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## **METHODISM IN GIBRALTAR AND ITS MISSION IN SPAIN, 1769-1842**

**SUSAN IRENE JACKSON**

In the context of Gibraltar's own history a description is given of how Methodism was taken to Gibraltar by soldiers who met together in small groups and founded the first Methodist Society there in 1769. After meeting with considerable opposition and persecution from the Established Church and others, the Methodist Conference decided to support the work by providing missionary ministers. The early work of building a chapel, fighting for their rights and gaining a degree of official sanction and protection is part of the story.

The purpose of the church was always evangelism and a ministry to soldiers was justified because the soldiers and sailors travelled around the world and took the gospel message with them. Links with the British and Foreign Bible Society were established in 1807 as Bible distribution was seen to be an important goal and a useful means of evangelism. There was always an interest too in converting the local inhabitants of Gibraltar and this aim was furthered by the appointment of William Barber in 1824, as a second missionary, solely to work with them. This work was later developed by William Harris Rule who founded the first Mission schools in Gibraltar, which led to considerable opposition from the Roman Catholic population.

In the 1830's Rule also attempted to establish Missions in Spain itself. This was the time when George Borrow and James Graydon were also working in Spain for the Bible Society. A brief account is given of the work of all three, in the context of the political and religious situation in Spain, thus exploring the reasons why they were all eventually forced to leave the country and why a permanent Protestant foothold was not established in Spain at this time.

**METHODISM IN GIBRALTAR AND ITS MISSION IN SPAIN, 1769-1842**

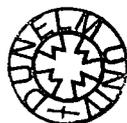
**SUSAN IRENE JACKSON**

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

University of Durham - Department of Theology

Submitted 2000



14 NOV 2000

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None of the material in this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree in this or any other university.

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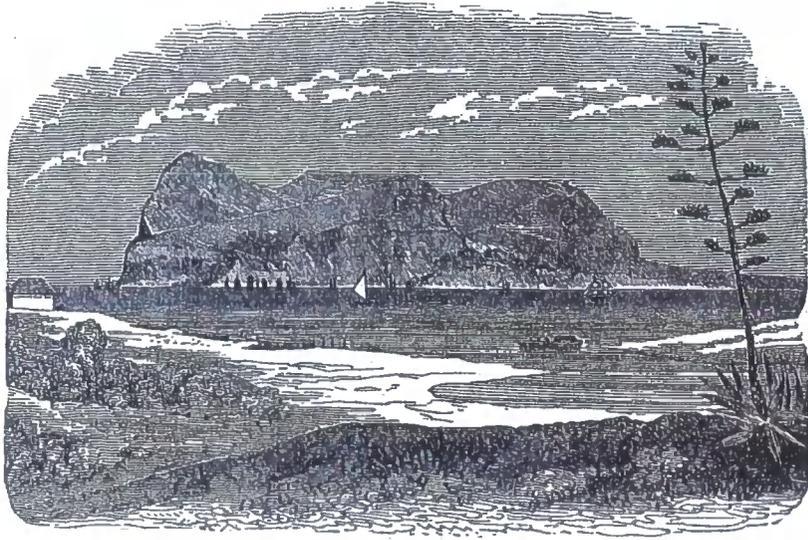
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## VIEWS OF GIBRALTAR



VIEW OF GIBRALTAR FROM ACROSS THE BAY

1844



A LATER VIEW OF GIBRALTAR FROM THE SPANISH LINES  
showing the sheer North Front where Ince's Galleries were mined  
the Moorish Castle on the sky line and the north end of the town

## **PREFACE**

The Methodist Society formed in Gibraltar in 1769 was one of the earliest developments outside Britain, but because its members were largely British soldiers and it related to the British inhabitants on the Rock, there were similarities between the development of Methodism at home and in Gibraltar. However, there were also differences because this was a foreign station, and ministers sent there came under the authority of the Missionary Society after it was formed. When the work spread out to the Spanish speaking population, and into Spain itself, Gibraltar became for a time more of a mission station, but always continued the work with the soldiers which ultimately took precedence.

The Methodist revival began with Wesley's open-air preaching in 1739. Wesley himself always hoped to live and die as an ordained Anglican priest, and wanted the Methodist movement to remain a part of the Established Church, but the seeds of separation were really sown at the beginning of the work. Wesley's open-air preaching, distinctive message, itinerant life-style, use of lay preachers, development of the class system and building of separate preaching houses were all innovative ways of working and likely to arouse suspicion, opposition and condemnation from more traditional Anglicans. Methodists were expected to attend Sunday worship at their parish church and receive the sacraments there, but even quite early on this did not always happen. Some Methodists were not happy to attend such services, and at times others were not admitted. However, Wesley continued to refuse to allow his preachers to administer the sacraments until 1784, when he made an exception by controversially ordaining two preachers for the work in America, and other ordinations followed. It is perhaps surprising that the Anglican Church did not expel him for his actions, but he died an Anglican priest as he had hoped. During the somewhat turbulent years after his death in 1791 the sacramental issue was hotly debated, along with the question of the leadership of the Methodist movement, its relationship with the Anglican Church and the involvement of the laity in decision-making, particularly at Conference which exclusively involved the preachers.

None of these issues was easy to resolve and it was not always possible to reach agreement, with the result that some splits and secessions did take place, over many years. Conference made some concessions and tried to unite the various parties through the Plan of Pacification of 1795 and the Form of Discipline of 1797. The former dealt largely with the sacramental issue, opening up the way for those Societies who desired it to be able to administer the sacrament. The latter endorsed Conference as the ruling authority of the Methodist connexion but laid down rules and structures for the connexion as a whole, through the district meeting, the work of the district chairman, the circuit superintendent, often described as "the key man in the Connexion", the travelling preachers, and the laity, particularly in the leaders' meeting where they had considerable local power.<sup>1</sup> Thus, slowly but surely, Methodism moved towards complete separation from the Church of England, but the transition from Society to Church was not an easy one, both for Methodism itself and in its relationship with others, particularly the Established Church.

By the time he reached old age much of the bitter opposition and suspicion of Wesley himself had died down and he enjoyed respectability and a degree of veneration in his last years, but the same was not true for his followers and successors. At the time of his death there were just over 70,000 Methodists but numbers continued to increase, so that by 1833 there were over 300,000, plus of course many others known as hearers or adherents, who could be faithful in their attendance but were reluctant to commit themselves to membership. The majority of early Methodists were probably skilled manual workers with different groups predominating in particular areas such as the miners in Cornwall, but the impact of Methodism was variable. As Hempton states: "Depending on local circumstances therefore, Methodism could be either a more lively religious alternative to established Anglicanism or, more commonly, a beneficiary of Anglican and Dissenting weakness".<sup>2</sup> The impact of Methodism on soldiers falls into the second category, for the army chaplains were notoriously negligent of their charges, and Wesley's concern for them is of particular significance for Gibraltar. Watkins stated that "there was no class of the community to which John Wesley was more drawn or of which he records with greater pleasure signs of spiritual awakening, than the soldiery. His letters and his Journal abound with references to

these men, over whom his heart yearned, and whose spiritual destitution was so great".<sup>3</sup> The result was the growth of small Methodist societies within the army which could continue to meet wherever they were posted. Some of these soldiers found their way to Gibraltar and formed the first Methodist Society there, long before any preacher was appointed to lead them. Indeed Watkins felt that Gibraltar was the centre of the army work and "for nearly a hundred years was to be the chief seat of Methodism in the army".<sup>4</sup> Yet Methodist soldiers were often subjected to bitter persecution and Gibraltar was no exception. It was a long hard battle to win for Methodist soldiers the same rights as those of the Established Church - the right to attend their own services of worship, to attend class meetings, to have their own minister visit them in hospital or prison, and to receive the rites of baptism, marriage and burial from their own minister too.

The persecution of Methodist soldiers probably had its roots in the general distrust of Methodism as a whole from its beginnings. As Walsh points out, the violence perpetrated against the early Methodists was often orchestrated by the clergy, gentry and influential farmers who saw the movement as undermining their power and position. The fact that the preachers were itinerant did not help for "who could tell what the clandestine aims of these men might not be?"<sup>5</sup> The private nature of some Methodist meetings was seen to be suspicious too. One result was Methodism's concern to be seen as loyal to sovereign and country and as time went on the suspicions did begin to fade. However, such factors seem to have been part of the early stage of persecution of the soldiers in Gibraltar. In later years it was much more about Anglican disapproval and non-acceptance of Methodism. In any case, Gibraltar was too small a place for any real subversion to go unnoticed.

One difficulty in the relationship between Methodism and the Established Church concerned the preachers themselves. As already stated the majority of early Methodists were skilled manual workers although, of course, generalisations are limited and there were many exceptions. However, the travelling preachers were drawn from the rank and file, and though most were certainly literate, they seldom had the educational background of their Anglican counterparts, who could belittle them and disregard them. Thus, for example,

there is an apocryphal tale that in Gibraltar the Anglican chaplain refused to bury a child after discovering it had been baptised by the Methodist minister. He is reported to have said to the parents at the graveside that they might just as well have had a cobbler baptise the child who could bury it as well. The Anglicans could and did try to discredit the Methodist missionaries in Gibraltar and deny the validity of their ministry.

There has been much debate as to whether Methodists were Dissenters. Wesley himself had to license his chapels as Dissenting meeting houses and his preachers as Dissenting preachers because that was the law, but he did not regard the Methodist movement as Dissenting because he saw it as a part of the Established Church. After his death, however, it was harder to maintain this position as Methodism began to administer its own sacraments and develop independence. Bowmer concluded that Methodism "was a 'new thing' in the religious world and there was no ready-made category into which it could conveniently fit".<sup>6</sup> Methodism itself certainly did not wish to be seen as Dissenting, and it may be that this desire contributed to the development of Wesleyan Methodism as a controlling and highly disciplined body firmly on the side of the Establishment. However, the very nature of its activities was bound to create opposition from the Anglicans whatever name was given to the movement.

In 1811 Lord Sidmouth, encouraged by some Anglican bishops, attempted to introduce a New Toleration Act which would have limited Methodist activities, particularly itinerant preaching. Methodists successfully campaigned against the bill and for the New Act of 1812 which was not a threat to the Connexion, and thus discovered that it now had the power and ability to fight its own battles. One result, however, was the hardening of Anglican attitudes towards Methodism. This problem was compounded by the rise of the Anglo-Catholic or Tractarian movement with its theory of episcopal ordination which reinforced Anglican objections to the validity of other ministries, including that of the Methodists. Methodist theology was also attacked, largely on the grounds that it taught "Justification by feelings".<sup>7</sup>

The tension relating to Methodist preachers also existed within Methodism itself but in a very different way. Wesley, as the well-educated leader of Methodism, was much respected by the ordinary membership and often referred to as a father, but most of the preachers were from the same background and seen more as brothers. This certainly affected the relationship between minister and people and sometimes caused considerable tension. As time went on, the preachers were more carefully selected and trained and their role also changed. Methodism continued to be an evangelising body concerned to make converts but also recognised that the converts needed further training in the pursuit of holiness. The preachers therefore had to be evangelists, but pastors and teachers too. Originally the local preachers and the travelling preachers had enjoyed a very similar role and status but with this change many local preachers felt relegated to an inferior position which caused some bitterness. As Methodism evolved there were also changes in worship which originally was fairly simple, being composed mainly of hymn-singing and preaching. Other elements were introduced and, as with all change, some people found the more formal approach less satisfactory. Some internal disputes occurred connected with these issues. The Leeds organ case related to worship and the Warrenite secession to ministerial training, but both were also protests against the authoritarian power base of Methodism, which was firmly in the hands of the preachers and Conference.

Many of these tensions also occurred in Gibraltar, where it was probably an even more sensitive issue because the church had been established by lay people and often maintained by them in the absence of an appointed preacher. In addition preachers seem rarely to have been chosen for their suitability for the post. There was such a shortage of candidates that on several occasions no one at all could be found for Gibraltar, and the impression is sometimes given that the person who was sent was the only one available and therefore not necessarily chosen for his skills for this particular job. What is perhaps surprising is the considerable ability of the vast majority of the preachers who were sent to Gibraltar, who were expected to relate not only to their own members but to people in authority, such as Gibraltar's Governors. Most of their letters still in existence are well written and, when occasion demanded, well argued.

Bowmer has seen the development of the minister's role as having "its roots in what Wesley thought a minister ought to be and in the responsibilities and powers he gave to his assistants".<sup>8</sup> Others, like Ward, have seen the change from "feeding and guiding to teaching and ruling" more in social and political terms, as a result of the need to control and unify the people and to support the Establishment.<sup>9</sup> Wesley had always maintained a high level of discipline and control within his Societies. Ordinary members were expected to live in a way which reflected their commitment to Christian holiness. Those in leadership positions were also expected to adhere to Methodist policy and obey Wesley's rules. The ultimate sanction was expulsion which was widely used at all levels. After Wesley's death, Methodism had developed into a highly structured and disciplined organisation. The power base lay with the Conference, composed as it was exclusively of the preachers, and it tended to respond to any challenges with a clear cut policy. Those who found this unacceptable either left or were expelled.

Ward described three early challenges to Wesleyan Methodism and the way in which Conference responded to them. The first came from revivalism. The advent of enthusiastic camp-meetings was frowned upon by Conference, as the revivalists challenged Wesleyan Methodism much as it had once challenged the Established Church. The result was the same. The revivalists were unable to find a home in the Methodist organisation and were driven to begin their own Primitive Methodist connexion. The considerable social unrest in the early 19th century was also a difficult challenge. In the end official policy made it clear that one could not be a radical *and* a Methodist, but this conservative stance was by no means acceptable to everyone. There was a great deal of tension and violence, with expulsions and secessions. The economic problems caused by the post-war recession also challenged Methodism which found itself in financial difficulty. The result was that the circuit horse largely disappeared, rural itinerancy declined and there was a greater dependency on the wealthier urban chapels.

The outcome was a degree of alienation and division and the power of the ministers and Conference was resented by many lay people. One result was the loss of many of the

poorer working class members who were also affected by the struggle for control of the Sunday schools. Denominational rivalry lay behind much of the educational expansion which also increased Anglican hostility towards Methodism, both in England and in Gibraltar.

Education had always been an important issue for Wesley, and he is reported to have said that "if the Methodists were not a reading people the work of grace would die out in a generation".<sup>10</sup> He stressed the importance of study strongly to his preachers but children were not neglected either. As Baker pointed out: "The teaching and clothing of children played a large part in the Wesleys' work ..... and in the first Methodist Societies in London, Bristol and Newcastle" which all had schools attached to them.<sup>11</sup> The most famous school of all, Kingswood, was established as early as 1739 for colliers' children, though the idea was Whitefield's, and it was he who laid the foundation stone of the school. However, in 1748, a new school was opened by Wesley, alongside the old one, to provide an education for the preachers' sons and others. Methodist Sunday schools developed next. Hempton states that "Sunday schools were begun in the 1780's by men committed to godliness and good learning as instruments of control in an environment that was becoming more alarming due to increases in population, crime, vagrancy, geographical mobility and radicalism".<sup>12</sup> Some included adults and instruction was often given in reading, writing and occasionally arithmetic, in addition to the teaching of religion. The Sunday schools appealed to the working classes because they were cheap and did not affect children's ability to work. They were originally undenominational. However, dissatisfaction with this approach led the Methodists, and others, to develop their own Sunday schools, with the added aim of recruiting new members, and Methodism soon had more of them than any other denomination apart from the Established Church. However, Conference decided that such schools should not give secular instruction and at times banned the teaching of writing in them, seeing this as a breach of Sabbath law. This was not popular with many working class people who wanted a wider education and had no other opportunity to receive it. There was less enthusiasm for the provision of day schools at this time, partly for financial reasons and also because of concern that too much education could lead to dissatisfaction

with one's lot in life. However, in 1833, Conference sanctioned the provision of day schools and in 1837 a small sub-committee, appointed by Conference the previous year, presented its report suggesting greater efforts could be made wanting "not merely schools, but church schools, which being systematically visited by the Preachers, may prove doors of entrance into the Church of God."<sup>13</sup> So, in 1838, Conference appointed an Education Committee to supervise both day and Sunday schools. In 1843 Sir James Graham introduced a Factory Education Bill to provide three hours daily education for children aged between 8 and 13 working in factories, but he proposed that Anglicans be given control of such schools. The Methodists therefore campaigned against the bill, thus directly opposing the Anglicans for the first time. The bill was defeated and shortly afterwards Conference agreed to implement a plan to provide 700 schools over the next seven years, though, as it turned out, progress was slower than this.

Developments in Gibraltar followed a similar pattern, with education being provided by the different denominations after the first Methodist initiatives. A Methodist Sunday school was formed in March 1822 and, in addition, in 1830 an evening school was established to teach Spanish children to read. Then, in 1832, day schools were developed which gave a good general education but were very much intended to be Mission schools. In Gibraltar the worries that had been expressed elsewhere about educating the masses were not evident, as education seems to have been regarded by everyone as very desirable. The controversial element here was the teaching of religion. The Methodists insisted on compulsory religious education for their pupils and attendance at the Methodist services every Sunday, despite the fact that the children were largely from Roman Catholic backgrounds. This inevitably led to considerable tension and antagonism between Methodists and Catholics and, to a lesser extent, with the Anglicans. At this time Methodism as a whole was extremely anti-Catholic and this was very much reflected in the attitudes of the preachers appointed to Gibraltar.

As Wesleyan Methodism moved further along the road of establishing itself as a national denomination, it was bound to encounter problems along the way, in its relationship with

other denominations, with the outside world and within itself. The challenges it faced and the authoritarian way it dealt with them did lead to alienation, particularly between the ministers and the laity, and the loss of many poorer working class members. However, despite all this, Wesleyan Methodism grew and expanded. There was a steady increase in membership and in the number of ministers both at home and abroad, until the greatest secession of all took place in the late 1840's during the flysheets controversy, which was largely a reaction against the power of the Conference and the leading preachers.

In Gibraltar, some of these tensions were also felt. However, the Methodists here were far away from the seat of power and there were problems with communication which was often slow and unsatisfactory. Local relationships were much more important but they were affected by some of the changes in Britain which were reflected in the attitudes of the preachers sent there. Gibraltar Methodists too were much more dependent on the local authorities. For soldiers military discipline had to be paramount and their rights were always limited by their duties. In Gibraltar the Governor was the supreme authority and had considerable power including the right to grant or refuse permission to reside on the Rock, at least in the early Methodist years. However, appeals could be made to the authorities in England who were sometimes asked for a decision both by the Governor and by the people, for example, in some of the disputes over soldiers' rights, and over the renewal of the lease of the Methodist property. Sometimes even the Governor had to have their permission before he could act. Methodism owes a great deal to the support of some of the Governors, notably General Don, and at other times suffered considerably at the hands of less supportive Governors, and the greatest persecution of all occurred at a time when the Governor was absent, having been recalled to England. Much seems to have depended on each Governor's personal attitude to Methodism.

Although the soldiers formed the bulk of the original Methodist Society, Gibraltar was regarded as a missionary station. Generally speaking there was little Protestant missionary activity before the 19th century although the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge was founded in 1698 and the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in 1701

and they were involved in some work overseas. The latter was involved in Georgia where Wesley spent some time. He had originally hoped to work with Indians there but in the event his work was confined to the settlers and it is doubtful if anyone felt the Indians were a real priority. However, in the 1790's, several Missionary Societies were formed including the London Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society. The Evangelical revival of the time does seem to have inspired greater concern to save lost souls not just at home but around the world, but no formal Methodist missionary society was begun at this time.

Wesley himself seems at times to have been rather reluctant to develop work overseas, and some have therefore doubted his personal commitment to missionary work. It has been suggested that he was deterred by his own lack of success in Georgia and that his concentration on the home work limited his vision. However, resources were limited; Wesley's reluctance to spread them too thinly was understandable, and others have argued that Wesley's whole outlook was a missionary one. His willingness to overcome his reluctance to field-preaching says much about his desire to preach the gospel to all who would listen and who could say who were more important, the unconverted at home or abroad? Bennett describes Wesley as "an enthusiastic evangelist who saw not only his own ministry but that of his Connexion as an out-reaching, soul-winning ministry".<sup>14</sup> He himself preached in Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales and visited the Channel Islands to support a growing work there at the age of eighty four. All this was the work of a man with a mission, albeit one limited to the British Isles, but even this was a much wider vision than most people of his time.

Wesley did respond to some calls from abroad, although he declined others, according to his judgement as to what was the providential way. The criticism that these calls, such as that from America, were largely from fellow Methodists and therefore not truly missionary work are answered by Taggart's comment that "It is difficult to see how else a start could have been made overseas apart from a cry for help from like-minded people", as indeed happened in Gibraltar.<sup>15</sup>

No one man could have overseen the work at home and overseas and it was Thomas Coke therefore, eventually with Wesley's support, who developed the missionary work. Conference had the overall responsibility but Coke remained the dominant person in the development of Methodist missionary work until his death. Various Committees were set up to help him in his task but he "strenuously resisted whatever appeared to him as interference and was bitterly opposed to any diminution of his role", and many argue that his autocratic rule delayed the formation of a formal Methodist missionary society.<sup>16</sup>

In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was formed and links were soon made with it from Gibraltar. The first consignment of books was sent in 1807 and the provision of different translations of the Bible was seen as a great help in the work of evangelism. Tracts were widely used too and links were also made with the Religious Tract Society which had been formed even earlier in 1799.

In 1813 a Methodist missionary meeting was held in Leeds and was followed by others in different districts. Martin argues that the reason for this initiative and the resultant local missionary societies was a reaction against the London Missionary Society. This had been formed in 1795 by Calvinistic Methodists, Independents and Scottish Presbyterians but sought to use the resources of all evangelical groups, including the Wesleyan Methodists, for missionary work, in which all could share a part. This seemed to work well at first but, as time went on, their approach became more competitive and their fund-raising more aggressive so that it was felt that resources were being drained away from Methodism itself. Martin argues therefore that the local initiatives in 1813 were "primarily to counteract the LMS".<sup>17</sup> The role of these local societies was mainly fund-raising to support Coke in his missionary endeavours, and to ensure that Methodist resources were not being used elsewhere.

Coke died in 1814 and his death seems to have precipitated the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in 1818. This was not a separate organisation as Conference retained ultimate control and responsibility for the work. The over-riding missionary motive

was the same at home and abroad, to preach the gospel of Christ to the glory of God and overseas work was organised in a similar way to that at home. In fact many missionaries also served in home circuits at some time in their ministry. Of the fifteen ministers and probationers appointed to Gibraltar up to 1842 two died, eight never served abroad again, and one who would have done so was not able to because of a breakdown in his relationship with the Missionary Society, so that only four had predominantly missionary careers. However, there were problems specifically related to missionary work including those that could arise from living and working in different cultures and sometimes cultural insensitivity did occur. As time went on there was less overlap, perhaps because of a recognition that the two spheres of work were different.

However, where possible, circuits and districts were created overseas and had the same personnel, chairmen, superintendent preachers, travelling preachers, local preachers, class leaders and trustees, as at home. However, this was not possible in Gibraltar where for most of the time there was only the one station. On the occasions that a second missionary was appointed, one was the superintendent, but generally this was a very isolated and lonely post. The Methodist minister in Gibraltar rarely had a colleague's support and there was no wider Methodist network immediately at hand to fall back on. This sense of isolation is just one of the problems with Missions that Taggart identified. The others included "lack of commitment on the part of Methodism generally, unsatisfactory communication, administrative weakness, inadequate financial and human resources, errors of judgement in the selection of missionaries, and insufficient consultation".<sup>18</sup> Most of these were to affect the work in Gibraltar at one time or another as well as the difficulty of dealing with ministerial disciplinary matters in a situation where there was no District meeting which in England dealt with such affairs. There was also the problem of a high mortality rate amongst missionaries in some areas, such as Africa. In Gibraltar two missionaries died of fever but many of the wives suffered major health problems, though there was only one death actually on the station where many of the children died too.

The work in Gibraltar differed from most other missionary stations in terms of the length of

appointments. Most missionaries were expected to serve from four to six years abroad presumably because of the expense of equipping them and sending them out. At first Gibraltar was treated more like a home station, with ministers initially appointed for two and then three years. This was probably because the work was primarily with British soldiers and there was therefore no need for language training. However, it differed from home circuits in that the congregation was a very fluctuating one and could change almost entirely as regiments came and went, so that in many ways it was not helpful having such frequent changes of minister. However, the Missionary Society was flexible enough to allow longer stays once the work spread out to the Spanish speaking population and into Spain itself.

Missionary work developed in a similar providential way as Wesley's original Methodist Societies. It was prioritised to a degree in that: "The official policy was that Methodist missionaries would not be placed in areas where the gospel already flourished, but a dominant Roman Catholic influence demanded a different response".<sup>19</sup> The strongly held anti-Catholic views of Methodism led to a keen desire to evangelise Catholic countries like Spain but there was no particular master plan. The work developed in response to local initiatives, requests for help and providential opportunities when resources allowed, and the lack of them often hindered the development of the work. So, there was no definite plan to evangelise Spain but when an opportunity seemed to be there the Missionary Society supported the attempt. However, Spain's history made this a very difficult venture.

Roman Catholicism became Spain's official religion in the year 589. However, the Moorish conquest which followed introduced the Muslim faith to the country and many Christians converted, although many others remained true to their beliefs. Christians lived under Muslim rule and Muslims lived under Christian rule in different parts of the country. Generally speaking the north was Christian and the south Muslim. There was a kind of mutual co-existence and tolerance known as *convivencia* between the separate communities of Christians, Jews and Muslims, despite occasional violence. The communities, particularly the Jews who had strict dietary laws, tended to live separate lives but generally peaceable

ones.

However, in 1086 the Almoravides, a far more fanatical Muslim people arrived in Spain, followed in 1145 by a second group, the Almohades, who were even more fanatical. Their intrusion into Spain and their fanaticism began to provoke a response and this more than anything seems to have been the turning point in the relationship between the Christian and Muslim parts of Spain. "The ideal of purification, of an elimination from the body of Spain of all elements considered spiritually noxious, began to take hold of the Spanish Christian conscience, and Spain tentatively assumed the religious destiny that was profoundly to influence her path through the centuries".<sup>20</sup> Gradually the Reconquest began though it was to take a very long time to achieve. The fall of Granada, the last Muslim stronghold, was only finally accomplished in 1492.

By this time Spanish Christians had also turned their attention to the Jews. Anti-Jewish sentiments became more common from the 13th century throughout Europe. Jews were expelled from England in 1290 and from France in 1306. In Spain it was not until 1391 that violent action against the Jews began. Many were killed and many were forced to become Christian, and the term *converso*, meaning new Christian, was used to describe all who converted. In some areas *convivencia* continued, so that the extent of the persecution was not uniform throughout the country.

Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, who became known as the Catholic Monarchs, began to reign in 1474 uniting the two kingdoms of Spain by their marriage. At first, to a large extent, they protected the Jews although there were still anti-Jewish groups in Spain who continued their persecution. The main concern was that contact with Jews led to Christians being drawn away from their faith. So, in 1478, Ferdinand and Isabella set up the Inquisition, with the aim of eradicating heresy amongst the Christian population. It therefore only had authority over Christians, including the *conversos*, although some Jews co-operated with it in denouncing the latter. The first *auto-da-fé*, or act of faith, was held in 1481 when six people were burnt at the stake. In recent years research has indicated that

many of the beliefs about the work of the Inquisition have been greatly exaggerated. The aim was to uncover heresy and to guide people back into the Church through repentance and a public act of faith. Only those who refused to repent were executed and many an auto-da-fé took place without any burnings. Nevertheless, it still meant that purity of faith and uniformity of belief was achieved in a climate of fear and repression.

Concerns about converso heresy particularly continued and Jewish expulsions began in 1482 with a total expulsion finally ordered in 1492 not long after the fall of Granada. Jews were given a choice between leaving and converting to Christianity for "The edict did not seek to expel a people, but to eliminate a religion".<sup>21</sup> After 1492 the practice of Judaism in Spain was forbidden, and many conversos went on to hold prominent positions even in the Church. When Granada fell religious freedom was promised to the Muslims defeated there, but eventually they too were given the choice of conversion or expulsion and so the process of achieving religious uniformity was complete. It was the practice of Catholicism which united Spain and achieved the aim of bringing political unity and social stability to what had been a divided and restless country. During the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella Spain became united in a way that had never been achieved before. There was a price to pay as the loss of the Moors and Jews with their distinctive contributions to society had been a heavy one but the gains were enormous too. Soon the explorations of Columbus were to open up a whole new world and the now united Spain became a very powerful nation.

Its insistence on religious conformity continued and the Church held a privileged and powerful position. In the 16th century, action was taken to ensure that Protestantism could not gain a foothold in Spain with the result that "The chance for Spain to lead a free and open social and cultural life had been rejected, and the course was set for that claustrophobic, intolerant, and xenophobic existence which was to remain Spain's hallmark for centuries to come".<sup>22</sup> To be Spanish meant being Catholic and so engrained was this by the time the Methodists turned their attention to Spain that it was highly unlikely that they could have achieved a foothold in that country.

As Callahan described in his study, the Church at this time did come attack, there were more liberal influences at work, there was a lot of anticlerical feeling which translated itself at times into violent action, but this did not mean that the Catholic faith itself was under threat.<sup>23</sup> To be Spanish still meant one was Catholic and this was enshrined in Spanish law and in the Spanish Constitution which prohibited the exercise of any other faith, and the Church was still strong enough to repulse any attempts to undermine the faith at least from the activities of Protestants.

For the vast majority of Spaniards Protestantism remained an alien thing and even today, with a greater measure of tolerance than ever before in Spain, there is little interest in it. The real challenge to the Church came from a modernising progressivism which saw Catholicism as likely to oppose its aims. The Church therefore identified its enemies, not so much with Protestantism, as with the forces of modernity, and it was the Church's adaptation to modernity which posed its central problem not Protestantism.<sup>24</sup>

This issue, unlike the others, is not part of the story of Methodism on the Rock. However, in order to place that story in context it is helpful to start by understanding something of the history of Gibraltar itself.

## **INTRODUCTION BACKGROUND INFORMATION (Upto 1769)**

The towering Rock of Gibraltar dominates the landscape at the southern end of Europe. Its strategic position, guarding the entrance to the Mediterranean, has meant that over the centuries it has been much sought after and there have been repeated sieges, battles and arguments over ownership. All this despite the fact that it is only two and a half square miles in size. Originally known as Calpe it formed, with Mount Abyla in North Africa, the Pillars of Hercules, one of the wonders of the ancient world and long before the first Methodists landed on its shores there were other visitors and settlers.

Remains of the first of these, Neanderthal Man, have been found in Gibraltar. They were followed by the Phoenicians who took shelter in Gorhams Cave on the eastern shore, possibly using it as a trading post. They did not settle on what must have seemed a wild and inhospitable shore, preferring Carteia further around the bay. Here there was fertile land, water and safe anchorage and the city flourished, becoming a Greek and then a Carthaginian city before the Romans took it around 190 BC. It remained Roman for 580 years. The Romans visited Calpe but did not settle there.

Next came the Vandals and the Visigoths and following them the Moors. They arrived in the area in 711 AD under the leadership of Tarik-ibn-Zeyad, and Calpe was renamed Gibel Tarik, Mountain of Tarik, after him. They remained in possession of the Rock for nearly six hundred years, but it is unlikely that any building took place until 1160. In that year work began on a castle and a city to be called Medinat al Fath, City of Victory. It was proposed that Gibel Tarik be renamed Jebal-al-Fath, Mountain of Conquest, but the name never came into usage.

The first of Gibraltar's fourteen sieges took place in 1309 when the Spanish successfully besieged the Rock. The Moors surrendered when it was agreed that they could leave for Africa. They were counted as they left and numbered 1,125 in all. Spanish building work began and people were offered incentives to settle in Gibraltar, such as freedom from

taxation and sanctuary for criminals, as settlement in such an isolated outpost was not a very inviting prospect.

The second siege took place in 1316 when the Moors tried unsuccessfully to recapture the Rock, but in mid 1333 after a siege of four and a half months, they were successful and soon began the work of strengthening the defences. It is probable that most of the Moorish remains in present day Gibraltar stem from this time. However, the Spanish, under King Alfonso XI of Castille, did not give up their efforts despite the surrender of Gibraltar's Governor but eventually at the end of 1333, after a further siege, a truce was signed. The Spanish again laid siege to Gibraltar in 1349 also under the leadership of King Alfonso, who refused to give up the siege even when an outbreak of Black Death occurred. However, when he himself died of the disease, the siege was abandoned.

The sixth siege took place in 1411, between different Moorish factions, and in 1436 the Spanish once again attacked the Rock. This time they were unsuccessful but a further attempt in 1462 led to a Moorish surrender and Gibraltar once again became Spanish. However, there was a dispute over ownership of the Rock between the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who took possession after the eighth siege, and the Crown, who claimed possession and appointed a Royal Governor. The Duke therefore laid siege to Gibraltar in 1466 and his ownership was eventually confirmed. When Isabella and Ferdinand, who became known as "The Catholic Kings" came to power in Spain, Isabella sought to have Gibraltar returned to the Crown. She succeeded in this in December 1501. Shortly afterwards a new Governor was appointed and in July 1502 Gibraltar received its coat of arms, the Castle and the Key, still in use today. In 1506, after Isabella's death, the Duke of Medina Sidonia tried unsuccessfully to regain possession of Gibraltar, but gave up his attempt after a somewhat half-hearted tenth siege.

After Gibraltar was taken by the Spanish, the mosque was converted into a church, which was later completely rebuilt and called St. Mary the Crowned. It was larger than the present day Catholic Cathedral but was on the same site. Eventually there were fifteen

places of worship for the population of five to six thousand, the most famous of which was the shrine of our Lady of Europa near Europa Point. The Franciscan friars came to build a religious house and the Convent was completed around 1531. The name seems to have caused some confusion. Apparently, in Spain a monastery is the name given to the home of enclosed orders, while other orders whether male or female, live in convents. Some of Gibraltar's historians feel therefore that the Convent in Gibraltar never housed nuns, only monks, but Yale in *A Story in Stone*, the history of the King's Chapel, refers to the monks and nuns and relates "the legend of the lost nun", a story of ill fated love leading to the death of a nun whose ghost is still said to haunt the Convent.<sup>1</sup> The skeleton of a nun was eventually found under the floor of the chapel, but in a later history she was said to have been from the female Franciscan order, the Poor Clares who also had a convent in Gibraltar, which is probably more likely.<sup>2</sup>

In 1540 a Corsair expedition from North Africa raided Gibraltar. The inhabitants fled to the castle, causing the death of twenty six women and children trampled to death in the rush. The town was plundered and the Convent was pillaged, as was the Shrine at Europa. Seventy captives were taken. Despite a call for improved fortifications, it was twelve years before work started, and the Charles V wall was constructed. Other fortifications followed in later years.

Other, less serious, raids took place and the mendicant friars of Our Lady of Ransom established themselves in Gibraltar in 1581. They raised money to ransom the captives of raids. Other Orders followed. The Brothers Hospitallers of St. John of God came in 1585. They ran a hospital which was probably much needed in 1649 when an epidemic struck and a quarter of the population died. The Poor Clares arrived in 1587.

Meanwhile, relationships between Protestant England and Catholic Spain were not good. The Spanish Armada set sail and was defeated in 1588. Adventurers like Drake, Hawkins and Raleigh attacked Spanish shipping and Dutch ships joined in with this activity. Both sides began to feel that Gibraltar would be a useful base for operations and a small number

of Spanish galleys were based there. Gibraltar was also used by the Spanish as a base for shipping out Spanish Moors or Moriscos to North Africa when they were expelled from Spain. Some then joined the privateers in attacking Spanish ships. The need for a base for English activities had not been forgotten, but in 1625 it was Cádiz, not Gibraltar, that was attacked. The raid failed largely due to drunkenness among the troops who broke into the Spanish wine stores. When Cromwell came to power in England he too considered the value of Gibraltar which could be "an advantage to our trade, and an annoyance to the Spaniards" but no attempt was made.<sup>3</sup> Then in 1662 England acquired Tangier which gave them a base in the area which they occupied until 1684.

As time went on the antagonism between Protestant and Catholic countries was superseded by concerns about the balance of power in Europe. As Spanish power began to decline that of France increased, and there was much interest and concern as to who would ascend the Spanish throne after the death of Charles II. The prospect of Spain coming under French rule led to a declaration of war between France and England in 1702. Two British and Dutch fleets were prepared for action. Admiral Sir George Rooke was appointed Commander-in-chief of the smaller force and was instructed to take Cádiz. If this was too well defended other targets, including Gibraltar, were suggested. An attempt was made on Cádiz which failed, as before, due to drunkenness amongst the soldiers. Then, finally, in the summer of 1704, one year after the birth of John Wesley in England, an attempt by Rooke was made to take Gibraltar.

Some two thousand marines under Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt landed almost unopposed on the isthmus separating the Rock from Spain. A message was sent to Don Diego de Salinas, the Governor, asking him to surrender, which he refused to do, despite the smallness of his defending forces. A bombardment from the ships began and other landings took place. The women and children, who had fled to take refuge at the shrine of our Lady of Europa, became cut off from the town and were captured. Their belongings were looted and the shrine plundered. A further request to surrender was sent to the Governor who eventually agreed to do so. Under the terms of the surrender the Garrison

was allowed to leave. Civilians were given a choice. They could leave with their belongings or stay if they were prepared to swear allegiance to Charles III of Spain in whose name the Rock had been taken. There were to be no changes to the religion or laws of Gibraltar. All but seventy of the inhabitants left and settled where they could. Many of the fishermen went to Algeciras, others moved to Los Barrios and to San Roque where the city council went along with the records from Gibraltar. Philip V later described San Roque as "My City of Gibraltar resident in its Campo".<sup>4</sup> A parish priest, Juan Romero, with a curate and bell-ringer stayed behind and saved his church of St. Mary the Crowned from being desecrated and put to other use, as were other places of worship. Yale reports that "all the monks and nuns abandoned their homes and fled to Spain" and that the chapel at the Convent was taken over "in the name of the King" and named therefore "The King's Chapel" as it is known today.<sup>5</sup> However, the later history reports that the friars stayed on until 1727 when a further siege took place and they left for San Roque and that it was in 1728 that the governor took over the Convent as his residence and named the chapel "The King's Chapel".<sup>6</sup> This makes more sense as in 1704 Queen Anne was on the English throne whereas George II was king in 1728. Certainly the chapel did eventually become the first and only Protestant place of worship in the Garrison, and was served by military chaplains, though both the troops and civilians were allowed to worship there. The building was larger than the present chapel.

Eventually Rooke returned to England, after fighting a naval battle against the French off Málaga, in which both sides seem to have claimed victory. Hesse remained in Gibraltar to oversee its defence. Spanish and French forces soon began gathering in the area under the command of the Marquis of Villadarias, Captain-General of Andalusia, who was anxious to recapture the Rock, and the twelfth siege of Gibraltar began in October 1704. Reinforcements arrived in December and Admiral Leake provided valuable naval support to the Garrison. Sickness affected both sides but the siege continued until the spring of 1705 when it was abandoned by the Spanish and French, although they continued to blockade the Rock.

The War of the Spanish Succession continued. Philip V had ascended to the throne but there were still those who supported Archduke Charles. He visited Gibraltar in 1705 and was acknowledged there as Charles III of Spain in whose name the Rock had been taken and was held. He left Gibraltar to try to take Barcelona. Hesse went with him and was killed in the attack. In England, however, there were those who began to suggest that Gibraltar should become a British possession if Charles did not become King of Spain. Negotiations continued. In November 1712 an armistice between the forces of Britain and Spain was agreed and the blockade on Gibraltar was lifted. Under the Treaty of Utrecht of July 1713, Britain recognised Philip as King of Spain and Gibraltar became British. Under the terms of the Treaty no Jews or Moors were to reside in Gibraltar but "the free exercise of their religion shall be indulged to the Roman Catholic inhabitants" (Article X).<sup>7</sup> Gibraltar thus became a British Garrison Town and, from then on, British soldiers formed a large part of the population. British Governors were appointed and the Convent was eventually taken over as their official residence. It has retained this use and its name to the present day.

However, Spain continued to regret the loss of Gibraltar and has tried to regain possession of it ever since, though without success. In February 1727 the Spanish besieged the Rock again in what was Gibraltar's thirteenth siege. The siege lasted seventeen and a half weeks and a truce was finally signed on 24 June. For some time afterwards each side accused the other of breaking the truce and Spain continued to seek the return of Gibraltar.

Meanwhile, in England in 1725, Wesley had been ordained in the Church of England, and in the following year he was elected a fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. From 1727 to 1729 he served as a curate in Wroote, Lincolnshire, on behalf of his father, the vicar, who had suffered a stroke. On his return to Oxford he took over the leadership of the Holy Club. The group met regularly "to study the classics and to seek a serious Christian way of life".<sup>8</sup> They gained the nickname "Methodist" because of the methodical way in which they ordered their lives. One of the members of this Club was George Whitefield. In October 1735 Wesley sailed for Georgia. He arrived back in England on 1 February 1738 to discover that George Whitefield had left for Georgia the day before, though his ship was

still in sight on the water. Whitefield sailed in the *Whitaker*, accompanied by the *Amy* and the *Lightfoot*, and visited Gibraltar on the way, where troops were embarked for Georgia to aid in the defence of the colony. He spent about a fortnight in Gibraltar and wrote up the details of his visit in his Journal which was later published.

He went ashore on 20 February and "was unspeakably delighted with the prospect of the place".<sup>9</sup> The following day he was welcomed by the Governor, Lieutenant General Joseph Sabine, who invited him to dine with him which he did on this and several subsequent occasions. On the next day he visited "both the ministers of Gibraltar", presumably the Garrison chaplains, and again was warmly welcomed and offered the use of their pulpit which would have been in the King's Chapel. At eleven he went to public prayers when many officers and soldiers attended the church. On 24 February he was invited to stay in lodgings in the town and once again attended public prayers, which the Governor also attended. These seem to have been a frequent if not a daily occurrence. The following day at six in the morning he went to the church to meet some soldiers who had formed themselves into a small society which had been in existence for twelve years. They had at first met in caves and dens but the Governor had then allowed them to use the church where they met three times a day "to read, pray and sing psalms." They had met with some persecution and were "in derision called, the new lights". There was also another society of the Scottish Church nicknamed "dark lanterns". Whitefield gave "proper" books to both societies and tried to unite them. He did not visit the Scottish group and seemed more impressed with the former, spending some time with them. He was also impressed with Governor Sabine, writing in a letter that "Gibraltar is blessed with a governor, who hath not absented himself from public worship, unless when he was sick, for these seven years, and yet is very moderate towards the dissenters."<sup>10</sup> On Sunday 26 February Whitefield joined the soldiers at the church between five and six in the morning. Later in the morning he preached to a congregation of officers and soldiers and found the church, "though very large, was quite thronged". After evening prayers he joined the society again and had nearly thirty hearers.

Whitefield continued to preach at the church and, on the evening of Wednesday 1 March the congregation was "near two hundred people, amongst whom were many of the officers, and of the honourable women not a few". On the Friday morning about a dozen townspeople also joined the gathering at the church before breakfast. The numbers increased to about a thousand by 4 March. Several people were visibly moved by his preaching, and on Sunday 5 March one person "was so affected, that he wished himself a despised methodist"! Whitefield received the sacrament that morning along with Governor Sabine and Lieutenant General Francis Columbine, the Lieutenant Governor, plus about fifty others. On 6 March, his last day in Gibraltar, many came to see him bringing presents for his journey. He was accompanied to the ship by nearly two hundred people all sorry to see him go. He sailed the following day.

Philip, in his biography of Whitefield, described his success at Gibraltar as remarkable. He also refers to Whitefield's interest in the "new lights" and described them as "a little group of pious soldiers, who, for twelve years, had been the *methodists* of Gibraltar".<sup>11</sup> It is unlikely that they could have been Methodists as early as this, but in later years other soldiers like them were influenced by Wesley's preaching and did indeed become the first Methodists of Gibraltar.

Ten years later in October 1748 a man called Robert Poole set off on a voyage to the West Indies. He was a christian doctor who wrote at length about medical and theological matters. His ship called at Gibraltar, where he spent almost a month, and he later wrote an interesting account of his stay.<sup>12</sup> He described the Spanish church as "pretty large" saying it was used for divine worship by the Roman Catholics "who daily resort there for that purpose". He reckoned that about 1,000 of the population of 6,000 were Catholics. On Wednesday 19 October he called at the King's Chapel as this was a day for public worship. He described it as "large within and unceiled above" and "but indifferently provided with pews, which are placed in a row on each side, leaving a wide area in the middle for the soldiers and common people to occupy in attending divine service". He went on to say, "a society of soldiers, I am informed, meets here every night at a set hour, to assist each other

in the exercise of religion, prayer, reading etc. This society is said to have subsisted these sixteen years, though they are now much reduced to a very small number, and several of them little better than indifferent Christians". He later refers to them as being called the New Lights and presumably this was a continuation of the group known to Whitefield despite the discrepancy in the number of years they were said to have existed.

Whitefield had returned to England in December 1738 and had soon become renowned for his preaching. When he was banned from London pulpits he went to Bristol. Doors there too became closed to him and he therefore began to preach in the open-air with thousands flocking to hear him. He had promised to return to Georgia and so he asked John Wesley to take over his work in Bristol. This he did and thus began his itinerant ministry which was to take him all over Britain, meeting with opposition and persecution, as well as overwhelming success. Wesley founded religious Societies throughout the country which he intended to be part of the Established Church. However, gradually Methodism became established in its own right separate from the Church of England. This had never been Wesley's intention but eventually became a consequence of his preaching and organisation, the unwillingness of the Church of England to accept change, and developments within the Methodist movement after Wesley's death.

One group of people, who particularly interested Wesley, were soldiers, for whom he had both an admiration and a concern. Watkins in his book *Soldiers and Preachers Too* describes this aspect of Wesley's ministry.<sup>13</sup> A soldier's life was hard, with many temptations, and much depravity resulted. Wesley often expressed his concern for their souls and preached to them whenever he could. Many responded to his preaching and became Methodists. In addition, in the early years when Wesley and his followers were subject to much persecution, many Methodists, including some preachers, were deliberately press-ganged into service. They then spread the word to their fellow soldiers. So, it is not surprising that there were many Methodists both in the army and the navy, and it was therefore likely that some of them would eventually be posted to Gibraltar. The first of these seems to have been a soldier called Henry Ince. He has always been regarded as the

founder of Methodism in Gibraltar, but was also to become famous in Gibraltar itself for his work on its defences and, as a result, his name lives on there to this day.

## CHAPTER ONE FOUNDATIONS AND BEGINNINGS - Soldier Preachers and Lay Leaders (1769 - 1804)

The most biographical information about Henry Ince, thought to have been the founder of Methodism in Gibraltar, is given by Connolly in his *History of the Royal Sappers and Miners* but he seems not to be correct in all details. He describes Ince as being born in Penzance in 1737 and dying there in 1809. However, his date of death is now known to be 1808 and he, in fact, died and was buried at Gittisham, in Devon, at the age of 72. It seems likely therefore that Ince was actually born in 1736. Connolly goes on to say that he was "brought up to the trade of a nailor, and afterwards acquired some experience as a miner."<sup>1</sup> In 1755 he enlisted into the Second Queen's Regiment of Foot then stationed in Galway. He served with them in Ireland until June 1765 when the Regiment moved to the Isle of Man and then went on to Gibraltar in March 1768. Henry Ince appears on the muster rolls of Captain Nickson's Company in Gibraltar, dated 4 July 1768, with the rank of Sergeant. Langford, a Cornishman himself, researched the details of Ince's army service and tried to find a record of his birth in the parish registers of Penzance and the Land's End peninsula, but without success.<sup>2</sup> He noted, too, that Ince was also an Irish name and therefore wondered if Ince could have been Irish, but this has not been proved, and one would, perhaps, have expected Ince to retire in Ireland if this had been true.

Connolly does not refer to Ince as having any Methodist connections but, on 3 April 1769, Ince wrote to John Wesley from Gibraltar:

At our first coming to this place, I found a people of such abominable practices, as I never before had seen. However, I and two or three more took a room to meet in, and we were soon joined by some of the Royal Scotch: but this continued only a short time; the reason was, they would not allow your hymns to be sung, neither your works to be read. Upon this I was obliged to declare, that while I could get any of your writings to make use of, I would use them; since I had found them agreeable to the word of God. And as God gave me a word to speak, I cared not who heard, so He might be glorified. On this many were offended, and separated from us. Yet, in about two months, we were thirty-seven in number, till a little persecution came, then we were reduced to about eighteen. But, blessed be

God! he is reviving his work again. We are now thirty-two, fifteen of whom can rejoice in the pardoning love of God, and most of the others are pressing hard after it. Several Officers come to hear, and God gives favour in the sight of all men. There is one Gentleman of the town who has joined us lately, and is a very great help to us.

As to myself, God is ever gracious to me, who am less than the least of his children. I am astonished that he should work by me! O, that I may be found faithful unto death! and that he may carry on his work in this barren place! So prays your unworthy Friend, Henry Ince.<sup>3</sup>

It seems likely, from the way in which this letter was written, that Ince had met Wesley although no details of such a meeting can be found. However, Wesley's *Journal* does give details of his visits both to Cornwall and to Ireland. He first visited Cornwall in 1743 when Ince would have been only seven years of age. He returned every year, up to and including 1748, and then visited in 1750, 1751 and 1753. In most years he preached in the Penzance area and so the young Ince might well have heard him or met him. Wesley first visited Ireland in 1747 and was there on five occasions between the years 1756 and 1765 when Ince was in the army. His journal for 1756 records that he preached in Cork.<sup>4</sup> At this time, eight companies of the Second Foot were stationed there.<sup>5</sup> On 13 July 1758 Wesley "preached in the Exchange at Kinsale. The townsfolk 'care for none of these things!' But we had a large congregation of soldiers, many of whom are good soldiers of Jesus Christ!"<sup>6</sup> One and a half companies of the regiment were based at Kinsale at the time. In 1760 Wesley preached often to soldiers. On 17 July he preached at Limerick where six companies of the regiment were based. "I was well pleased to see a little army of soldiers there, and not a few of their officers. Nor did they behave as unconcerned hearers, but like men that really desired to save their souls."<sup>7</sup> It seems quite likely therefore that Ince met, and was influenced by, Wesley during his years in the army. Then, when he was posted to Gibraltar, he began the first Methodist Society there.

Ince's letter to Wesley refers to persecution and this was to be a continuing and deepening problem as is evident from the next reference to the Methodist Society which is found in Fortress Orders for 3 June 1769. These state: "Whereas divers soldiers and inhabitants assemble themselves every evening to prayer it's the Governor's Order that no person

whatever presume to molest them nor to go into their meeting to behave indecently there". This is usually quoted as the Governor's "positive" Order but the word positive does not appear in the original. However, it seems that the Governor, Lieutenant General the Honourable Edward Cornwallis, was sympathetic to the cause and was prepared to support the Methodists against their persecutors.

Others soon began to help Ince with his task. Jasper Winscom, a local preacher who founded a Methodist Society in Winchester, often met with soldiers in that city. In 1769 one of the regiments from Winchester, containing several Methodists, was ordered to Gibraltar. One of the soldiers wrote to Winscom on 23 November 1769 giving further details of the Gibraltar Society.<sup>8</sup> The letter was to provide the last information for some years.

We have between thirty and forty joined in the Society from the different regiments, besides some townfolk and one officer. Our proceedings are as follows. We have preaching every night and morning. We have three nights set apart for Class-Meeting after the sermon, and on the Sabbath day, at eight in the morning, two in the afternoon, and six in the evening; and for our speakers we have Henry Ince of the II<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, Henry Hall of the Royal Scots, and Brother Morton, under whom the work seems to prosper.

Meanwhile, Spain had not given up her claim to the Rock but, despite further wars in Europe, intrigue and negotiation, Gibraltar had remained British. Protestants were encouraged to settle there and the Governors, particularly Sir Humphrey Bland, Governor from 1749-1754, established an administration and order in Gibraltar that enabled the diverse population to live in relative peace with one another.

In 1761 William Green was appointed as Senior Engineer, and in 1769 he returned to England to seek permission for the implementation of his plans for strengthening Gibraltar's defences. This work had been continuing but had been carried out by civilian workers who had little regard for discipline and the work had progressed slowly. Green suggested that the problem could be solved by forming a company of military artificers who would work

under military authority and discipline. In 1772 he was given permission to do this and the Soldier Artificer Company was formed. Its members were recruited from regiments already in Gibraltar. The Company was first mustered on 30 June 1772 and in the list of non-commissioned officers was Sergeant Henry Ince whose occupation was given as miner.<sup>9</sup> In 1773 the foundation stone of the King's Bastion was laid and extensive work on this and other fortifications was carried out. The company was augmented in 1774 and 1776.

In June 1779 Spain once again declared war against Britain and immediately turned her attention to Gibraltar. At this time there was relatively free communication between Gibraltar and Spain. Many officers rode out into the countryside and sometimes families stayed in nearby villages which were thought to be more healthy. Suddenly communications were cut off and all British citizens were sent back to Gibraltar. Those who could not return within a day had to attempt to do so via Portugal. Thus began the fourteenth siege, later to be known as the Great Siege because it was the longest and most determined of them all.

It was slow to start, but by October 1779 there were over fourteen thousand troops gathered on the isthmus, and gradually the firing on both sides increased in intensity. The Governor, George Elliott, later to become Lord Heathfield of Gibraltar, led the British defence. Early on the streets were ploughed up and steeples and other landmarks pulled down to try and limit the effectiveness of the enemy's bombardment. The main problem, however, was food. The population consisted of four thousand British officers and men, one thousand and three hundred Hanoverians, one thousand five hundred wives and children and some two thousand other civilians. People were encouraged to leave but as the blockade tightened this became almost impossible and shortages became even greater. The gardens of the Garrison were situated on the isthmus and soon came under threat. Everyone was encouraged to grow whatever they could wherever they could. Relief came in 1780 with the arrival of Admiral George Rodney, in April 1781 through Admiral Darby and in October 1782 through Admiral Howe, but food was very scarce throughout the siege and this contributed to the scale of sickness including scurvy. The bombardment continued

from land and from gunboats at sea. In May 1781 Drinkwater reported that "the buildings in town, at this time, exhibited a most dreadful picture of the effects of so animated a bombardment. Scarce a house, north of the Grand Parade, was tenatable; all of them were deserted. Some few, near South-port, continued to be inhabited by soldiers' families, but in general the floors and roofs were destroyed, and the bare shell only was left standing."<sup>10</sup> The Church of St. Mary the Crowned which, along with other churches, had been used for storage had been severely damaged by fire and the Convent had also been hit.

In November 1781 a successful sortie into enemy lines, of two thousand and six hundred officers and men, took place. The enemy's guns were spiked and magazines blown up. Some of the Artificer Company were involved but whether Henry Ince was one of them is not known. However, in May 1782, the Governor along with Green, the chief engineer, was inspecting some of the defences and is reported to have offered a thousand dollars to anyone who could suggest a way of getting guns to bear on the enemy from a position called the notch. It was Ince, now Sergeant-Major, who suggested tunnelling through the Rock. It is not clear if he got the reward, but he was certainly given the job of overseeing the work, which began immediately. When a hole was blown out to provide ventilation for the miners it was realised that this too would provide a gun emplacement. Spilsbury reported his progress. On 11 May 1783 he wrote: "Ince's gallery has 10 embrasures and an air hole cut, and is about 600 and odd feet long; the 9th chamber or cave is large enough for a guard room, has 2 doors, and is tolerably dry". By 3 June "Ince's gallery got to within a few yards of the notch, and a gallery is now making to it on the outside from the furthest embrasure".<sup>11</sup> These Galleries still exist and are now a tourist attraction.

The siege continued, and in September 1782 the Spanish used floating batteries to launch an all-out attack. However, Gibraltar's defences held and the use of red hot shot proved very effective despite the fact that the Spanish had designed the batteries to be fire proof. After this hostilities gradually declined in intensity and, with the relief provided by Howe, it became clear that the siege was drawing to an end. At the beginning of February 1783 the Duke de Crillon, Commander of the Spanish forces, informed Elliott that peace was being

negotiated between Britain and Spain. The two met and toured each other's defences, including Ince's Galleries, which astonished and impressed the Duke.

The siege had lasted three years, seven months and twelve days. Drinkwater gives other interesting statistics.<sup>12</sup> 333 people were killed or died of wounds and 138 were disabled by wounds. 536 died of sickness, not including those who died of scurvy in 1779 and 1780. So, sickness killed far more people than the bombardment. 181 people were discharged with incurable complaints and 43 soldiers deserted. There were many desertions from the Spanish side also. The town was largely reduced to ruins.

But what of Henry Ince? Connolly said of him, "He was active, prompt and persevering, very short in stature, but wiry and hardy in constitution; was greatly esteemed by his officers, and frequently the subject of commendation from the highest authorities at Gibraltar."<sup>13</sup> He received special pay and privileges as a result of the high esteem in which he was held. Half way up the Rock are the ruins of a property called Ince's Farm. A nearby plaque states: "After the end of the Great Siege in 1783 a farm at this point was given to Sergeant Major Ince in recognition of his idea of blasting galleries to allow the defenders to fire down upon the enemy's advanced works. Ince's Galleries helped greatly towards the successful defence of the fortress." After receiving the farm, Methodist tradition as stated in *Upon this Rock* says that Henry Ince "gave his old home in Prince Edward's Road as the first regular meeting place for the Methodist Society in Gibraltar, which he had helped to found."<sup>14</sup> This belief is referred to on plaques at the site on Prince Edward's Road and in the present church, but a closer examination of the evidence casts doubt on this.

Firstly, when Ince wrote to Wesley he says he took a room to meet in and does not appear to have used his own home. As will be shown, this was a practice that continued. Secondly, no evidence can be found to link him with the Prince Edward's Road site. Virtually all the property in Gibraltar belonged to the Crown and was leased out in plots which were given a number on the general plan of the town. The site on Prince Edward's Road was numbered 728. Most of the records relating to land transactions are now held at

Land Property Services. Details in the file for plot 728 show that the original lease was granted for 41 years on 1 January 1788 by General O'Hara, the Governor, to an Alexander Adams.<sup>15</sup> There is no mention of Henry Ince at this time nor in connection with later transactions. In addition on 21 June 1784 Henry Ince bought a property on the east side of Main Street.<sup>16</sup> It was probably in a ruinous condition after the siege but it seems a little unlikely that Ince would have bought it if he already had a property on Prince Edward's Road, and the farm unless, of course, he bought it as an investment.

Finally, it seems that even those who wrote the plaque near Ince's Farm were not aware of all the circumstances surrounding its grant and it may well be that Ince had been living here for some time. The late J.W.V. Cumming, former archivist in Gibraltar, was very interested in Ince and had done some considerable, but unpublished, research. Amongst his papers, now in the possession of his family, is a copy of the original grant of Ince's Farm made by General Elliott on the first day of January 1787, which can also be found in the Government archives.<sup>17</sup> This states:

Whereas Henry Ince Sergeant Major in the Royal Military Artificer Company having at his own expense, during the late blockade and with my consent and permission for the improvement and benefit of the place, enclosed and cultivated a certain extent of ground situated on the center of the Hill above the town.....which ground the said Henry Ince hath partly planted with trees, erected some buildings thereon and otherwise improved and converted the same into kitchen garden for raising greens and other esculent plants and roots for market, that have ever since proved to be of great utility to the Garrison in General. Wherefor for the encouragement of so usefull an undertaking and the increase of vegetables, roots and fruits for the benefit and consumption of the Troops and Community, as well as the increase of the King's Revenue, I do, by virtue of the power and authority to me given by His Majesty hereby let and grant the said ground and appurtenances unto the same Henry Ince, .... for the space and term of forty one years.

A rent of twelve reals a month was charged and certain conditions laid down. These included the completion of a fence around the property and the planting of as many lemon trees as possible. Ince was also instructed to keep a small nursery of useful trees for planting on the farm or elsewhere. This adds to the picture Connolly gave of Ince and

shows him to have been a resourceful and energetic man. There is no mention of the farm being given as a reward for his tunnelling, and it is possible that Ince had actually lived on the farm for some time as he had started cultivating the land during the Great Siege. In any event he was granted the farm before the first grant of the site on Prince Edward's Road was made. It does, therefore, seem very unlikely that the old Methodist tradition is correct.

The farm would have been a safer place for religious meetings, being away from the town and possible persecution. It would also have been safer during the Great Siege for, by this time, Ince was a family man, though the date of his marriage is not known. As Methodists were not yet authorised to perform baptisms or marriages, such ceremonies would have been carried out at the King's Chapel. The marriage registers there do not start until 1771 and Ince was married by then. He could have married in Gibraltar between 1768, when he arrived, and 1771 or, as he was over thirty when he was posted to Gibraltar, it is perfectly possible that he came with a wife and even a family. The baptismal registers began in 1769, and on 5th February 1771 there is a record of the baptism of Joseph Ince, son of Henry Ince of the Artificer Company. There is no mother's name given, in common with the other entries at this time. Cumming found evidence that on 2 January 1782, during the Great Siege, Mrs. Ince and a child left for England on the Mercury transport ship. There is no other information as to her future whereabouts and it is not until August 1788 that another baptism is recorded. This was when Robert Ince was baptised and his mother's name was given as Jane. In October 1792 Henry Ince was baptised and this time the mother's name was given as Joanna, though perhaps it is possible that the names do refer to the same person. There were clearly other children, for Thomas and Eliza Ince had three daughters baptised at the King's Chapel between 1795 and 1803. It is this son, Thomas, whom Connolly refers to as Ince's "only son, a clerk in the Commissariat department at Gibraltar."<sup>18</sup> He died in 1804. There was also a son William in the 44th Regiment whose wife Ann had a son Charles in 1800. William and Jemima Ince had a son John in 1845. There were daughters too, for Connolly refers to Ince's "eldest daughter" Augusta who was married to Lieutenant Richard Stapleton of the 60th rifles in Gibraltar on 27 July 1815. There are no records in Gibraltar of other daughters. However, Cumming obtained a copy

of Ince's will written on 8 August 1807 and the children mentioned in it are Joseph, William Boyd, Robert, Harriet, Henry and George. He refers to his wife as Fanny, so it seems likely that Ince had married at least twice though there is no record of this in Gibraltar. However, it may well be that neither the marriage nor the baptismal records are complete.

In 1791 Ince was discharged from the Artificer Company but continued as Overseer of the works. In February 1796 he was commissioned as an Ensign in the Royal Garrison Battalion and Cumming discovered that in March 1801 he was posted to the Channel Islands. However, the Governor intervened to prevent this move and he stayed in Gibraltar, being promoted to Lieutenant in March 1801. In 1802 the regiment was disbanded. On 1 January 1803 the lease on Ince's Farm was renewed for another sixty six years "on account of his former and meritorious services".<sup>19</sup> Ince had actually lost the original grant which may explain why the lease was renewed early. Some time afterwards Ince left Gibraltar "having worn himself out in the service of the fortress" and retired to Devon.<sup>20</sup> It is not clear why he decided to leave especially when it involved leaving family members behind. As already noted, he died at Gittisham on 9 October 1808 and was buried in the churchyard there on October 14. On his gravestone are the words, "In memory of Lieutenant Henry Ince, late of the Royal Garrison Battalion Gibraltar, the works of which fortress be a lasting testimony to his skill, industry and zeal". The stone was later renovated by the Institution of Royal Engineers who added the sentence, "His principal service was in the Soldier Artificer Company, the first unit of the Corps of Royal Engineers".<sup>21</sup>

After the end of the Great Siege further discussions took place about the future ownership of Gibraltar. Various territories were used as bargaining counters, but in the end Gibraltar remained British. Land communications with Spain stayed closed, but in 1789 the French Revolution broke out and in 1793 Britain and Spain united in war against France. Land communications re-opened at Gibraltar but in 1796 Spain made peace with France. Britain continued to fight until the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815. Life in Gibraltar, meanwhile, was being disrupted by indiscipline and drunkenness amongst the troops. By 1798 there were ninety taverns on the Rock, which provided the Governor with a handsome

source of income. Repairs to property damaged in the siege had been made, trade had improved and many people, including merchants, had returned to Gibraltar. They were not happy with the behaviour of the soldiers and began to consider the advantages of being under Spanish rule. Plans were made to achieve this but the plot was discovered and over a thousand civilians were expelled from the Rock as a result. After General O'Hara died, Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, was appointed as Governor and arrived early in 1802. He had been instructed to deal with some of the problems amongst the soldiers. He immediately brought in a series of strict regulations to discipline the army and closed fifty of the taverns, limiting access to the others. There were mixed feelings about this amongst the population depending on where interests lay but in December 1802 the soldiers rebelled. Their plot was not successful and several of the leaders were court-martialled. Some were shot and the others transported. Kent was recalled to England and left in May 1803. He was not allowed a Court of Inquiry but did retain his title and salary as Gibraltar's Governor until his death seventeen years later. Until then Gibraltar was ruled by a series of Lieutenant Governors, the first of whom was General Sir Thomas Trigge. The other powerful figure of the time was Major-General Charles Barnett, who had himself briefly been the Lieutenant Governor before the appointment of the Duke of Kent.

It is against this background that the next developments in the story of Methodism in Gibraltar unfold. In 1787 Andrew Armour, a young man of just eighteen years, arrived in Gibraltar with his regiment. He was born in Glasgow in 1769 and in 1786 enlisted in the army and, while serving in Ireland, he attended a Methodist meeting and then joined the Wesleyan Society. The following year he was sent to Gibraltar. In Gibraltar he and another soldier met together to read the Bible and talk about spiritual matters. Armour's faith deepened and some feel it was here in Gibraltar and not in Ireland that he was actually converted. He and his friend were eventually joined by others:

.... and a Methodist Class-meeting was formed in which the members told one another of their spiritual experiences. Armour was the 'Leader' of this meeting. They met in a small place near the Governor's house, and for a time refrained from singing, lest they should alarm or disturb others. More and more soldiers joined the Class, and Armour became a Local Preacher. They

now began to sing and soon got talked about, till Armour was summoned to Government House to explain the strange doings. His explanation was accepted, and the meetings were formally sanctioned.<sup>22</sup>

It is not clear from this account exactly when these developments took place. However, more information is given in a long letter written in November 1801 by a soldier, living in Edinburgh but recently returned from Gibraltar, which seems to refer to the same events and places them in 1792.

In March 1792, the 46th, 51st and 61st regiments arrived at Gibraltar from Ireland. In them there were ten or eleven persons who feared God, one of whom preached, and two exhorted. They first met in a private room, not knowing they would be permitted to meet in public. But, when they began to sing, people flocked about the door, entreating to get in; to which they consented. Fearing, however, that they might incur the displeasure of the Governor, [Lieutenant General Sir Robert Boyd] they petitioned him for permission to assemble together to worship God. Hearing they belonged to the Methodist connection, he readily consented, hoping they would not neglect their duty as soldiers. Immediately after this, a large room was taken; but it could not contain one half of the people; another, about twice as large, was immediately taken at one guinea per month. Many now began to be concerned about the salvation of their souls; and some of them did not rest until they knew, in their experience, that Christ had power on earth to forgive sins. Our number soon increased to about fifty. Before the war broke out in 1793, our number was one hundred and twenty. I believe about fifty of these were truly converted to God; and some of them left a testimony of the truth of it to the world, in a short time after, when they expired, wallowing in their own gore.

All this time, however, the enemy was not idle; for he stirred up much opposition from every quarter. Two or three gentlemen importuned the governor to put a stop to our meetings; but the Lord, in whose hands are the hearts of all men, soon overthrew their counsel. General O'Hara [Governor from December 1795] is said to have replied, 'Let them alone; I wish there were twenty for one of them, and we should have fewer court-martials in the garrison than we have'. Nevertheless, the persecution did not cease; for we were reproached on every hand, and all manner of evil spoken against us falsely. This had one good effect; for such as did not receive the seed into good ground, soon withered away; but the hands of the faithful were strengthened, and their hearts united by the love of God, and we frequently found the Lord present in our little assemblies, particularly at our love-feasts; these indeed often proved times of refreshing. Our Society seemed now well settled; but the war soon occasioned the removal of the troops, some to the West Indies, others to Toulon, and Corsica, by which in about twelve months, our numbers reduced to twenty, yet we continued to meet regularly, there being always some to give a word of exhortation. In August 1796, the

28th regiment arrived from England; among whom there were some who preached. At the same time there came also a young officer, who preached. The novelty of an officer preaching, drew many to hear the Word. The Lord did not let his word return void; for to a number it was, I trust, the power of God to salvation. Our Society increased, the house was far too small for the congregation, and we then took a larger room; but with this revival the enemy stirred up fresh persecution. The commanding officer of a regiment gave out an order, that no man belonging to his regiment was to attend the Methodist meetings, upon pain of being punished for disobedience of orders. Application was made in vain to have the order done away; however, the regiment was soon ordered for England, as was also the young officer mentioned above. But there being some left to speak in the name of Christ, their labour was not in vain; for the number of those continued to increase who sought redemption in the blood of Christ. It was then thought advisable to build a chapel, as we were at this time paying above two guineas per month. The chapel was accordingly built without delay, the expense of which amounted to upwards of £120 sterling. Our brethren were so desirous of the prosperity of Zion, that each gave freely of what the Lord had blessed him with; and when the house was finished, there was not a farthing of debt on it. This was a great encouragement to us. Our number at this time was about fifty, and our congregation commonly between two and three hundred.

We were but a short time settled in our new chapel when the regiments, of which our Society chiefly consisted, were ordered on the expedition to Minorca; and shortly after this, a few more to Malta and Egypt. Thus we were again reduced to about fourteen or fifteen. Yet, blessed be God, there has always been a few to keep open house for the worship of God; and though the enemies of the Cross of Christ have often strove to overturn the work, we always found, that no weapon formed against us did prosper; and that they who were for us, were more than all that could be against us.

When I left them in June last, [1801] our number was about thirty five, and our congregations frequently about two hundred. There was then a young man, a school-master, that preached and another a clerk, that exhorted. On the Sabbath and Thursdays there is preaching; and on the other nights there are exhortations or prayer-meetings. And that every thing may be done decently and in order, we have a committee, consisting of eleven members, one of whom is the leader, and another the steward. These meet as often as occasion may require, to consider the best methods of conducting both the spiritual and temporal affairs of the Society. The steward reads over the accounts and the resolutions of the committee once a month to the Society. Our leader is set apart to his office by solemn prayer, and he also administers the Lord's Supper to the Society once a month. Farther, no one is admitted a member amongst us till he has been two months on trial (unless we knew that he has been serious before;) then, if there be no objection to him, he is admitted with public prayer. This we think a prudent way to prevent reproach from being brought on the cause of God by unworthy members. We were led to this from having suffered much from this quarter in times past. If any amongst us walk disorderly, we admonish him, and bear with him for a season; but if he still continue to walk disorderly, and contrary to

the Gospel, we then at a public meeting, declare him to be no more of us.<sup>23</sup>

In a second letter, the writer described other aspects of the work which he had forgotten to mention in his first letter. Contact had been made with ships in the Bay, including the *Terpsichore* frigate, the *Hector* and the *Defence*. Sometimes the Society sent a preacher to preach on board ship and to distribute pamphlets, a method of evangelisation that was to be used again and again in the coming years. Sometimes crew members attended the meetings at the chapel and, on occasion, they contributed financially to the work of the Society. A small library had been set up consisting of about one hundred and fifty books and the writer felt that many owed to this library "a great deal of their knowledge in the ways of God."<sup>24</sup> Finally, the writer also mentioned how the work of the Society had not just been limited to Gibraltar. As the soldiers left, they took the message with them, and he had heard of Societies being formed in Minorca and Malta, as a result. This was the hope later of the Methodist authorities in London and one of their reasons for supporting the work in Gibraltar, despite the ever fluctuating membership.

Clearly, this was a well organised Society, adhering to many of the rules and principles developed in British Methodism. However, the events described occurred over twenty two years after the beginnings of 1769 and the account does seem to describe a new work and not a continuation of a Society already in existence. Findlay and Holdsworth in their *History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society* regard this as the start of Methodism in Gibraltar and do not refer to the earlier beginnings of 1769.<sup>25</sup> In 1814 Armour himself refers, in a letter, to his time in Gibraltar saying, "I was made instrumental in establishing a society, which I am happy to understand remains till this day".<sup>26</sup> This certainly sounds like a completely new venture, so what had happened to Ince's initiative? It is odd that he is not mentioned or referred to in this account or in subsequent events as he was so well known in Gibraltar. One can only speculate - did the continuing persecution prove overwhelming for a time? Did Henry Ince lose his faith or perhaps transfer his loyalties to the Established Church at the King's Chapel where some of his children were baptised? No evidence for an answer can be found, but it is known that the later work did continue from this time until

the present day.

Findlay and Holdsworth report that it was Armour who appeared before the Governor to argue the Methodist case and no doubt he was one of the leaders 'set apart to his office' mentioned in the letter. He left Gibraltar in 1798 and was posted to Madras where he married and continued his Methodist witness along with his wife. In 1800 he was sent to Colombo as an interpreter in the Supreme Court and was said to speak thirteen languages. His wife died there and he married twice more. After obtaining his discharge from the army, he worked as the principal of a government educational establishment in Colombo. In the absence of other Methodists he worshipped with the Anglican community, and in 1812 was licensed to preach in Portuguese and Sinhalese, later working also on translating the Bible into the latter language. He warmly welcomed the Methodist missionaries when they arrived in 1814 and was described as an assistant missionary himself in the *Conference Minutes* of 1816 and 1817. However, later he strengthened his links with the Anglican Church, and in 1821 was ordained deacon. He became a priest in 1825 and died in 1828.

The government clerk and the schoolmaster who were mentioned in the letter, but remained unnamed, were Robert Brand and John Byrn. They were leaders of the Society for some time. The persecution continued, initiated by the Garrison Chaplain, Rev. Mr. Wetherell, and Rev. Mr. Hughes, Chaplain to the Governor, now the Duke of Kent. They threatened to suppress the Methodist meetings, largely, it seems, because of their practice of administering the sacrament without an ordained minister. In October 1802 the Methodists, hearing that they had been represented to the Governor as "disaffected persons" holding "improper meetings", sent a memorial to the Governor. They wished to put the record straight and assured the Governor of their loyalty to King and country. They referred to the previous memorial sent to Sir Robert Boyd, the Governor in 1792, in which they had asked leave for freedom to worship God in their own way, which had been granted. Since then, not wishing to take the sacrament from a minister of the Established Church, they had chosen a person to administer it, but only to their own members, which they claimed was the practice in Great Britain, Ireland and His Majesty's Plantations. They asked for

permission to continue. The memorial was signed by John Byrn, Robert Brand and Michael Caulfield, who was to be a leader of the Society for many years to come.<sup>27</sup>

The outrage of the Garrison Chaplains at the Methodist practice of administering the Lord's Supper was understandable. The view of the Established Church was that only an ordained priest was authorised to do this and a similar controversy had, in fact, also taken place in Great Britain. The early Methodist Societies were not intended to be separate from the Church of England. They were formed as a means of gathering people together for preaching, prayer and Bible study and members of the Societies were formed into classes to study and grow in faith together. The chapels were built as meeting and preaching houses, but it was not intended that any of these activities should take place at the same time as church services. Methodists were expected to attend services at their local parish church and to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in them. The first exception to this occurred in America. Following a plea for help in 1769 two men were sent to America. Others followed who were controversially ordained by Wesley and authorised to baptise and administer the Lord's Supper, largely because there was no one else to do this in large parts of America. Later an exception was also made in Scotland when Methodists were denied the sacrament at many local churches.

However, as time went by, more and more Societies in England requested that their own preachers be allowed to administer the Lord's Supper. Matters came to a head after Wesley's death in 1791. At the annual Conference of Methodist preachers in 1793 in Leeds it was agreed that the sacrament would not normally be administered throughout the Methodist Connexion, but exceptions could be made in those places "where the whole Society is unanimous for it, and *will not be contented without it*".<sup>28</sup> The issue continued to be debated and in 1795 the annual Conference began with a day of prayer and fasting in the hope of avoiding division. The result was the drawing up of the Plan of Pacification which laid down various regulations for the administration of the Lord's Supper. These included the rule that only those authorised by Conference could administer it. During the next few years more and more Societies became involved in the administration of the sacrament to

their own members and unfortunately some divisions did eventually occur. By this time Methodism was organised into local Societies, grouped together into circuits and districts. Continuing the tradition of Wesley's ministry, itinerant travelling preachers, who served no more than two years in any appointment, were accepted on trial, served a probationary period and were then received into full connexion. It was from this group of men that those authorised to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper were chosen. As the Society in Gibraltar had no such preacher appointed to them, it is possible that the Methodist authorities in England would not themselves have been happy with their practice, although the Society was clearly well disciplined and concerned to do things properly. However, it was still a controversial issue both within Methodism and between it and the Church of England.

A reply to the memorial was sent the following day, stating that the Governor did not want to interfere with their form of worship, or privileges previously granted, as long as they continued "to merit the same, by a correct and faithful adherence to the true spirit and tenets of the Christian religion." The final sentence stated that the Governor did not wish that their "meetings should be so much frequented by the military part of this garrison".<sup>29</sup> Although this reply was somewhat guarded, the memorialists were greatly encouraged by it. They were, at least, to be allowed to continue their worship in their own way. However, Wetherell was far from satisfied and said so to John Byrn in no uncertain terms. So, Robert Brand and Michael Caulfield wrote to him reporting on the outcome of their memorial to the Governor and inviting him, if he was of a different opinion, to write to them, so that they could lay the matter again before the Governor. Wetherell did not reply to this letter! He did, however, continue his verbal threats.

In June 1803, Robert Brand wrote to a friend in England and described what happened next.<sup>30</sup> After receiving the letter from the Governor, the work prospered and the chapel "could not contain all that attended". About thirty members of the Queen's regiment joined the Society despite a "bitter persecution". But almost as soon as the Duke of Kent had left Gibraltar, in May 1803, the persecution increased and, it seems, that only the support of the

Governors had kept it at bay. On 26 May 1803 Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay, the commanding officer of the Queen's Regiment, issued the following regimental order:

It having been observed, that a great number of the men are constantly attending the Methodist Meetings, and have induced the youngest boys of the regiment to do the same, Lieutenant-Colonel Ramsay is determined to put a stop to it; it will therefore be considered as a standing order of the regiment, that no man will ever attempt to preach, or attend the Methodist Meetings, or induce others to do the same, under pain of being tried for disobedience of orders, unless a particular permit is granted by the Commanding Officer.

On 29 May Major-General Barnett summoned Byrn to his office and told him he was not to hold any more meetings, threatening him with prison and expulsion from the town if he did. On hearing this, Robert Brand with three friends went the same day to see Barnett, hoping he would change his mind. Brand described him as showing "an overbearing tyrannical spirit which refuses to see reason", and he would not listen to anything they had to say. So, a memorial was then sent to Sir Thomas Trigge giving the history of the dispute, and asking for permission to meet for worship. This was signed by Thomas Davis, who was to be a leader of the Society for many years, George Daniels, John Byrn, Robert Brand, Michael Caulfield and John Daniels. The answer came, dated 3 June. No objection was made to the townsfolk meeting for worship, but he would not allow "any assembly or association, of which the soldiers of the garrison, under his command, are to form a part. Mr. Robert Brand's manner of speaking to Major-General Barnett is a strong reason against it, in addition to many others." He did not take into account Barnett's manner of speaking to Brand!

Soldiers of various regiments therefore began to meet at the house of a man called Ballantine, but Colonel Ramsay issued a verbal order to his regiment forbidding any three Methodists from walking or talking together. Some of them wrote to him to protest against this order and he sent for them, denying that he had made the order. When they asked for permission to meet together to read the Bible and pray he refused but then said they could meet where they liked, but if Mr. Byrn preached to them he would be sent to prison. They

therefore joined the others at Ballantine's house and met there for five nights. On the sixth night, as they left, five of them were arrested. They were court-martialled the following day, 11 June 1803, charged with "unsoldier-like conduct, in attending a Methodist Meeting, contrary to regimental orders". Captain Parker presided and the other members were Lieutenants Scott, Rutter and Smith plus Ensign Johnston. The prisoners were Corporals James Lamb and Richard Russell and Privates James Hampton, John Reeves and John Fluccard, one of whom was only fourteen years old. Sergeant-Major Wright, who had arrested the men, informed the meeting what had happened and how, when he had asked James Hampton what he had been doing, he had answered that he had been to meeting, which was hardly the action of a man with something to hide. The prisoners all acknowledged this, saying that they had received the Colonel's verbal permission. He denied giving this and, according to Robert Brand, any further attempts by the prisoners to speak in their defence were halted by the words "Hold your tongues, we don't want you to preach to us." The men were all found guilty and sentenced to five hundred lashes apiece with the two Corporals being reduced to the ranks also.

James Lamb and Richard Russell were reduced to the ranks and each received two hundred lashes that evening. The rest of the sentences were suspended but were to be carried out if they were found going to another religious meeting. This hardly sounds like a fair trial and Robert Brand's great distress at what had happened comes over strongly in his account of events. In addition, Colonel Ramsay was reported to have gone to the guardhouse before the trial where he told the corporals that "he certainly would flog them". There is no account of this affair in the *Gibraltar Chronicle*.

Information concerning these events reached England and on 9 November 1803 Joseph Butterworth, Secretary of the Methodist General Committee, wrote to the Rt. Hon. Charles Bragge, Secretary at War, "to submit a remonstrance upon some late proceedings, which have infringed upon the liberty of conscience".<sup>31</sup> This long letter described the events at Gibraltar and went on to suggest that a statement be printed in the *London Gazette* or in orders to the Army. The letter even suggested a form of words for this which included the

words "the Secretary at War deems it proper to give this public notice, that the free and undisturbed exercise of religious worship is allowed and sanctioned by the laws of the British Empire". An acknowledgement of the letter was sent on 11 November indicating that the matter had been referred to his Royal Highness, the Commander in Chief. There appears, however, to have been no further correspondence. The Government was, of course, very much involved in the war against the French and no doubt affairs in Gibraltar were not felt to be of national significance. It is also true to say that Methodist missionary affairs were not yet well organised and this too may have made a difference to their ability to pursue the matter.

Wesley's famous words, "I look upon all the world as my parish" are often quoted and seen as an indication of Wesley's desire to evangelise the world. However, as Taggart points out, these words were actually said in the context of a challenge to Wesley for conducting services in parishes without permission.<sup>32</sup> In response to this criticism Wesley declared that he would preach "the glad tidings of salvation" wherever he was, to all who were willing to hear as he regarded the whole world as his parish. In fact, he devoted himself almost entirely to the work in Great Britain and Ireland, and it was Dr. Thomas Coke who developed the missionary work.

Coke was born in Brecon in October 1747. He was educated in Brecon and at Oxford and eventually became curate of South Petherton in Somerset. He was ordained deacon in 1770 and priest in 1772. He met, and was influenced by, a number of Methodists before he finally met Wesley himself in August 1776. Shortly after this he was forced to leave his parish and he then joined the Methodists. His name first appears in the Minutes of Conference of 1778. From the beginning of his association with the Methodists, Coke worked closely with Wesley himself as his assistant, and Wesley acknowledged his evangelical zeal by commissioning him to "go out, and preach the Gospel to all the world."<sup>33</sup>

There are, however, different opinions about when Methodist missionary work first began,

with some suggesting 1769 when two preachers were sent to America. However, they went in response to a plea from fellow Methodists already there and so the work was not a completely new one. Others feel the work started even earlier as a result of individual conversions and initiatives such as that of Henry Ince and notably Nathaniel Gilbert who formed the earliest Methodist Society overseas in 1760 in Antigua. Others feel it was later still, after Coke's first initiatives, when affairs became more centrally organised from London.

Around the beginning of 1784 Coke produced a *Plan of the Society for the Establishment of Missions among the Heathens*.<sup>34</sup> Subscribers were sought who, at a public meeting, would have the power to form a committee and train missionaries for service. Birtwhistle suggests that Wesley put a stop to this as such a meeting does not appear to have taken place.<sup>35</sup> Instead, in September of the same year, Wesley ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey as deacons and elders, and set apart Coke as Superintendent of the Missions in America. All three left for America later that same month. Coke returned to England in 1785 to face considerable opposition from those critical of the ordinations. Some believed Coke had influenced Wesley to take this action, which many thought would lead to separation from the Church of England.

In 1786 Coke wrote *An Address to the Pious and Benevolent proposing an Annual Subscription for the support of Missionaries etc.* On this occasion Wesley supported him and approved his plan. Coke himself had entertained hopes for India but agreed to concentrate on four areas only at first - Scotland, the Channel Islands, the West Indies and British North America including Newfoundland. He personally visited Scotland and the Channel Islands and later in 1786 he left with three others on a ship bound for Nova Scotia, but severe weather forced the captain to divert to the West Indies instead. This gave Coke an opportunity to investigate the prospects there and he stayed until February 1787 when he sailed for America. As Wesley still needed him in England, Coke was unable to spend all his time abroad and so he developed the routine of going to America for a few months every two years to visit and preach to Societies there, attend Conferences whenever

possible and liaise with Francis Asbury, joint superintendent of the work. In all he visited America nine times and several times went to the West Indies too, where the work developed despite considerable persecution. This gave Coke personal experience of missionary life and some of the journeys he undertook were both difficult and dangerous. In 1790 and 1791 committees were formed for the management of West Indian affairs but neither continued. Coke was, at this time, variously described by Conference as its delegate, agent, representative and Superintendent of Missions.

When Wesley died in 1791, Coke was in America. On hearing the news he hurried back to England and did not return to America and the West Indies for another eighteen months. The years following Wesley's death were somewhat turbulent and Coke was very much involved with British Methodism at this time. He served as Secretary of the Conference for a number of years and as President in both 1797 and 1805. He was also often appointed as President of the Irish Conference. Yet, despite these commitments, Coke still continued to oversee all the missionary work. He also spent considerable time and effort over the years in fund-raising, willingly donating much of his personal money too. It was always hard to raise the resources to finance the existing work let alone expand it, which Coke was always keen to do.

At the Conference of 1798, held at Bristol, the Chairmen of the Districts were asked to enquire if any of the travelling or local preachers were willing to go to Nova-Scotia, Gibraltar or the West Indies. They were asked to report to the Conference the following year. There was, however, no mention of Gibraltar at the Conference of 1799 but a general collection was ordered for the work in the West Indies. Further collections were ordered the following year at the London Conference. These minutes also stated that, "Dr. Coke is appointed President of the Irish Conference next year; and is authorised to send a Missionary to Gibraltar, and another to Madras" but it seems that once again no one could be found for Gibraltar and neither was anyone sent to Madras.<sup>36</sup>

In 1804 Conference appointed a Committee of Finance and Advice consisting of all the

London preachers with Dr. Coke as President. Since the preachers changed from time to time, and Dr. Coke was often away, it was hard for the committee to be efficient. In addition some tension was bound to occur because Coke was used to dealing with missionary affairs on his own. He was given the power of making the final decision but nevertheless at times found it irksome to have to go through the Committee. It was before this committee that "all letters and communications whatever from the Missionaries shall be laid from time to time, and their advice taken upon the same."<sup>37</sup> It was, therefore, to this committee, headed by Dr. Coke, that communications came from Gibraltar in the autumn of 1804 and afterwards.

Before this though, in February 1804, Brand wrote another letter describing the state of the Society. There had been no further trouble but they were still obliged to turn away the soldiers from the chapel. Some were meeting at a friend's house and a few more had joined them. The meetings were not known to the authorities. A few of the inhabitants had attended the chapel but Brand felt there was little prospect of achieving much amongst them. He went on to say, "You will judge what our feelings are, in being obliged to turn away our friends from the means of grace, and in being prevented from preaching to the only people who are willing to hear."<sup>38</sup> Byrn was still under the threat of imprisonment and banishment if he preached to the soldiers and they felt nothing would change while General Barnett remained in Gibraltar.

In view of these continuing difficulties, a minister was once again sought for Gibraltar. The Rev. James McMullen, from Ireland, volunteered his services. It is likely that Dr. Coke, through his connections with Ireland, had recruited him but his reasons for going are not known. His name first appears in the Minutes of Conference of 1788 when he was accepted on trial as a travelling preacher. He was received into full connexion in 1792 and by 1804 he had had twelve different appointments in Ireland and had served as Chairman of the District in Dublin in 1797 and Cork in 1798. He sailed for Gibraltar in August 1804 with his wife Susanna and their little daughter Ann.

## CHAPTER 2 MINISTERIAL OVERSIGHT - The Building of Providence Chapel (1804 -1811)

After all the persecution and the long wait for a minister, it must have been with considerable hope and expectation that the beleaguered Society in Gibraltar awaited the arrival of James and Susanna McMullen. They had a difficult and dangerous voyage out, experiencing a severe storm which forced their ship to take shelter in a bay off the African shore. They survived the storm and arrived in Gibraltar on Sunday 17 September, in some relief, believing that all danger was past. However, on landing, they discovered Gibraltar to be in the grip of a yellow fever epidemic, thought to have been brought to the Rock from Málaga. The fever had broken out in August in a tenement near the Garrison Library but by September it had spread throughout the town. McMullen described events in a letter to Dr. Coke dated 1 October 1804:

The disorder ran through the garrison like an armed man, whose footsteps are marked with certain death. The streets were cleansed, the garrison guns were fired again and again; fires, by the Governor's orders, were lighted in the streets and lanes: and all this to purify the air. The garrison was drained of vinegar, the dock-yard was whitewashed with lime slaked with vinegar, which deprived the inhabitants of this useful article. The garrison was removed to camps, pitched among the rocks, and along the sea shore, the mortality being dreadful among them, nor did this measure appear to retard its progress. Rain, which used to pour down in torrents at this season, was now withheld, and all appearance of it vanished; and instead thereof, a constant blaze of sun, and a fiery atmosphere, parched up all our juices. To heighten our misfortunes, the water of the garrison failed; so that that indispensable article of life could not be had unless it was fetched more than a mile ..... provisions are very scarce ..... This day we had to make a dinner of a little barley boiled, and God only knows whether we shall be able to get that to-morrow, for the shops are all closed up ..... My little child was seized with the disorder about five days after we landed. As we could get no house (except we would go into a house deserted or emptied by the plague,) I was in a friend's house, [Michael Caulfield] when my child was taken ill. What an hour of distress! A stranger without an habitation! my child ill of the plague, and myself and wife expecting to be obliged to take up our lodging under a rock! For I could not hope that any one would suffer me to abide in his house, at almost certainty of infecting his own family. Yet I had no sooner intimated my purpose of departure, than my affectionate host declared I should not stir; that he would run all risks, as also did his kind wife. Such an instance of friendship, I believe, is very rare. The captain, with whom I sailed, has sent me word, if my family be in health, he will take me on board;

but my family is not in health. My child is but just able to creep about, and my wife complains of a pain in her head to-day, which is the first symptom of the disease. ....

Our Society here consists of only twelve, three of whom have been carried off in a few days. Many of the soldiers were in the society, but dare not come to meet. I waited on Sir Thomas Trigge, as is the custom, to inform him, that I meant to reside some time in the garrison; he received me with courtesy. I had a note from him, informing me, that the Health Committee judged it necessary to shut all places of worship, lest the infection should be communicated by large numbers assembling together. In this note he submitted the measure to my own consideration. I knew the orders were general; therefore complied, but obtained liberty for a select number to meet in a private house. From the courtesy of both the notes, and my reception, I hope I shall be able to obtain liberty for the soldiers, if God's hand should be removed, and myself be spared. But at present none will assemble together. Indeed our friends cannot spare an hour from the sick and dying. This day we have observed as a day of fasting and prayer in our respective houses. Where this awful desolation will end, God only knows!<sup>1</sup>

The real horror of this situation is hard to imagine. Benady, quoting from two contemporary accounts of events, describes how carts were stationed outside the Spanish church to receive the bodies, which were then taken to the neutral ground for burial in pits dug every morning by the soldiers.<sup>2</sup> Often bodies were left in the streets and were picked up as the carts passed by. Sometimes the soldiers who had dug the pits fell ill and were themselves buried in the very pits they had dug. Hundreds of people were buried in this way and it was impossible to keep an accurate account of names and numbers.

James McMullen soon caught the fever himself and Michael Caulfield wrote to London to inform the authorities that he had died on Wednesday 17 October.<sup>3</sup> It is clear from his obituary in the Conference Minutes that he had suffered ill health before for he was described as, "truly disinterested in worldly views, labouring with his hands, without burdening the Connexion when unable to travel through debility of body".<sup>4</sup> He had been a minister for sixteen years. Caulfield went on to say:

It appears to me, it is not the will of God his gospel should be preached here, where it has been so long rejected; for besides Mr. McMullen, two of the three local preachers, four more of the society, (inhabitants) as also several of the pious soldiers, have been taken off. The writer of this was taken from

the very gates of death, he believes, in answer to the very faithful prayers of Mr. McMullen, in order to pay some little attention to dear sister McMullen, in her now most unpleasant situation, occasioned by want of even the common necessaries of life. It is entirely impossible to describe the distress; it is only known to God and the sufferers.

Caulfield went on to express the hope that Susanna McMullen would survive as she appeared to have only a slight touch of the fever, but this was not to be. She died on Sunday 28 October. The McMullen's daughter, Ann, who was six years old survived. Caulfield planned to leave Gibraltar and return to Ireland, his native land, taking the little girl to a Mrs. Morris of Waterford as requested by her mother.<sup>5</sup> He clearly later changed his mind about leaving and it is not certain who, if anyone, accompanied the child back to England. The minutes of the meeting of the Missionary Committee of Finance and Advice held in April 1805, commend Michael Caulfield's care of all the McMullens and state: "It is judged best that Miss McMullen who is now at Mrs. Tyler's should remain in London till Dr. Coke go to Ireland."<sup>6</sup> The Mission Committee contributed towards her education and Moister records that Dr. Adam Clarke gave her a home and that she later married a Wesleyan Methodist minister, the Rev. John Rigg.<sup>7</sup> One of their sons was James Rigg who was born in Newcastle upon Tyne on 16 January 1821. He entered the Methodist ministry in 1845. In 1868 he was appointed Principal of the Westminster Training College and served as President of Conference twice in 1878 and 1892. In his obituary his relationship to the McMullens was explained and his service to the cause of foreign missions is noted.<sup>8</sup> He was described as "one of the best known and most influential Methodist Ministers of his day", which no doubt would have gladdened the hearts of his grandparents had they lived. His mother, Ann, died at Southport on 3 June 1869 at the age of 72.

Under these circumstances McMullen was able to achieve very little in the few short weeks of his ministry in Gibraltar. He seems to have made a favourable impression on the Governor and he wrote to the Commander-in-Chief to suggest a day of fasting and prayer but he received no answer to this letter. He baptised Samuel James Caulfield on 23 September, the son of Michael and Sophia, which forms the first entry in the baptismal register. He expounded part of the second chapter of Matthew and preached twice in the

Caulfield's house because the chapel had been closed. Of the twenty people or so at the meetings eight had died. Brand and Byrn both died as did Corporal James Lamb who had been flogged. Henry Ince's son, Thomas, died of the fever and also Major-General Barnett. There is a plaque in his memory in the King's Chapel. The *Gibraltar Chronicle*, which ceased publication when the epidemic was at its height, did not re-appear until Saturday 23 March 1805. In that issue the number of deaths was given as follows: Officers:- 54; Soldiers:- 864; Soldiers' Wives and Children:- 164; Inhabitants:- 4,864; making a total of 5,946 deaths. The burials register at the King's Chapel does not give all the names of those buried by the chaplain but includes the words: "The reader will see what dreadful havoc has been made in this small place - but of the misery that accompanied this scene of desolation no one without being an actual witness can form an idea."

The whole of Gibraltar was devastated by the epidemic fever and it is clear from the newspaper articles that the cause, spread and treatment of the fever was not understood. Those who now remained in the little Methodist Society struggled to understand how God could have allowed such a thing to happen. Thomas Davis, the only remaining local preacher, wrote in December 1804, "Our dear and Rev. Mr. McMullen was received with thankfulness and with great expectations of much good being done by him but this the Lord thought fit to disappoint us in ..... and we know not if we ever can so expect another blessing of this nature from Britain. But the will of God be done."<sup>9</sup> Davis had written to the Governor for permission to re-open the chapel. This had been granted "under the usual restrictions of not allowing the soldiers to meet with us, nor encouraging them to attend Divine Service in that place". This was placed in inverted commas and underlined, presumably as a quotation from the Governor's reply. Under these restrictions meetings were carrying on through the week and Davis tried to preach twice on a Sunday. He reported that the congregations were "truly small" but that they hoped for better things when the new Governor arrived.

The new Governor was Lieutenant-General, the Honourable Henry Edward Fox. On 4 January 1805 a memorial was sent to him signed by Thomas Davis, Michael Caulfield and

Zachary Ledger, asking for the restrictions to be lifted and for the soldiers to be allowed to worship at the chapel.<sup>10</sup> The Governor sent for the three men and gave them full liberty to carry on their meetings, adding that he did not wish them to turn a single soldier out of the chapel, "as long as they conducted themselves properly". This news was transmitted to London by Davis who felt there was "now every prospect of doing good". He still wanted a minister to be sent though as he was "the only person left to speak to them of the things of God; and my time is much occupied in secular concerns." He reported that the chapel had been put "into decent order, by whitewashing, painting etc. and the army, and some of the inhabitants begin to crowd our meetings, so that we have a comfortable prospect of much good being done, May God grant it."<sup>11</sup>

While life in Gibraltar was dominated by the epidemic and its aftermath, Britain, France and Spain were still occupied with war. In 1789 when the French Revolution broke out Spain, under its new king Charles IV, reacted in horror and, when Louis XVI was executed, came out against the republic and declared war on France. However, when French troops invaded Spanish territory a treaty was signed between the two countries. The French were the dominant partners in the alliance which also involved Spain in war with Britain. However, in Gibraltar there were good relations between General Fox and the Spanish General Castaños. Indeed, according to a letter quoted by Ellicott, it was "a common thing after an attempt by the Spaniards on British vessels entering or leaving Gibraltar, for the opposing officers to meet at dinner, at the table of either the British or Spanish general."<sup>12</sup>

In July 1805 Admiral Nelson arrived in Gibraltar and took stores on board his ship the *Victory*. The French and Spanish fleet, under Villeneuve, was at Cádiz. On 21 October this fleet left Cádiz and later in the day the battle of Trafalgar was fought. The result was a British victory, but Nelson was killed in the battle. Afterwards, many of the British ships, including the *Victory* with Nelson's body on board, sailed to Gibraltar. A few, who died there later from their wounds, are buried in the Trafalgar Cemetery, near Southport Gates.

In late 1806 Fox was succeeded by General Sir Hew Dalrymple and he too soon established

friendly relations with Castaños. It was even possible for the inhabitants of Gibraltar to travel into nearby Spain as long as they were granted permission from both sides. However, in October 1807, the Spanish were given orders from Madrid to close the frontier. Napoleon's armies had continued to be victorious but in Spain resentment against the French domination of their country began to grow. France proved too strong though and although Charles IV abdicated in favour of his son Ferdinand, who thus became Ferdinand VII of Spain, it was too late for a change of policy because French troops had already invaded the north of Spain. Charles and Ferdinand met with Napoleon and both were forced to abdicate in his favour. The throne was given to his brother Joseph Bonaparte, and the Spanish royals were deported to France. Napoleon tried to blockade Britain and European ports were closed to British ships. So Gibraltar became an important and busy port, repairing ships in the dockyard and replenishing stores at the new Naval Victualling Yard at Rosia Bay which was built in 1808. On 2 May 1808 the people of Madrid rose up in rebellion against the French. The rest of Spain followed suit and the French were defeated at Bailén in July but this only marked the beginning of a long struggle and by December 1808 the French had occupied Madrid and were pushing south. The help of Britain was sought in the fight against Napoleon and the French. Thus began the Peninsular War, known to the Spanish as their War of Independence, and Gibraltar became a useful base for aiding the Spanish in their fight against the French, until Napoleon was finally defeated.

During these years, despite their lack of a minister, the little Society in Gibraltar carried on its work. The minutes of the Committee in London meeting on 29 April 1806 record that a letter had been received from Gibraltar "informing us that the Society have renewed the lease of their Chapel, speaking of a prospect of good and entreating the Committee to send a Missionary".<sup>13</sup> It was agreed that the Secretary would reply saying that "they may expect a Missionary, if a proper person can be found", but once again this seems to have proved a difficult task. In the same year the following annual report on the work in Gibraltar was given to the Conference:

This impregnable Rock is of vast importance in a religious view. The Missionary, who may be stationed here, must not expect much of the honour which comes from man. For when, under the blessing of God, he has formed a large Society, they may, on a sudden, be ordered to another part of the world; and he may have to begin a new work, perhaps among a new people. But when we consider that, by these means, the divine fire may be scattered through all the quarters of the globe, the object rises very high in its value! One missionary would, probably, be always sufficient; but the expense might be considerable, as every thing there is so very dear. No missionary has been sent to this place since the death of Mr. McMullen, but the Superintendent and Committee have it deeply at heart to find out a proper person for this important post. We have, at present, a small Society and a good congregation, composed chiefly, of the military. The preachers are soldiers. But many of the proper inhabitants say, that they will sit constantly under the preaching of the gospel, if we send them a regular minister.<sup>14</sup>

This account is not entirely accurate, for the two main leaders of the day Davis and Caulfield were not soldiers. Davis was also a local preacher and had preached the word for years, especially when the soldiers were forbidden to attend the chapel. However, the report does indeed foretell the future for, time after time, in the coming years membership fluctuated and changed as regiments came and went. A thriving, growing Society could, within days, be reduced to a handful. However, this was justified because the message of salvation went with the soldiers. Although the local inhabitants are mentioned, the emphasis was on the soldiers who would take the message with them wherever they went. It seems that evangelism was the main focus of the work and far more important than nurturing and sustaining a local congregation. This work was not neglected even in the absence of a missionary and there was always an interest in Spain too.

In March 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society, known today as the Bible Society, was formed in London with the aim of supplying Bibles and New Testaments without note or comment on a world-wide basis. The first acknowledgement of this Society by the Methodist Conference did not come until 1807 when the question was asked "How can the Conference of the Methodist Connexion best testify the lively interest, which they, in common with the whole Christian world, cannot but feel for the success of the British and Foreign Bible Society lately established in London?"<sup>15</sup> The answer was that a public collection would be made in the principal congregations throughout the circuits in support

of this work. In the same year the Society supplied Bibles to Gibraltar. It is not clear how the contact was initially made as the whole correspondence has not survived but Joseph Butterworth, a Methodist who supported Methodist missionary work, was also on the Bible Society's Committee and he may therefore have been the link.

The earliest surviving letter is from Joseph Tarn of the Bible Society to Davis and Caulfield in Gibraltar and is dated 10 November 1807.<sup>16</sup> This refers to the sending out of a consignment of 100 English Bibles, 500 English Testaments and 200 Spanish Testaments. It is clear from this letter that there had been earlier correspondence as it refers to a previous grant of books, 500 Spanish Testaments sent in July. Instructions regarding distribution were given as follows:

The Committee having the fullest confidence in your zeal and fidelity, have taken the liberty of placing the above at your disposal; the English Scriptures for the Garrison or for Troops or Seamen who may occasionally touch at your Port, and the Spanish Testaments for distribution among the Spaniards with whom you may have opportunities of communicating.

It was suggested that the recipients would value the books more if they had paid something for them and that the Spanish would then be more likely to keep them from their priests. However, discretion was given and gratuitous distribution was allowed if appropriate. The 500 Spanish Testaments arrived in mid-March 1808 but, as already mentioned, by then there were problems at the border. Davis and Caulfield explained that:

since October 1807 all communication between this Garrison and Spain by land has been entirely cut off unless by a flag of truce, which will effectually deprive us of the opportunity of forwarding anything in the Book way there at present, but have hope that we may be able to meet with some of the masters of the small craft which frequently arrive here who will be prevailed with to accept some of them gratuitously. The foreigners in the Garrison we have reason to believe will purchase many of them, as we have already had an order for fifteen at the beforementioned price. (3 reals or 1s 1½d)<sup>17</sup>

The second consignment of books arrived on 28 April and Davis and Caulfield called a few friends together to discuss plans for them. They agreed to dispose of as many English

Bibles and Testaments to the army as possible, setting a price for this, but agreed that no price would be charged to the navy. The sale of Spanish Testaments was at a stand in the Garrison but they agreed to send as many into Spain as possible. Many of those that had been sold had been to people from Spain, from Cádiz and particularly from Minorca. A respectable Roman Catholic in the town had asked for five dozen to send to Málaga and had already distributed a dozen to leading men of the Catholic church including the priests themselves. By June 1808 the problems at the border were easing. Some pious men of a Regiment embarking for Cádiz had been given Spanish Testaments and tracts to distribute there. A free tract had also been given to all those who had purchased a Testament.

In a further letter dated 8 August Davis and Caulfield wrote that the border was again opened but problems with the French invading Spain meant that there was "little probability of much good being done with the Spanish Testaments till things are in a more settled state".<sup>18</sup> However, they had disposed of about 300 along with some English Bibles and Testaments and sent £25 - £24 8s 1d to the Committee and 11s 11d owed to Mr. Butterworth "on books sent out to our Secretary". In a postscript to the letter Davis and Caulfield wrote: "Please mention to Mr. Butterworth that our minister is safely arrived with us."

A minister, William Griffith, had finally been appointed to Gibraltar. He was born in 1777 and towards the end of the century had become a Methodist. In 1801 he became associated with the "Community" in London which was a Christian association formed for work among the poor, in particular through visiting the workhouses. Dr. Coke encouraged him to offer for missionary work and he was appointed to Gibraltar. He was not at this time a travelling preacher though he may have been a local preacher. His name does not appear in the *Minutes of Conference* for 1808 as being received on trial, nor does it appear in the lists the following year. In 1810 his name appears in the list of those who had travelled two years, but for all these years his name does appear in the list of stations as being at Gibraltar. He set sail with his wife Ann and their young son William in June 1808. Their accommodation on board was not good, the voyage was quite slow and their water supply

nearly failed. Ann Griffith suffered from seasickness and was also nearing the end of a pregnancy. They were both anxious that she would go into labour during the voyage. However, they arrived safely in Gibraltar on the Sunday afternoon of 16 July 1808. They were "gladly received by Brother Davis and the Society who were the more thankful as they had entirely given up all hopes of a Preacher at least for the moment",<sup>19</sup> which implies that word of the appointment had not reached Gibraltar. The following day they went to stay with Zachary Ledger and their son Samuel was born there just a few days later on 23 July. Griffith felt that "the work of God in this place is at a low ebb". The Society numbered 36, mostly soldiers, and few others attended services, for there were many other attractive diversions particularly on a Sunday. Griffith visited most of the Society and described three classes. These were a Friday men's class which met at the chapel, a Monday women's class and a further class of soldiers who met in a cave about two miles from the chapel "as they cannot attend with us". The reason for this was not given. They were led by a "pious man of the regiment". Griffith met with them but shortly afterwards they received embarkation orders.

The work of distributing the scriptures continued and Griffith soon also became involved in this. The following incident, which occurred in November 1808, was described by Davis and Caulfield:

A few days since our minister Mr. Griffith taking a few of the Testaments to market where the Spaniards mostly resort, he offered one of them to a man who at first declined accepting it thinking he wished him to purchase it, but when he found he might have it gratuitously he received it and went from one to another showing it who in their turn applied to Mr. Griffith that they might have one also. He went for twelve more which he soon distributed and numbers of people followed him to our chapel, where in consequence of not being able to converse with them, he was obliged to lock himself in till they dispersed, a number of whom attended in the evening. Next day being Sunday we had no sooner opened our chapel than they began to flock in, many of them remained during the sermon, after which we supplied them that were present, but the members of our church having been detained to partake of the Lord's Supper and those who had received books having informed their acquaintances, our house was so surrounded with men, women and children that we were obliged to open the door and let them continue while we were engaged in that ordinance, after which we distributed Spanish Testaments as far as we could, and it gives us pleasure to say they

received them with the greatest eagerness.<sup>20</sup>

Correspondence with the Bible Society continued but from July 1809 onwards the letters were from Davis alone. Links were made with a Captain Gourly of the Royal Navy who stated, "This unsettled way of life has given me many, very many opportunities of scattering the Scriptures far and wide. In England, Scotland and the Islands, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Italy, Spain and even in Barbary I have given away the words of eternal life."<sup>21</sup> A wide variety of translations were already available and supplies for him were sometimes sent to Gibraltar. He worked closely with Griffith and Davis saying "we are fellow servants and have one master and his glory is our chief desire."<sup>22</sup>

In July 1809 Davis refers to the fact that they were about to build "a new stone chapel".<sup>23</sup> Early on Griffith had identified that the Society's main need was for a "proper place for divine worship" and this need was highlighted in the 1809 Missionary Report for Gibraltar.<sup>24</sup> It stated that worship was being held in

a kind of temporary shed, the sides of which are formed of boards, and the roof of canvas; but being only nine feet in height, and contracted in its limits, it is neither wholesome nor commodious. In addition to this, the passage which leads to it is frequently blocked up with materials belonging to other buildings, or with lumber, which proves a great annoyance to the people. Above all our holding in it will expire in 1811.

The £120 chapel had served its purpose and it was time to build a new and bigger one and to build a Mission House to provide a home for the missionary and his family. The report goes on to say, "to accomplish this, we have reason to believe that we can procure a spot of land in a convenient place". This statement adds weight to the argument that the site on Prince Edward's road was not the place where the original chapel was built on land given by Henry Ince, but unfortunately it has not proved possible to discover where it was situated. Financial help from "our wealthy friends in England" was sought and local people were already promising to help. The Society was growing. Membership had increased to 40 and the Sunday congregation had nearly doubled, with the week-night congregation nearly

trebled since the previous year. Many soldiers were unable to attend the services in the chapel "being prevented by the rules of military discipline from leaving their quarters at the regular hours of worship." Griffith had therefore been preaching to them weekly "at a place called the South", which was out towards Europa.

The first step in the process of building the chapel and house was to seek permission to obtain the land. A memorial was therefore sent to the Governor, now General Sir John Craddock, which was transmitted to the Secretary of State in London with an accompanying letter on 7 July 1809, requesting permission to lease land for the purpose of building a chapel. However, a favourable reply was clearly expected as on the same day a document confirming the "assignment of property from Francis Fau, Ann Fau and Luigi Danino to Thomas Davis, Zacharias Ledger and William Griffith" was signed by General Craddock, subject to the terms and conditions of the original lease.<sup>25</sup>

The land in question was plot 728 in the General Plan of the town and was situated on Prince Edward's Road. It covered an area of 1,889 square feet. An earlier document, dated 28 June 1809, a Tripartite Indenture, is in the church archives. This gives some further details about those involved and about the history of the property. The three parties were firstly Francisco Fau, a mariner, and Ann his wife, secondly Luis Danino and thirdly Thomas Davis, Zacharias Ledger and the Rev. William Griffith. The land, along with nearby plots, had first been granted to Alexander Adams for 41 years from 1 January 1788, at a rent of three reals a month. Adams enclosed and cultivated this plot and on 11 September 1804 his son Henry of "His Majesty's Barrack Department acting on behalf of himself and the rest of the heirs of his late father" sold the lease to Gregorio Raggio which included "the piece of ground and cottage standing thereon". Raggio sold the lease to Ann Fau, then Ann Ferro, widow of Ignacio Ferro, on 1 August 1806, "with the ground and cottage and appurtenances". Ann later mortgaged the property to Luis Danino, hence his involvement in the purchase by the Methodists. The sum of \$900 Gibraltar currency was paid to the Faus and five shillings of English money was paid to Danino. The ground rent was to be one real a month. The land was granted "for the purpose of preaching and expounding of

God's Holy Word in a chapel thereon to be erected" and a "small dwelling house" was to be built as well. There is no mention of Henry Ince in this document, and it therefore seems highly improbable that he was ever connected with this site.

The reply from London granting permission to purchase the lease of the land and build a chapel and a house was not sent until 3 September 1809. It was received in Gibraltar on 25 September and Griffith "immediately opened a subscription towards the expense of the buildings".<sup>26</sup> Not only the Methodists contributed for Griffith reported: "Besides our own Society, several of the inhabitants who at present have no connection with us, have contributed liberally. A Roman Catholic gave us 15 doubloons or £54 - another two. And I doubt not others will yet further assist us in the work." In one week \$1,630 or £245 was raised out of which \$950 had been paid for "the ground and ritings". On 29 November 1809, the Governor, now Major General Sir Colin Campbell, granted formal permission for the chapel to be erected on the ground purchased for this purpose subject to two conditions.<sup>27</sup> Firstly, that if the land was "demanded for the service of Government" it would be handed over without any compensation though the Society would have the right to remove any building materials. Secondly, that at the expiration of the lease, (on 1 January 1829) the chapel and the ground would become the property of His Majesty. These were similar to the conditions laid down in most leases of the day so the Society had little choice but to accept them. Nevertheless it seems a risky undertaking to commit so much money to so uncertain a future.

It is difficult to know exactly how much expense was involved in this building scheme as no complete accounting seems to have survived. In a letter dated 24 January 1810 Griffith gave the cost of building as "6,400 hard Spanish dollars exclusive of painting and chandiliers ... the above sum to be paid in four equal payments when the work is in a specified state of forwardness."<sup>28</sup> He went on to say "the work is begun and I expect the first stone will be laid tomorrow". The first payment was due in six weeks and they were still about £120 short. He hoped to be able to make the payment as more money was promised. However, trade was not so good and there were no rich members of the Society which still numbered

about 40 members though the congregation was growing. He reported that sometimes on a Sunday evening there were as many inhabitants attending as there had been of soldiers and inhabitants together when he had first arrived. In addition to the problems of raising money in Gibraltar it seems that there was little enthusiasm in Britain to support the work financially. Thomas Coke wrote, "I am strongly against our applying any part of our fund to the erecting of chapels. Gibraltar is a small thing in comparison to our home missions".<sup>29</sup>

It seems that all possible sources of financial help were approached and in a letter to the Bible Society in February 1810 Davis wrote:

I sincerely thank you in the name of the little church here for the active part you have taken in our behalf with Mr. Butterworth, and also for your kind contribution towards the chapel which is going on fast, and will be completed in a very few months if all things continue as they now are, but would thank you to say to Mr. Butterworth as from me, that yesterday we had a meeting and that after doing our utmost we find that we are about 950 dollars [about £143] short of our first payment, which will become due about Monday next, which sum we have been forced to borrow on interest and that in less than one month from this date, we expect the second payment will become due which we will have to borrow in like manner, and at a much higher rate (as cash is very dear here at present) unless we have remittances from England.<sup>30</sup>

He hoped, once the chapel and house were completed and religion better established, that collections and monetary contributions would enable them to defray the expenses of the preacher without depending on income from England. He apologised for "speaking so freely to you on this subject for that you do not belong to the same branch of Christ's Church that we profess to belong to, yet sir, you have the one common cause at heart, and will I hope use all your influence in our favour."

At the Methodist Conference of 1810 the question was asked, "What more can be done to secure the prosperity and permanency of the work of God at Gibraltar?"<sup>31</sup> The reply was three-fold - Gibraltar was to be considered as "one of our regular Circuits subject to the same regulations respecting appointments, removals and a constant succession of Preachers,

as the Circuits in Great Britain." The Missionary Committee was therefore authorised to find a successor to Griffith and thirdly the sum of £500 would be granted from Mission funds "in aid of the noble and generous exertions of our Society and friends at Gibraltar for the erection of a chapel at that place." It is not clear why there was this change of heart. Perhaps the influence of Butterworth, and even indirectly that of the Bible Society, helped.

The grant is also mentioned in the 1811 Missionary Report but it does not give details of the total cost.<sup>32</sup> The figures quoted for the cost of the land and building add up to \$7,350 or about £1,103. £745 had been raised so this gives a shortfall of about £358. There are two documents in the church archives giving details of loans to the Society, one for \$1,600 and the other for \$800, both at 10% annual interest. This total loan of \$2,400, or £360, is about the amount of the shortfall, so it may well be that \$7,350 was the total figure, although a booklet published in 1909 gives a figure of \$11,500.<sup>33</sup> However, although the extent of the debt is not known, it is clear from later documents that the Society was saddled with a large debt which was to be a great burden to them for many years.

It is not clear when the work was finished but in a ledger in the church archives the collection on 12 August 1810 was recorded as being taken at the new chapel, named Providence Chapel, both in the morning and evening. In the September Caulfield recorded the receipt of \$400 for the old meeting house. No doubt there was great rejoicing at the completion of the chapel and house and the Missionary Report of 1812 reported the chapel as being well attended. Griffith and his family moved into the new Mission House and there was an addition to the family on 27 June 1811 when a daughter, Ann, was born. She was baptised by her father in Providence Chapel on 14 July. Griffith performed his last baptism in Gibraltar on 11 August 1811 and some time after this he and his family returned to England to an appointment in London. The following year he was stationed at Banbury and received into full connexion. He continued his ministry in England, never serving abroad again and his son William eventually followed him into the ministry. He became a supernumerary in 1850. "He was a useful Preacher, and a diligent Pastor. The severe and complicated affliction which closed his life was endured with calm resignation, and

sometimes with cheerfulness. On the 24 February, 1860, he triumphantly entered into rest."<sup>34</sup> He was in his eighty third year.

### CHAPTER THREE GROWTH AND CONSOLIDATION - Tension and Division (1812 -1821)

After the completion of Providence Chapel, Methodism became better established on the Rock and a series of ministers were sent out for two year appointments to serve at Gibraltar. William Griffith was succeeded by James Gill, who was, by then, about forty two years old. Gibraltar was his twelfth appointment. He had been accepted on trial as a travelling preacher in 1795 and was admitted into full connexion in 1799 while stationed at Shrewsbury. The previous two years had been spent in Brecon where he was stationed again in 1807 for one year as a supernumerary. Whether this appointment was due to ill-health or some other difficulties is not known. It seems likely that there was a short gap between the Griffith family leaving Gibraltar and James Gill and his wife arriving. Gill's appointment to Gibraltar was recommended to Conference by the Missionary Committee of Finance and Advice in June 1811 but in September Gill was advised to stay in London because of fears about the plague in Cartagena. This delay in their departure explains why they did not arrive until 9 January 1812, having embarked at Portsmouth on Christmas Day. Unfortunately sailing at this time of year meant a stormy passage was more likely and Mrs. Gill was extremely seasick throughout the voyage. While still off the coast of England she begged her husband to take her ashore and to "make no other attempt for Gibraltar" but the seas were running too high to make this possible.<sup>1</sup> On arriving in Gibraltar they found to their anger and dismay that the house was empty of all furniture.

Gill immediately set about furnishing the house at a cost of about 100 guineas. Prices were very high and he made it clear that he had only bought absolute necessities. It would have been much cheaper to have brought furniture with them but they had not been aware of the need to do so. He expected the Committee or Conference to pay as the Society, numbering forty, could not afford this. He was not happy with the house, complaining that the plaster on the walls and ceiling had fallen down and that it was very badly planned as the stairs were outside and they had to go out of doors to go to bed. He had engaged a mason and carpenters to alter and repair the house. He also complained that servants were hard to

obtain and their wages very high, £24 to £30 a year, and "it is impossible to do without one in this hot country". He wished they had brought an English girl with them. How much London contributed to these expenses is not known, but it is clear from later documents that the debt was considerably increased as a result.

In his letter Gill reports that Griffith had been much respected and had done much in raising the chapel and house, though the chapel was described as very small. He also referred to "a dreadful battle fought at Tarifa a small distance from us a few days before we came". The French were still fighting the Spanish and in January 1810 the old Spanish lines, forts and batteries at Gibraltar had all been dismantled and destroyed to prevent the French making use of them. The French had arrived in San Roque a few days later, and by the end of February 1810 only Cádiz, Tarifa and Gibraltar had escaped French occupation. The Governor of Gibraltar, Sir Colin Campbell, gave help in the defence of Cádiz and Tarifa, and there was much fighting and activity in the area including the battle at Tarifa in December 1811 in which help was given from the Gibraltar Garrison. The siege of Tarifa ended in a French withdrawal. Two British officers were killed in the action and there is a memorial to them in the King's Chapel. At the end of April 1812 the threat to Tarifa was over and Gibraltar's troops returned to the Rock with the thanks of the Spanish defenders of the city. Gradually the French withdrew from Andalucia and by the summer of 1812 they had left the area of Gibraltar altogether. When the Napoleonic Wars ended in 1815 Gibraltar began to enjoy more peaceable times with friendlier relations with Spain.

Contact with the Bible Society continued with Davis still very much involved with the work. Shortly after his arrival Gill was asked to make enquiries about the language used in the Spanish version and he set about this task with considerable thoroughness. In fact he planned to learn Spanish so that he could make his own judgments, and he employed a teacher to instruct him. However, the teacher could not continue because of other commitments, and Gill therefore made "enquiries of some respectable Spanish gentlemen".<sup>2</sup> He also purchased a Spanish Bible printed in Madrid to compare with the Society's version. As a result of all these investigations, he came to the conclusion that the Society's version

was not a good one mainly through the use of inappropriate language and he gave some examples to prove his point. He did not receive a reply to this letter. In another letter written in September 1812 he described his distribution of the scriptures. Once word went out that he had books for distribution his "house was crowded with soldiers, soldier's wives and soldier's children, pressing upon each other with the greatest eagerness, to obtain the sacred volume."<sup>3</sup> He went on to say that the "distribution of the Scriptures has been a principal cause in this place of the success of my Mission", because many soldiers after receiving them became "regular attendants on the ministry of the word, and were reformed in their conduct." He estimated that there were about 5,000 troops in Gibraltar with about 300 Bibles among them, and he therefore wanted more to distribute, particularly the Pocket Bibles, which were a more convenient size for the soldiers. In a final letter, written after he had left Gibraltar he gave a full accounting of the distribution of the scriptures which had passed through his hands.<sup>4</sup> Some had been given to the crews of ships, placed in different barracks, supplied to the hospital, the orphan house, the guard houses and the Signal House, to the Regimental schools, to Regiments leaving Gibraltar and to individuals and families. Some Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Arabic, German, French and Welsh books had also been distributed. Perhaps it was this well advertised availability of Bibles that led to a "Daring Robbery" reported in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* in May 1812. Two large Bibles were stolen from the pulpit and desk of Providence Chapel along with a large number of prayer-books, hymn-books and pocket Bibles. A reward was offered to anyone giving information leading to a conviction.

During this time there was further anxiety in Gibraltar about yellow fever. There had not been an epidemic for several years, which Benady suggests might have been due to a high level of immunity in the population following the 1804 epidemic.<sup>5</sup> A few cases were reported in 1810 but in 1813 an epidemic claimed the lives of 883 civilians and 461 soldiers. Campbell, the Governor, survived a bout of fever but died the following year. Both Mr. and Mrs. Gill caught the fever in the autumn of 1813 but thankfully survived, and the 1814 Missionary Report stated that "the alarming malady which has raged in this place for some months past, by carrying off multitudes of the inhabitants, has thinned our society in

proportion to its members".<sup>6</sup> Membership was given as 87.

At about this time on 19 August 1813 the trustees of Providence Chapel bought from Gregorio Raggio 135 square feet of land and half a wall containing 72 square yards which bordered their property. The cost was 261 Spanish hard dollars and the deed of conveyance, now in the church archives, was witnessed by Michael Caulfield. This meant their property now amounted to a total of 2,024 square feet. The Missionary Report for 1815 recorded that "His Majesty's government has allowed our missionary, for a limited time, two rations from the king's stores, which will prove very useful, especially in cases of fever, siege, or war with Spain".<sup>7</sup> It seems therefore that Methodism had gained greater recognition and acceptance in Gibraltar. The report went on to praise Gill's work: "The labours of brother Gill, during the two years he resided in Gibraltar, were made a general blessing. He stood high in the estimation of all who knew him, and the good effects of his ministerial labours are likely to be a lasting benefit. He has returned to his native country in peace and safety". All in all, however, it sounds to have been rather a difficult two years for James Gill and his wife.

They sailed on 7 July 1814 in the transport brig *Sceptre* and landed at Deal on 6 August. Once again Mrs. Gill suffered from severe seasickness and so they travelled along the coast to Portsmouth, their next appointment, in easy stages. James Gill never served abroad again and fulfilled a further twelve appointments, serving on several occasions as Chairman of the District. In his obituary he was described as a "man of sound judgement", "mighty in the Scriptures" with a ministry "clear in its doctrines, full and rich in Christian experience, and thoroughly practical."<sup>8</sup> His last two appointments in Dudley and Northampton were supernumerary appointments but he continued to be "diligent in preaching and pastoral visiting till within three months of his decease." He died on 1 May 1844 at the age of 74 having served 49 years in the ministry.

On 28 June 1814 Benjamin and Esther Wood arrived at Gibraltar after a voyage lasting 23 days. They were thus able to meet with their predecessors who, no doubt, introduced them

to the people and the work of the station. Benjamin Wood was born near Sheffield in 1784. As a child he worshipped in the Established Church but at the age of seventeen he heard Methodist preaching and this eventually led him to become a travelling preacher himself. He was accepted on trial in 1806 at Norwich and was admitted into full connexion at Ludlow in 1810. He then served in Shaftesbury before being posted to Gibraltar. It is perhaps remarkable that he and his wife were willing to go to Gibraltar at all because they arrived in what was, by then, acknowledged to be the fever season. Wood expressed their anxiety about this in his first letter from the Rock but felt it was right to have undertaken the work.<sup>9</sup> On arrival they were given a "kind reception". Few soldiers were attending the chapel but Wood reported that it "was well attended by attentive and respectable inhabitants".

In August 1814 a fever did break out. Spain immediately placed Gibraltar under quarantine and various measures aimed at combating the spread of disease were enforced. These included an order to close the chapel, along with the other places of worship. A number of "respectable inhabitants not as yet members of our Society" attempted to find the Woods a safe place to live in Spain but they were prevented from going there by the quarantine. They were instead found a place from which Wood wrote the letter already mentioned. It was described as a place not affected by the previous epidemics in a bay nearly two miles from the Garrison, which might have been Catalan Bay. He reported some criticism because of his move to a safer area but that generally everyone approved and he himself felt it was the right thing to do. He also stated that he felt it would be helpful to know Spanish as everyone understood it and two thirds of the inhabitants understood little else. However, he did not feel that a two year appointment was long enough to learn and use the language.

On 5 November they were allowed to re-open the chapel and the Woods returned to town. In all 114 troops and 132 inhabitants had died which was nowhere near the numbers of the previous epidemics of 1804 and 1813. However, Gibraltar's economy had been affected and Wood reported "that every branch of business has been nearly at a stand - scarcely anything like it has been known in Gibraltar, except perhaps during the Siege".<sup>10</sup> This was

partly due to the fever and because "Ferdinand [VII] too has shackled the commerce of the Garrison by his rigorous measures to prevent British manufactures from being imported into Spain". It seems that this was also an attempt to limit the excessive smuggling that was taking place. Many had decided to leave. Wood did, however, describe the congregation as considerably increased and reported the number in Society to be 53.

However, there were clearly difficulties for the Society financially, which Wood refers to in several letters. He described the Mission House as "very comfortable my predecessor having taken great pains to make it so", but goes on to say, "I am sorry to say the premises are deeply involved - so that the whole of the income of seat-rents and a monthly collection for the purpose do not meet the interest when things are not so prosperous!" Collections amounted to between £3 and £4 a month and none of the seats was let for less than 4s 6d a quarter but this was only just about sufficient to pay the "enormous rate of 10%" interest on the loan, let alone pay off any of the principal. He felt it was unlikely that the Society could afford to pay the preacher which they would have liked to have done. He was therefore asking for help from London towards his expenses and mentioned that they had had to pay over £3 12s a month for a wet nurse as Mrs. Wood had been too indisposed since her confinement to feed their child. The baby, Harriet, had been born on 21 November 1814. They had, however, begun to receive rations from the Government stores. In October 1815, the church drew up a statement and a strategy for dealing with the chapel debt.<sup>11</sup> This stood at \$4,500. (About £675.) This clearly was a great burden to the Society, and various collections and subscriptions were instituted to try and deal with the problem. Wood went on to say that he felt no preacher should be sent later than the beginning of May, because "the inconvenience a Preacher suffers by entering Gibraltar about Midsummer as we did is inconceivable" and he hoped he would be relieved by the beginning of June 1816 to avoid the heat himself. Some time later Davis and Caulfield wrote to the Missionary Committee to the same effect.<sup>12</sup> They suggested that April was the ideal time for a preacher to arrive to avoid the heat of summer and to avoid the possibility of being placed in quarantine, which would mean they could not fulfil their duties. Their advice does not seem to have been taken for a while at least.

The links with the Bible Society continued with Davis still involved. In addition a Mrs. Caroline Nicklin, a shopkeeper, helped in the distribution of the scriptures. She first wrote to the Bible Society in May 1814.<sup>13</sup> She enclosed a £5 donation for "your blessed Institution" which she had sent on behalf of someone with the initials J.B. She went on to say that she would like to help further the cause and for many years she sent an annual subscription and helped in the work of distributing the scriptures through her shop. On 20 January 1815 the Rev. Dr. Symons wrote to the Bible Society from Portsmouth where he was about to embark for Gibraltar, to serve as a chaplain there. He had discovered that on board the ship were some cases of Bibles destined for Mr. Wood. He wrote:

I think it right to inform the Committee that there are at Gibraltar two clergymen of the Established Church - Government chaplains - either of whom would be happy to distribute these Bibles - I am at this time on the point of embarkation to succeed the Rev. M. Hughes as chaplain to the garrison and shall have great pleasure in distributing the Bibles now about to be sent there.<sup>14</sup>

He therefore asked for the Bibles to be placed at his disposal rather than that of Mr. Wood, and in fact the Bible Society complied with this request! Needless to say Wood was not pleased with this decision and it hindered his work of distributing the scriptures. The Bible Society did write to Wood to explain their decision.<sup>15</sup> They had urged Dr. Symons "to use his best exertions to promote the establishment of a Bible Society at Gibraltar". It seems likely therefore that their motive in acting as they did was the hope that Dr. Symons might be in a more influential position than Wood to establish a local Bible Society. However, the Governor, General Don would not allow a Bible Society to be formed, appearing to think that this would be seen to be a provocative move amongst the staunchly Roman Catholic Spaniards. When Dr. Symons left Gibraltar he left the majority of the Bibles at the Garrison Library and with various individuals. They were eventually taken into the care of the Methodists and they were instructed by the Bible Society to distribute them "as though they had been originally granted to you" which indeed they had!<sup>16</sup> From then on, they were once again at the heart of the work!

Unfortunately, this was not the only occasion of dispute between the Methodists and the Garrison chaplains at this time. On 25 September 1815 the Rev. Mr. Mackereth refused to bury the child of Methodist parents as he did not consider the child's baptism to be valid. He also told the parents, and Mr. Wood, that he felt their actions over the baptism exposed them to the risk of expulsion from the Garrison by the Governor. Wood therefore wrote to the Governor, to lay the matter before him, and sent copies of his letters to the Missionary Committee in London.<sup>17</sup> He argued that their baptismal registers had been recognised as legal and, on previous occasions when challenged, H.M. Justices had decided in their favour. He linked the problem with the lack of a Methodist burial ground and referred to his previous appointments in Norwich and Shaftesbury, where the dead had been buried by clergymen of the Established Church for a fee, a perfectly satisfactory practice to all concerned, and one which he stated he would be quite happy to follow in Gibraltar. It is evident from the letters that the child's parents were caused great distress and that Dr. Symons was also involved as Wood reported that he had gone to "brow beat" him and had told him that the matter would be determined against him. The Governor appears to have forwarded copies of all relevant documents to the Government presumably so that they could advise him on an appropriate course of action.

This problem had arisen in England also. As with the sacrament of Holy Communion, Methodists had eventually begun to do their own baptising, which had led to further opposition from the Established Church and continued to be a controversial issue for many years. As late as 1840 an article appeared in the *Wesleyan Watchman* quoting a letter from an Anglican clergyman complaining about being expected to bury children baptised by Methodists.<sup>18</sup> The article however quoted the case of Wickes of 1811, when the court had stated that it was the duty of the parish minister to bury all persons dying within his parish unless they had been excommunicated, and also acknowledged the validity of baptisms by the laity. Nevertheless in Gibraltar this dispute carried on for some years. Little documentation has survived and no account of the dispute is given in the annual Missionary Reports though the one for 1816 stated, "protection and encouragement were liberally afforded by the local government" without giving details.<sup>19</sup> Certainly the impression gained

is that General Don, the Governor, was supportive of the Methodists.

During the summer of 1815 the Woods had once again moved to the Bay where they had stayed the previous year. This was in compliance with the Governor's orders to try and combat the fever and they stayed there for two months. In his letter Wood added, "the garrison has not been visited with the malignant fever this year thank God".<sup>20</sup>

In January 1816 another daughter, Mary, was born to Benjamin and Esther Wood and the little family left Gibraltar in July 1816. They returned to England to an appointment in Melton Mowbray and never served abroad again. After a further eleven appointments Wood became a supernumerary in Birmingham in 1845. For 20 more years he "continued to work for Christ" though for the last ten years he "was disabled from active service".<sup>21</sup> He died on 17th September 1875 in his 91st year and the 70th of his ministry.

Around this time various changes occurred in the management of Methodist Missions. The first ever Methodist missionary meeting was held in Leeds on 6 October 1813. This was a daring move, as it was the first public meeting to be held other than for worship, preaching, prayer or Bible study and it was not therefore without its critics. However, it was followed by others in the Halifax, York, Sheffield, Cornwall and Newcastle Districts. The 1814 Methodist Conference thanked those who had been concerned with the formation of these *Methodist Missionary Societies* "for the very liberal and zealous support which they have afforded" and strongly recommended the establishment of such Societies in every District in the Kingdom.<sup>22</sup>

On 30 December 1813 Coke, with a small group of missionaries, embarked for India and Ceylon. He had long hoped, and planned, for a mission in this part of the world and he set off enthusiastically to found this new mission field. It was a long voyage and Coke used much of the time to study and prepare for the new work. He became unwell and on the morning of 3 May he was found dead on the floor of his cabin. He was 66 years old. Later that day his body was committed to the waters of the Indian Ocean. Despite his death, the

mission went ahead - a fitting tribute to this hard-working man who had done so much for the missionary cause. The news of his death shocked the Methodist Connexion but it also seems to have stimulated it to greater missionary endeavours.

At the 1815 Conference the question was asked about what plan was to be adopted for foreign missions following Coke's death. Various resolutions were passed. Then the 1817 Conference approved a plan for a General Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and suitable premises for a Mission House in London were to be sought. The following year various laws and regulations governing the Society were adopted to provide a systematic and efficient plan for the support of foreign missions. The regulations covered the raising of subscriptions, the formation of District and Circuit Societies and of Ladies and Juvenile Associations. Treasurers and Secretaries were to be appointed at all levels including a General Treasurer and three General Secretaries, one of whom was to reside at the Mission House. A General Committee was to be appointed by Conference to consist of the President and Secretary of Conference with 48 other members for the management of missions. Rules governing the selection of missionaries, stationing, discipline etc. were drawn up and monthly missionary prayer meetings in all chapels were recommended. Thus was born the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, which led to a far better organisation of the work and its continued expansion. From this time onwards the missionaries in Gibraltar corresponded directly with one or other of the General Secretaries. Their letters would then be placed before the Committee for discussion, following which one of the Secretaries would write a reply. In 1816 a missionary magazine was published called *Missionary Notices*. Its aim was to publicise Methodist missionary work around the world. Quotations from the letters and journals of missionaries were often printed to encourage interest in the work and support for it through prayer and gifts of money. The work in Gibraltar was often featured in its pages.

The next minister to be appointed to Gibraltar was Thomas Davis. He had been accepted on trial in 1808 and admitted to full connexion at Yarmouth in 1812. After several appointments he was posted to Gibraltar and arrived in mid August 1816 with his wife Jane.

He did not overlap with Wood who had left about a month before. It must have been a little confusing that he had the same name as Davis, the local preacher, who had been in Gibraltar for so many years! Several days after his arrival he "waited upon General Don and received strong marks of attention and kindness". He went on to say, "the General has been of very great use here", and in fact he was also to prove a good support to the Methodist cause.<sup>23</sup>

General Don was Lieutenant Governor from 1814 until he retired in 1831. Ellicott described him as "The Father of Modern Gibraltar", and there is no doubt that he achieved a tremendous amount during his period of office.<sup>24</sup> The Duke of Kent was still officially Governor, and when he died in 1820 the Earl of Chatham succeeded him. However, he did not spend much time in Gibraltar and so, in effect, Don was in charge of Gibraltar's affairs until the Colonial Office appointed General Sir William Houston to succeed him in May 1831. Apparently Don had hoped to stay in his post for life, and there were those who believed his death on New Year's Day 1832 was due to a broken heart at being replaced.

It seems that it was largely due to Don's measures that there was very little fever for fourteen years after the cases reported in 1814. He improved the water supply and ordered the building of an efficient sewage system. Commissioners for Paving and Scavenging were appointed, who levied a rate for the cost of paving, repairing and cleaning the streets and for making and repairing sewers and drains. Vaccination against smallpox was encouraged and a register was made of all civilian medical practitioners. Don set up a system of District Inspectors who, with the help of a Sergeant and Medical Officer, supervised conditions and reported disease. In the summer months he encouraged people to move out of the overcrowded town and he built a hospital for the civilian population. It was not only in the field of health that he brought change and reform. In previous years British Governors had had little power over civilians other than to expel them from the Garrison but Don set up a Supreme Court which was empowered to try both civil and criminal cases. Alameda gardens were laid out, and the first garrison schools opened which the children of civilian inhabitants could attend on payment of a small fee. Some of Don's actions were less

popular than others. He prohibited slave ships from fitting out at Gibraltar and also set up a Commission to settle the titles to land in Gibraltar.

Early on, under Governor Sir Humphrey Bland, only Protestants were allowed to own property. This measure had been taken to encourage Protestants to settle on the Rock. However, it led to Protestant nominees being used for property actually owned by Jews or Roman Catholics. So Don set up a Commission to review and confirm all titles to property. This caused anxiety in case titles were found to be invalid for it meant that everyone, including the Methodists, had to justify their claim to property. The Methodist claim to their property on Prince Edward's Road was printed in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* on 11 April 1818, but the whole matter caused them considerable anxiety. In a letter to the Missionary Committee Davis reported that it had cost \$90 to make the claim, and added that he feared it might go hard for them because he had heard that under certain grants, similar to theirs, the lessee would have to pay half the value of the property and an additional ground rent.<sup>25</sup> It also later turned out that the person from whom they had purchased the ground claimed the whole at the expiration of the lease. Fortunately this claim was rejected and the matter seems to have been settled satisfactorily. By 1825 all titles to property had been reviewed and confirmed and ownership of land was no longer limited to Protestants. It was also during General Don's period in office, in 1830, that the status of the Rock was changed from a garrison town to the Crown Colony of Gibraltar. This meant that from then on Gibraltar's affairs were the responsibility of the Colonial Office and not the War Office.

General Don gave the Methodists good support, and in addition he was very much involved in providing other Protestant inhabitants with a place of worship. Their children were baptised at the King's Chapel and marriages could take place there, but this was the garrison church and was not big enough for the Protestant inhabitants to worship there with the garrison on Sundays. A meeting was therefore held in 1819 to consider the best means of building a church. The British Government was prevailed upon to sell a derelict building which had been a monastery and a naval storehouse and to use the proceeds to build a church. The building of Holy Trinity Church began in 1825 and was completed in 1832

though it was not consecrated for a further six years. In 1842 it was designated a Cathedral. General Don did not live to see the church finished, but he is buried in it. As the Cathedral guide book says, "it was fitting that he should be buried in front of the spot where the High Altar was to stand in the church he had done so much to bring into existence."<sup>26</sup>

It is hardly surprising therefore that Thomas Davis was so impressed with General Don. He described him as a "very sensible, mild, active moral man" but did go on to say that it was "a pity he should suffer the Lord's Day to be so dreadfully profaned!"<sup>27</sup> Sunday was the main market day and Davis felt Don could have put a stop to this if he had wanted to.

Davis had arrived in Gibraltar with considerable energy and enthusiasm. He was sure his appointment was of God and said, "I bless God for my appointment. Kind friends, prosperity in God's work, and plenty to do, with the Divine smile, this is sufficient to cause any man to rejoice". He felt there were many proofs that the appointment was from God: "favour in the eyes of the Governor and men in authority; the love of the little flock here; an additional number of hearers; above one hundred souls added to the society, many of whom are converted to God and a mind composed and thankful".<sup>28</sup> The increase in numbers was clearly due to his energy and commitment to the task. He took every opportunity to meet with, and preach to, the soldiers. When a group of 1,100 black soldiers landed from St. Kitts in early 1817, he obtained permission to visit them in their barracks. He asked for suitable tracts for them and hoped to arrange for other soldiers to go and read to them as few could read. Davis made quite an impact on several regiments - the Royal Artillery, the 67th Regiment and notably the 26th Regiment of Foot. The head doctor and two Captains of this Regiment came to the chapel, met with Davis in his home, and professed themselves keen to be involved. Indeed the doctor, Dr. Coldstream, offered to treat Davis and his family free of expense during their stay. One convert from this Regiment was Captain Tripp whose Journal from 1817 to 1820 is in the archives of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. He first attended the Methodist chapel in the spring of 1817 and at the beginning of the following year he made a firm step of commitment to faith in God. He decided to speak at the first love-feast he ever attended which took place in July 1818. He was

extremely nervous about doing so and prayed that God would give him the strength. He said, "I think I never was more embarrassed. I had just power to speak, almost all I wished. However I sat down quite content and happy. The next day I enjoyed much heavenly favour".<sup>29</sup> He was then twenty seven years old.

In the summer of 1818 the army moved to camp on the neutral ground as a precaution against the fever. Tripp went with them. Davis went and preached to them weekly. In addition he had "taken a room at the South of the Rock about two miles from our chapel in which a class of soldiers meet who could not get into the garrison in the evening as the gates are closed and the gun fires before they could return".<sup>30</sup> Davis preached to the soldiers there once a week and also held regular prayer meetings. Thomas Davis, the local preacher, had also been appointed to visit them weekly when possible so that there was frequent preaching. Davis had also encouraged the soldiers of the 26th Regiment to set up a small library through monthly subscriptions and had recommended the books to them, helping them with the management of it. The success of the work among the inhabitants was never as great as they would have hoped but nevertheless in August 1817 the total number in Society was given as 102 which consisted of 35 inhabitants and 67 military. In addition the chapel was described as being well attended by a number of other "respectable persons".<sup>31</sup>

Links with the Bible Society continued and Davis was much involved with the distribution of Bibles and tracts. He wrote to the Bible Society that he wished the Bibles were smaller as it was difficult for the soldiers to carry the larger ones with them. He distributed thousands of religious tracts too in different languages. He described the way he did this by saying, "my common method of giving for tracts is to send them by the ship-boats, which come to water-port in our market, early in the morning. I have sent a good number of Spanish tracts into Spain, through those who come to our market out of Spain and by Spanish Boat-men".<sup>32</sup>

Worries about the chapel debt continued and various plans were put into effect to deal with

it. The Society's finances suffered "owing to the breaking up of the Dock-yard which has thrown most of our members out of employ".<sup>33</sup> Times were described as very bad because of the low state of trade in Gibraltar and merchants were "daily emigrating".<sup>34</sup> It seems that following the economic boom of the war years things did get more difficult. Naval activity was reduced but the recession was short-lived. When Spanish American colonies declared their independence and severed the trading links between Spain and South America, both sides used Gibraltar as a neutral port and "the traffic was large and profitable to Gibraltar."<sup>35</sup> Generally though Davis seemed to feel that the debt was being dealt with. He also wrote in early 1817 that he was about to lose his ration because of an order from England to issue no more rations to any but the army. General Don did support his case and, as a result, by the end of the year he was allowed to draw one ration for the next twelve months. However, this was a field ration and not as valuable as the one he had first been given.

Opposition from the garrison chaplains continued which Davis felt was to some degree due to the success of their mission. He wrote that the chaplains had opposed him, saying he had no right to visit the hospital or baptise any child belonging to the army. He had approached General Don about this and been granted full liberty to do these things. He added, "the chaplain is much lessened in the General's esteem by such unnecessary opposition."<sup>36</sup> In fact the Methodists had also sent a memorial to Don on 1 December 1817 asking to be allowed a separate piece of ground in which to bury their own dead. This presumably was a result of further reluctance on the part of the garrison chaplains to bury anyone baptised by the Methodists. Don wrote back the following day saying, "As it is not yet ascertained what ceremonies the clergyman of your persuasion is authorised to perform, it will not be in my power to sanction a deviation from what has hitherto been the practice here until I receive a reply to a communication which I intend to make to His Majesty's Government on the subject".<sup>37</sup> This presumably meant that no answer had yet been received from England to the previous communications following the incident involving Benjamin Wood. In a letter dated 4 June 1818 the church leaders explained what happened next. General Don "a few days since sent for Mr. Davis and told him he had received directions from Earl Bathurst to

grant our request (consequently a piece of the present burying ground in marked out for us) and that Mr. Davis is at perfect liberty to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper as also to bury the dead."<sup>38</sup> They were delighted by this news and went on to say, "we who have been a number of years here and recalled having frequently to rise from our knees and turn out His Majesty's subjects from a Protestant public place of worship, are constrained to exclaim 'what hath God wrought' in the course of a few years, in having given us favour in the eyes of our superiors and in having sent us faithful pastors who care for our souls, may we ever be kept humble and thankful." Their faithfulness and perseverance had indeed been rewarded and this measure of independence took away many of the weapons of the garrison chaplains. The Methodists, however, were only too well aware that the support of General Don had made all the difference. They wrote that "His Excellency has given every proof of his readiness to patronise our cause in this place - and behaved in the most kind manner to both Mr. Davis and his predecessor Mr. Wood, his favour renders access to the troops more easy in many cases, and is highly desirable."<sup>39</sup>

The first burial recorded in the register as having taken place in their new burial ground was that of Susanna Davis Caulfield the seven month daughter of Michael and Sophia. She was buried on 21 July 1818. Methodism may have been better accepted after all this, and in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* for December 26 1818 a report is given about the Orphan Asylum and the British Poor Fund. Collections had been made at the King's Chapel when a sermon was preached by the Rev. M.A. Mackereth and at the Methodist chapel when the preacher was the Rev. T. Davis.

The ministry of Thomas Davis was very much appreciated and several letters sent to London make this clear. The leaders and stewards wrote in August 1817, having heard of God's work in other parts of the world, to inform the Committee that "the Lord is with us also - since the arrival of our worthy and well beloved brother and pastor the Rev. Thomas Davis, God has been carrying on a good work amongst us".<sup>40</sup> They described Davis as "highly respected" and they very much wanted him to stay an extra two years. They even quoted General Don as saying, "Mr. Davis there is one thing in your rules that I do not

approve of, which is the changing of your Ministers so soon when they are found very useful, and much good is being done by them, were my opinion asked I should say you ought to remain longer". This letter was accompanied by one from the 45 Methodists of the 26th Regiment.<sup>41</sup> They stated that their love for their pastor prompted them to petition the Committee that he might continue on the station for a further two years. They praised God "for sending such a man amongst us as our present preacher". However, despite their desire to have Davis stay, both letters acknowledged the impossibility of this because of Jane Davis's health. The leaders wrote that "in consequence of his partner's constitution not being equal to the heat of the climate we are under the disagreeable necessity of giving up all expectations of this nature". One wonders if they had mixed motives in sending the letters, as clearly they wanted Davis to stay while understanding why he could not. It is not clear either whether the Committee fully understood what they were saying, for Davis received a letter from London informing him that he was to stay another year. The church leaders were quite concerned about this and wrote again to say that Davis had not been prepared for such news.<sup>42</sup> They stated that they felt "some misunderstanding has arisen among the Committee relative to the allotted time for the stay of the Missionary in this place" which they had thought was two not three years. Of course they may also have been a little concerned about their own part in all this. The letter went on to state "the disappointment to both himself and partner on receipt of your letter was therefore great especially as Mrs. Davis suffers much during the summer months from the heat of the climate the which she almost dreads again encountering."

Davis himself wrote to the Committee in January 1818 in response to their letter and said, "although I fully expected to be relieved this April (as I was not told when in London anything about the appointment being for three years) yet as the friends here continue to urge me to remain with them and God's work prospers my dear wife and myself after much thought and prayer have concluded to venture upon another year in the name of the Lord."<sup>43</sup> With a touch of humour he went on to say "After preaching to the same people ever since I arrived I am surprised they should desire to hear me another year for I am truly tired of hearing myself and engage with them to be their preacher for another year (if

spared) with much fear. Lord help! If the Lord don't the chapel will be emptied and Society dissolved". Further letters to the Committee describing the importance of the work in Gibraltar and appreciation of Davis's ministry were sent later in 1818 by Captain Tripp and the surgeon of the 26th Regiment, Dr. Coldstream.<sup>44</sup>

However, it seems that the decision to stay was a costly one. On 10 January 1817, just a few months after Thomas and Jane Davis arrived in Gibraltar, they had a son whom they named Thomas Spencer. In October 1818 Davis wrote to the Committee to say that he expected his wife would have had their second child by the time they received the letter.<sup>45</sup> There is, however, no account of any baptism, or burial, in the registers and Davis later referred to the "very great and long affliction of my dear wife".<sup>46</sup> One can only presume that something went wrong in the later stages of the pregnancy and that this caused Jane Davis's illness, perhaps made worse by her difficulty in coping with the climate. They left the Rock sometime in May 1819 and Davis reported fully to the Missionary Committee on his return to England. As a result a letter of thanks was sent to General Don in July 1819 signed by all three of the General Secretaries. In this letter General Don was thanked most warmly for his help and kindness to Davis and the hope was expressed "that Mr. Rees will continue to deserve for himself and the Society under his care the protection and kindness with which his predecessor has been honoured."<sup>47</sup>

Davis served in several appointments in England, the last in Durham in 1828. In 1829 the *Minutes of Conference* recorded that he had "desisted from travelling". No reason was given. One is left to speculate about the reasons, to wonder about Jane Davis's health and to mourn the loss to Methodism of a truly gifted man whose ministry in Gibraltar was so fruitful and so greatly appreciated.

Davis was succeeded by a Welshman called Owen Rees. He had been accepted on trial in 1809 and was admitted into full connexion three years later in 1812 while serving at Ruthin and Denbigh. He had several appointments after this, three of which are described as Welsh preaching in the *Minutes of Conference*. However, it later became clear in Gibraltar that he

had, in fact, preached for 18 years in Welsh and seems never to have preached in English at all. This raises the question about his motives in wanting to become a missionary and about the Committee's wisdom in selecting him, for unfortunately his ministry in Gibraltar, while fruitful in many ways, was to be dogged by dissension and division.

Rees was about thirty one years of age when he went to Gibraltar. He set sail with his wife and teenage son, Thomas, in April 1819. They experienced a difficult voyage with "contrary winds and strong gales" in a "little brig" which he reported "had not been accustomed to take passengers which rendered our situation far from comfortable".<sup>48</sup> So he was grateful the voyage had only taken nineteen days. They arrived on Sunday 25 April and immediately sent word to Davis to report their arrival. He came on board and arranged for them to come on shore. Rees, in this first letter, reported that the Society was in a prosperous state. He could not speak too highly of Davis whose "whole conduct has been such as merits the highest commendation ... he is immensely respected and great regret has been expressed by all classes at his leaving the Rock". A few days after his arrival, Davis took Rees to meet General Don who was actually residing at San Roque at the time. He was "surprised and pleased on my introduction to His Excellency the Governor to observe the kindness and freedom with which he conversed with us, and the high terms in which he spoke of Brother Davis's conduct during his residence upon the Rock, also expressing the greatest regret at his departure at the same time telling me that he should be very happy at all times to serve me in any way, saying that his sole object was to do good in general, that religion was the first thing in this world, as well as for that which is to come. And looking at Mr. Davis observed that that had been their mutual object during Mr. Davis's residence in the Garrison".<sup>49</sup>

Just before Davis left Gibraltar, a small piece of land adjoining the Methodist chapel, owned by a Matthew Smith and containing 473 square feet, was given to him to add to the Methodist property. The chapel was also liable to pay a fixed rate for paving and scavenging the town and they planned to appeal against this. However, in the rush of Davis leaving, the day of appeal in May 1819 passed. They would therefore have to pay for the

year but Rees asked the Committee for advice and information about the rules for exemption from rates for chapels in England. In the reply the Committee advised Rees to apply for exemption and suggested that he used the form of memorial which Davis had apparently written out for him before he left. No further information about this is given by Rees but it was many years before the matter was finally settled.

Once Davis had returned to England Rees began to settle in, making the acquaintance of the stewards and leaders of the chapel. Prices were still high in Gibraltar and they were pressing him to set a sum for board and quarterage. Davis had apparently been persuaded to reduce it from the sum received by all his predecessors, but had found it difficult to make ends meet. The Committee had sent the gift of a book to both Caulfield and Davis, the local preacher, as an acknowledgement of all the work they had done in Gibraltar. The gifts were sent as a result of information Davis gave to the Committee about both men. In the case of Caulfield the Committee had been told of his "services in the cause of the Methodist Society at Gibraltar and of your kindness and attention to their Missionaries appointed to that station".<sup>50</sup> Davis was thanked for his "faithful and diligent labour as a Local Preacher for many years past" and the hope was expressed "that your example, prayers and ministry will long benefit the Society and Congregation at Gibraltar".<sup>51</sup> Rees felt Mr. Herbert too should have received a book, as he was the chapel steward, "a man on whom devolves all the business and everything that belongs to this Society, he has had all to do now for seven years and to him all look up as to Mr. Davis and Mr. Caulfield."<sup>52</sup>

In the summer of that year there were concerns and alarms about the fever but thankfully there was no major outbreak and presumably the work of Methodism was not interrupted. Rees set about establishing an Auxiliary Methodist Missionary Society in Gibraltar. He ran in to some opposition from Davis and Caulfield in particular. They were concerned about the high prices in Gibraltar, the extent of the chapel debt and the difficulties in raising money. Rees described them "as the most inactive men I have ever met with whatever they have been in years that are past",<sup>53</sup> and later said they were "the weakest men I ever saw".<sup>54</sup> He seemed to have lost his high opinion of them already. He went ahead anyway without

their support, held meetings, got subscription cards printed and spoke to the Governor. The result was that he obtained 70 collectors and appointed Captain Tripp and Mr. Pyne as Treasurers. £106 was raised in the first half year. He was clearly delighted with this success despite the fact that he had been unable to obtain the Governor's patronage, although he does not seem to have opposed what he had done. The formation of an Auxiliary Missionary Society would, without doubt, be seen by the Methodist authorities as a very commendable project and it is reported with enthusiasm both in the Missionary Society's annual Report for 1820, and in *Missionary Notices* for 1819. A warm congratulatory letter was sent from the Committee to Capt. Tripp who was instructed to pass on these sentiments to Pyne and Rees also.<sup>55</sup> No doubt it was felt to be important and beneficial for people to be so concerned and involved with missionary work in the same way as was encouraged throughout Methodism in Britain, but the Gibraltar station was still not self-sufficient and continued to depend on financial help from London for many years. So, it might seem rather strange that money was being raised in Gibraltar, remitted to London, and then presumably returned when financial help was needed! On the other hand it may have been more acceptable to seek subscriptions for general missionary work rather than for their own Society, although in the end it probably amounted to the same thing.

On 25 January 1820 a memorial was sent to the Governor asking for an extension to the lease on the Methodist premises. The debt had diminished but still stood at \$4,500, and the leaders felt the length of the lease remaining was not giving much security for lenders and creditors. They were therefore asking for a "further and permanent interest in the premises either in fee or for a long term of years".<sup>56</sup> This was signed by Davis, Caulfield, Herbert, Gillfilang, Gilbert and Fisher. The eventual outcome of this was in fact a refusal. As there were nine years of the lease remaining, they were expected not to seek a renewal until just before the lease was due to expire.

As time went on there were continued differences of opinion between Rees and the leaders and stewards, notably Davis, Caulfield, Herbert, Gilbert, Barnard and Gillfilang. Several incidents took place and as Capt. Tripp explained, "Mr. Rees from his first arrival was never

popular with the class leaders in general".<sup>57</sup> Matters seemed to deteriorate and come to a head shortly after the memorial was sent to the Governor. The accounts of events vary, according to the writer's standpoint, and it is therefore difficult to be clear about what actually happened and why.

The leaders' main cause for complaint concerned Rees's ability to preach. Everyone acknowledged that, as he had not been accustomed to preach in English, he made grammatical errors. Both sides describe his preaching as plain, and there seems to be agreement that he was not the best of preachers. However, the leaders also criticised the content of some sermons, feeling he concentrated too much on the depravity of man and that they could not always follow his train of thought. They felt he had no calling to preach and that they received no benefit from his preaching. Others disagreed, and Pyne wrote that "a complaint of this kind issuing from the source it does - persons in low stations of life and having no pretension to learning I conceive - becomes rather ridiculous when men of education such as Capt. Tripp, Mr. Coldstream and others are not offended".<sup>58</sup> The question of status and rank seems to have played a part in the dispute as this was probably the first time that more educated men had been part of the Methodist Church in Gibraltar which may have threatened the leaders. They did come from humbler backgrounds which were different from these new arrivals - Capt. Tripp, Dr. Coldstream, surgeon of the 26th Regiment, Lieutenant Bailey of the Royal Navy and Mr. Pyne who all supported Rees. Certainly Rees felt the leaders regarded themselves as equal to the minister and "boldly assert that in the Church of Christ all should be on a level and that to pay respect to their minister is only the remains of Popery. The plausible argument on which they build their system is that the preacher is only the servant of all, and as such he ought to be considered."<sup>59</sup> He even suggested that his predecessor had been too lenient with them and clearly did not agree with this view. To some degree at least it seems the dispute was a power struggle. Davis and Caulfield had been leaders for around twenty years and for several years, in the absence of any minister, had led the Society, but Rees clearly saw himself as the decision maker.

The leaders did not criticise Rees's doctrine or moral standing. They did not deny that much good was being done although they were critical that this was only with the military. They did feel that Rees was extravagant and that he took more than his due in his allowances, a view the Committee seems to have shared as he was ordered by it "to bring his ordinary expenditure within the allowances made by those regulations of the Committee made in May 1819".<sup>60</sup> They found him high-handed and overbearing and felt he did not listen to, or understand, their point of view. They felt he was a little lax in discipline. Discussions within the leaders' meetings became very heated at times. Davis and Caulfield withdrew for a while but were persuaded to return by Coldstream who seems several times to have tried to adopt a mediation role. Finally, matters came to a head on Sunday 6 February 1820. The leaders did not stay for the morning communion service. They left as they felt unable to participate in the service because of the tension existing between themselves and Rees. However, this was the first time that Bailey and Pyne had taken part in the sacrament, so it was a special service of public commitment for them, and Rees therefore felt the leaders' action was rude and also made everyone present aware that there was a problem. He therefore decided to lay the whole matter before the Society. The leaders urged him not to, feeling "he would make a breach he could never heal".<sup>61</sup> He went ahead anyway and, after the Sunday evening service, discussed all the issues before the Society as a whole, quoting from private conversations and from those that had taken place within the leaders' meetings which they felt was a breach of confidentiality. They also felt they had little time to defend themselves as Rees kept talking close to the time the soldiers had to leave to be back in barracks on time.

The leaders met together, by themselves, on 9 February to discuss matters and drew up a list of resolutions which they sent to Rees and to the Committee. They offered their services as usual and decided to continue attending the chapel but would meet separately as a class. They resolved to lay the whole matter before the Committee, which they did in a lengthy report. Rees did not reply to their letter but, since they were meeting separately in class, he regarded them as having left the Society and, in due course, other leaders were appointed to their positions. Rees also wrote a full report to the Committee and Capt.

Tripp, Mr. Pyne, Lieutenant Bailey and Dr. Coldstream all wrote in support of Rees. A letter signed by 75 soldiers and wives was sent, though some of the soldiers later retracted their support, saying that many had not known what they were signing. It is possible that they were encouraged to do this by the leaders, and only six soldiers signed this second letter. At least three of them had signed both. The other three signatures were too difficult to read for this to be checked. Rees denied soliciting anyone to write in his support but he certainly did do so in the case of Captain Tripp. The leaders were aware of Rees's support saying, "we are not ignorant that Mr. Rees has the interest and influence of two or three individuals of note and who from real pure motives are led to act but who are altogether ignorant of real facts as it respects his behaviour to us."<sup>62</sup> After these events the leaders gained the impression, from the way he announced a communion service, that Rees would not administer the Lord's Supper to them and so wrote to ask him if he would, as they did not want to be denied the sacrament at the actual service. He refused to do so saying he could not give it to those "who have evinced a conduct so gross and unworthy".<sup>63</sup> They did, however, continue to attend the chapel although they reported Rees making pointed observations about them in his sermons and prayers. All of this was reported to the Committee and thus the matter was fully laid before them and their decision was eagerly awaited by both sides.

Meanwhile the work of the Mission continued. Contact with the Bible Society was maintained and Rees distributed some Bibles from them. He was wary of giving them away free and tells how one soldier had attempted to sell on a Bible he had been given. He and Coldstream distributed Bibles and tracts in Spain and were thrown out of the church in San Roque for not bowing to the altar. Rees engaged two people to sell Bibles in the market. He liaised with a Dr. Parker, who was involved in supplying Bibles to a contact in Málaga, and with Mrs. Nicklin who continued to sell books through her shop. She reported in a letter that "Mr. Rees and other gentlemen have exerted themselves in forming a Bible Society but they have not yet succeeded".<sup>64</sup> They were all hopeful that opportunities of doing work in Spain would improve. Rees actually also made the suggestion that a young minister just starting out should be appointed in addition to the married preacher to learn

Spanish and to work with the twelve to fourteen thousand souls on the Rock who spoke Spanish and who might also be able to branch out into neighbouring Spanish towns. He continued his work with the Auxiliary Missionary Society and his usual business of preaching and visiting. Despite the rift with the leaders, his ministry did continue to bear fruit.

However, this time of waiting was clearly very difficult for both sides who were each convinced they were in the right. Further correspondence with the Committee followed and life was made difficult as everyone in the Society was aware of what had happened and people outside it also knew. The leaders' bewilderment at what had happened is evident in their letters. They could not understand how a minister could have treated them as Rees had. They reminded the Committee of all their years of work in Gibraltar and the fact that they had had no problems with previous ministers, some of whom they asked to write to the Committee on their behalf. They sent a memorial to Conference, dated 17 July 1820, in which they asked for Rees to be removed and suggested that either Davis or Griffith be asked to return. Conference began on 26 July that year so it probably did not arrive in time. There is nothing in the *Minutes of Conference* and they never received a reply. They later expressed the hope that "a kind and loving man" would be sent to them.<sup>65</sup>

Rees also expressed his feelings about his difficult situation and the rugged path he had to tread, but he did have more support than the leaders and was in a much stronger position. He was clearly also angry and upset by what had happened. He did ask the Committee's opinion on his actions but overall felt he was in the right, stating "what a support and consolation is a clear conscience".<sup>66</sup> He did not express any loving concern for these men who were in his pastoral care. Instead he was reported to have referred to them as villains and ignorant fellows who were activated by a diabolical spirit. He made no attempt to seek a reconciliation and several times expressed the view that the Society was better off without them. "It is my firm opinion .... that whilst such characters had anything to do as leaders and stewards it would never prosper. In losing them I hope it will ultimately prove an everlasting blessing to the cause in this place."<sup>67</sup> The whole affair must have been very

difficult for Mrs. Rees too and in July she was reported to be unwell, partly attributed to the heat in the house which Rees felt was not suitable for the climate. She eventually spent some time at San Roque and by October was back in Gibraltar and reported to be much better.

There must have been faults on both sides. Rees does seem to have been high-handed and lacking in pastoral concern. The leaders may not have been prepared to move on, to do new things or do things differently. It may simply have been a case of clashing personalities and a power struggle between them. It certainly resulted in the polarisation of the two camps - the old guard and the new. However, one would have hoped that men of long standing Christian witness and experience could have found a way to resolve their differences. Instead both sides awaited the Committee's decision, both sure it would be in their favour. Yet it is hard to see what the Committee could do. They were far away, receiving conflicting accounts, communication was slow and there was no possibility of sending out an arbitrator so theirs was no easy decision. The tragedy, however, was that months went by without a decision of any kind.

In further letters both sides expressed great regret at the delay in hearing from the Committee. Finally, in June, Rees informed the Society that the Committee had told him they hoped to write in July as at present they "had business of more importance to attend to".<sup>68</sup> Missionary affairs around the world were expanding rapidly and no doubt the rift in Gibraltar was of minor significance in comparison with the ever increasing calls upon the Missionary Committee. In 1816 there were 21,097 foreign members with 97 travelling preachers appointed to foreign stations, excluding America. By 1820 there were 27,442 members with 124 travelling preachers and 4 supernumeraries stationed abroad, which gives some indication of the scale of expansion. In Gibraltar however relations between the two sides in the Society remained strained and each solicited support and reported incidents to the Committee. Rees felt the chapel affairs needed to be put in better order as Davis was the only trustee in Gibraltar, although Rev. Thomas Davis had obtained power of attorney from Griffith. Zacharias Ledger had long since returned to Ireland and there is a document

in the church archives from him resigning as a trustee, but he seems not to have been replaced. This meant Davis still had responsibilities particularly for the chapel finances, and the collection of seat rents, which was very awkward under the circumstances.

By the end of September no word had come. The leaders saw in the *Minutes of Conference* that Rees had been appointed to Gibraltar for another year, and as all their letters to the Committee had gone unanswered, they were still denied communion and their "feelings were constantly hurt in his [Rees's] public discourses as also by his slanderous assertions for these past eight months", they felt they had had enough. So, they separated from the Society along "with those who feel with us" and on 25 September took a room to meet in.<sup>69</sup> Shortly afterwards a Mrs. West, who had been in Society for many years, was expelled by Rees because she had met with them in their room.

It later transpired that the Committee had written on 30 June, but these letters never arrived. Duplicates were finally sent and appear to have arrived in November. Although at the time of writing the leaders were still attending services they were regarded as having left the Society and they were criticised for having done so. They denied this, arguing that Rees had thrust them out and that they would never have completely left in September if the Committee had written earlier. The Committee argued that some of the matters were trivial and that not profiting from preaching could sometimes be caused by a want of prayer which they also denied. The Committee urged reconciliation stating that they had "laid it upon Mr. Rees to throw no obstacle in the way" and adding "do not plead that you have been grieved, none of us can keep our place in religious society, without being at times grieved".<sup>70</sup> However, sadly matters had gone too far for reconciliation and neither side was prepared to make the first move. The leaders still wanted Rees removed and altogether were very disappointed in the Committee's response.

Rees was criticised too, firstly in having the public discussion on a Sunday evening after a service of communion and secondly by too often placing himself in situations likely "to excite and court opposition".<sup>71</sup> He was reminded that the former leaders had "been for

years steady and useful members of the society and for this you should give them credit at all times." He was urged to open the way to their return and whenever they did to promise that past grievances would not be mentioned. However, Rees seems to have found the letter almost irrelevant stating that it "arrived too late to prevent the mischief which was done." He felt their observations arose "either from a misconception or a misrepresentation of the subject" and did not seem willing to accept the blame either.<sup>72</sup> By this time the Committee had another preacher in view for the station which they mentioned in a letter to Coldstream, and Gill mentioned in a letter to Caulfield, so Rees was rightly upset and perplexed as to why the Committee had not mentioned it to him.

The stalemate between the two sides continued and a reconciliation was not even attempted. In February 1821, the leaders reported to the Committee that Rees had been found drunk and had been unable to take his class meeting. Gillfilang then sent him a copy of a pamphlet Rees had himself written on drunkenness. Rees threatened to take him to the magistrate but took no further action apart from telling the Committee. He did not state his guilt or innocence, but it seems from later correspondence that he was completely innocent and that the whole affair was based on a misunderstanding. However, the incident proves what a sorry state of affairs now existed. The months prior to their departure must have been very difficult for the Rees family and in March 1821 Mrs. Rees was again reported to be unwell both because of the climate and "the treatment we have received".<sup>73</sup>

There is also one puzzling matter which will probably never be explained. In the baptismal register there are nineteen entries of baptisms taken by Rees. The entries all originally stated: "Baptized at ..... by me, O. Rees, Missionary". In fourteen cases the words "by me" and "missionary" have been crossed out and the name Geo. Crusoe added. Earlier researchers concluded that Crusoe was a missionary and added his name to the list of ministers, but this is not true. One of the entries actually refers to the baptism of Crusoe's own son and his profession is given as "collector of assessed rates". This may have been an attempt to express the view of those who felt Rees was not a suitable missionary, but the real reason may never be known.

So Rees prepared to leave Gibraltar but, before he did, he received news of the death of Captain Tripp who had left Gibraltar in March 1820 because of ill-health. Rees paid tribute to this courageous young man who had worked so hard for the cause of Methodism and felt he "lived on in the hearts of all who knew him".<sup>74</sup> In his journal Tripp referred to his growing ill-health in January 1820 and his feelings about this in relation to his faith in God. He was much affected by a sermon Rees preached on the text "This year shalt thou die", but despite all he felt he had not "lost the divine peace which passeth understanding".<sup>75</sup> He spent time at San Roque, considered to be healthier, but was forced to return to England where he died in December 1820 at the home of his mother in Sussex shortly after his thirtieth birthday.

His contribution to the Society in Gibraltar however was not finished for he left them a large legacy of £600 to pay off the debt on the chapel. Any surplus was to go to the Mission Fund to which he had also left £50. In addition he bequeathed £100 to the Rev. Thomas Davis, £50 to Rees and £20 to Caulfield whose circumstances were apparently very difficult. This legacy relieved the chapel of its burdensome debt and could hardly have come at a better time, with a new preacher coming and the prospect of a new beginning.

## **CHAPTER FOUR    EVANGELISATION - A Mission to the Spanish on the Rock (1821-1828)**

After all the difficulties the Missionary Committee may have given more thought to the appointment in Gibraltar because for the first time the person appointed, William Croscombe, was an experienced missionary. He was a Devonian and had been accepted on trial in 1810 at Shepton Mallet. The following year he was stationed in Canada, where he was to serve for most of his ministry. He served in five different stations there over the next eight years and then returned to England because of problems with his health, which seem to have been caused by overwork, as a result of a shortage of missionaries. In 1819 and the following year he was stationed in Nottingham. Then in 1821 he was appointed to Gibraltar. At some time, before he left England, he visited the Mission House in London and read most of the correspondence that had been received from Gibraltar. He was given strict instructions not to make any decisions without reference to the Committee. He was also instructed to keep a journal, as were all missionaries.

So William Croscombe with his wife, Ann, and their family journeyed to Falmouth where they were to embark for Gibraltar. They were delayed on the way and arrived there in mid April 1821 after a trying journey. Unfortunately, the delay meant that Ann was advised, at the last minute, not to sail with her family. It seems likely that she was in the last stages of pregnancy and that to embark so late on was too risky. Croscombe expressed his great distress at this separation in his first letter to the Committee from Gibraltar.<sup>1</sup> They were apart for nine weeks but were eventually re-united in Gibraltar in good health and spirits, on 21 June. In the letter Croscombe wrote of his safe arrival in Gibraltar with his "dear little children" after a passage of thirteen days. Rees had come on board to meet him and he had been joyfully received by him, his wife, Coldstream, Bailey and Pyne. However, he reported that they had been very anxious about what he would do about the division in the church. The former leaders were apparently expecting Croscombe to call Rees to account, believing they would then be vindicated and restored to their former positions in the Society. Davis asked to see him soon after his arrival and expressed this view, placing the blame for the

division firmly on Rees. Croscombe acknowledged in his letter that his position would have been very difficult indeed had he not had clear instructions from the Committee, which he explained to Davis were to receive the Society from Rees and not to undo anything he had done without consulting the Committee. Davis was bitterly disappointed and saw this decision as an endorsement of Rees's actions which Croscombe implied that it was. However, at this stage it was probably sensible to leave things as they were to give Croscombe time to make a more objective assessment as someone who had not been involved in the dispute. In addition, as it was the Committee's decision, it freed Croscombe from any responsibility for it, enabling the former leaders to blame the Committee and remain free to make up their minds about Croscombe himself. Overall it seems to have been a wise decision although the former leaders were angry and upset by it. Herbert wrote a final letter to Rees signing himself "Your much injured brother in the gospel".<sup>2</sup> He sent a copy to the Committee along with a letter which was endorsed by Caulfield, Gilbert, Gillfilang and Barnard.<sup>3</sup> Herbert went over many of the aspects of the dispute and clearly felt very much misjudged and very upset by the Committee's decision.

Croscombe and Rees spent a few weeks together, no doubt discussing the situation and preparing for the hand-over. They appointed five new trustees, including Pyne, Bailey and Crusoe although they also wondered if it would be better for the Committee to act as trustees because of the fluctuating and unsettled state of the Society in Gibraltar. One of the first jobs of the new trustees was to write to the Committee to ask permission to raise the preacher's house by one storey as it was not big enough to accommodate the whole Croscombe family.<sup>4</sup> Comments were also made about the size of the chapel which was not large enough to seat everyone comfortably but, because of the way it was built, no one could see how it could be enlarged. Croscombe later described the house as consisting of only one bedroom measuring eight feet by thirteen. There was another small room which he felt did not deserve to be called a bedroom. In addition the drains passed directly through the house. He had been urged, therefore, to move to another house which he did, but this cost \$16 a month in rent. The Society was anxious to receive instructions and "mailed packet after packet in hopes of receiving some communication in answer to the suggested

alterations".<sup>5</sup> When they still heard nothing they finally decided to go ahead with a modified scheme which was cheaper than raising the house a storey higher. A store-room in the chapel yard was converted into a vestry. By raising this to the height of the house an extra bedroom was added and a cellar was built under the vestry. The work was finished by the end of October and the Croscombes returned to the Mission House. The work cost about £100 which was added to the chapel debt, though this was now very much lower as a result of Tripp's legacy.

Croscombe took charge of the work on 25 May 1821. Rees and his family left Gibraltar on 1 June. They returned to England and were stationed at Shepton Mallet for two years. A further seven appointments followed, the last five of which lasted only one year, and all were in England. In 1832 Rees finally returned to Wales, to Carmarthen, though to English, not Welsh, preaching. This may have been a supernumerary post as his health was declining. He died on 22 August 1832 while only in his forty fourth year and his twenty fourth year of ministry. A brief obituary appeared in the *Conference Minutes* of 1833.

Soon after Rees left Gibraltar Croscombe informed the former leaders that the way was open for their return to Society, on the condition that they were willing to acknowledge the impropriety of their conduct to the Committee and to the Society. Davis, Caulfield, Gilbert and Mrs. West all applied at different times to return to the Society but all continued to justify their conduct and blame Rees for what had happened. Indeed Caulfield said he would rather jump over the ramparts of Gibraltar than acknowledge wrong conduct on their behalf! However, they were all attending chapel regularly and professing to gain much benefit from doing so. They were still unhappy about the Committee's decision and conditions but all parties seem to have accepted Croscombe. There is a difference in the tone of his letters, for in them Croscombe, like many of his predecessors, showed a greater humility and a desire to serve God on whom he depended than Rees. It seems the Society had been sent the kind and loving man they had asked for, but it was still difficult to find a way to resolve the situation.

A breakthrough in the impasse came towards the end of 1821 when Croscombe discovered that the allegation of drunkenness had been made against Rees. He had not read the letter about this while in London and, after investigation, was anxious to make it clear that the charge had been false. Rees had apparently fallen while painting his house, and the fact that he had needed to be helped indoors and was unable to meet with his class had been misinterpreted. Croscombe wrote to the Committee in November 1821 making all this clear.<sup>6</sup> The letter was carried to England by Coldstream who had obtained leave of absence for a few months. Before he left Gibraltar he had taken an affectionate leave of all the former leaders and advised them most earnestly to return to the Society. A few days later Davis went to see Croscombe and they discussed the allegation of drunkenness. Davis acknowledged that he should have made a stricter enquiry into the whole affair, before reporting it to the Committee. He put this in writing for Rees and the Committee saying, "this act with some others I now see to have been unwise and improper and would have been better left undone, but all I can do now is to express my deep regret". He wrote a brief note for consideration by the leaders' meeting and the Committee about his "earnest desire to return to the Society", acknowledging his "sincere sorrow for the unpleasant things which have taken place some of which as far as I have been concerned I see to have been unwise and improper". The leaders' meeting agreed to his request. Croscombe therefore wrote to ask the Committee's permission for Davis to return. He enclosed his letters and recommended that they agreed to the request, asking for the matter to be dealt with at an "early opportunity".<sup>7</sup> Some of the others, including Caulfield, followed suit, sending similar apologies and requests, but three decided to wait until the outcome of these first applications was known. Croscombe also reported that they were showing a much better spirit, particularly Caulfield, but it is not clear what had caused this change of heart. Time may have played its part and a growing confidence and trust in Croscombe whom they clearly liked and respected. Perhaps there was a recognition that the division had not been entirely their fault and, no doubt, it was easier to apologise by linking the apology to a specific incident where they had clearly been in the wrong. Whatever the reason it was time to go forward and engage in the work of mission which was seen to be the primary role of the church. And, when in due course all returned to the Society, they played their part in

this work.

Links with the Bible Society became much stronger and better organised largely through the efforts of Lieutenant John Bailey who worked tirelessly to circulate the scriptures and to preach the gospel to all who would listen. He first wrote to the Bible Society in April 1821 asking for a supply of books, because he felt his situation in Gibraltar gave him a very good opportunity of conversing with people from many different nations.<sup>8</sup> He reported French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, German, American, Greek, Arabic and Turkish people as continually in Gibraltar. In September of the same year he wrote to Lord Teignmouth, the President of the Society, offering his services and expressing his particular concern for seamen, amongst whom he had worked for thirty years.<sup>9</sup> He signed himself, John William Bailey, Lieutenant in the Royal Navy and Agent for Transports at Gibraltar. The Bible Society agreed to send some scriptures and requested Bailey, Coldstream, Croscombe, Pyne and Dr. Parker to act as a Committee for their distribution and to supply Mrs. Nicklin. They were asked to sell the books, wherever possible, however low the price. Lord Teignmouth also wrote to the Earl of Chatham,<sup>10</sup> now Governor of Gibraltar, to whom the Methodists had sent a formal letter of welcome on his arrival in November 1821 assuring him of their loyalty to King and country.<sup>11</sup> Lord Teignmouth asked for his support for an auxiliary Bible Society in Gibraltar. There is no record of any reply but it seems such support was not forthcoming. The garrison chaplain, Dr. Hughes, was involved with an Auxiliary to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge which the Governor did support, and perhaps he felt this was sufficient. Without his patronage an Auxiliary Society was not possible, and so instead a Corresponding Committee was formed. The 1822 Report of the Bible Society refers to previous efforts in Gibraltar as "desultory and occasional", and reported on "a more systematic and regular constitution" in the formation of a Corresponding Committee to attend to the needs of "the local population, the shipping etc." as well as trying to establish communications with Spain and Morocco.<sup>12</sup> By the following year the Committee had circulated an amazing 3,175 copies of the scriptures.

Bailey acted as Secretary and sometimes also as Treasurer to the Corresponding Committee. He wrote numerous letters to the Bible Society reporting on progress and ordering stock. When it was suggested that a proper depository was needed for the storage of books, he offered a room attached to his own home, sending books as required both to Mrs. Nicklin and the Wesleyan Mission House. He made contact with a friar in Tangier and had high hopes that he would write an Arabic translation. He kept in touch with him, even visiting him, but the translation was never produced. He had a variety of other correspondents and sought to circulate the scriptures as widely as possible, though it was difficult to get them into Spain as such books were prohibited by Spanish law.

One means of distributing the scriptures was on board ship. In August 1821 Croscombe reported:

We held a meeting on board ship, for the first time in the Bay of Gibraltar. This is intended as a preparatory step towards forming a Society for the religious benefit of seamen in this Garrison, similar to those formed in the sea-port towns of England. Of the importance of such a Society at Gibraltar there can be no doubt where, it is said, more than 3,000 sail of shipping anchor annually, a considerable part of which are English or American.<sup>13</sup>

The result of this was the formation of the Bethel Society and the minutes of its meetings are in the church archives. The first Committee meeting took place on 4 September 1821. Included on the Committee were Croscombe, Parker, Coldstream, Bailey, Pyne and five others. They linked with the parent Society in London, printed notices to advertise themselves and organised a depository for their Bethel flag. It seems that any ship willing to host a service collected the flag and flew it to advertise the fact that a service would be taking place so that others could join if they wished. Services were held every Sunday, weather permitting, and occasionally on weekdays. Tracts, scriptures and other publications were sold and distributed. In January 1822 Bailey proposed Davis, Caulfield and Herbert as Committee members. The first two accepted, but did not join the Committee until the summer of 1823 when Crusoe also joined. Herbert declined but joined the following year. In 1824 the preaching extended to the lateen craft, small Spanish and

Portuguese trading vessels, with ten to fifteen people on board. Three or four were visited on Sunday afternoons and Croscombe felt this was a very useful opportunity as there were "at no time less than one hundred of these craft not more than a pistol shot from the shore."<sup>14</sup>

Work with the soldiers also continued, although this was often hard for the missionary because of the loss of friends and members when regiments changed and also because of continued opposition. Several soldiers of the 64th regiment joined the Society after their arrival in Gibraltar and, in August 1822, Croscombe reported on a small revival amongst them.<sup>15</sup> A sergeant who was "much alive to God" had worked hard to encourage and strengthen the five or six men belonging to the Society by inviting them to his room for prayer. More had joined them until the room was full. "Then to their astonishment another sergeant came forward and offered his room for prayer and when that room was filled, a third came forward in like manner." The result was that the men showed a great desire to hear the word of God and the preaching room at the South became crowded with them. Twenty were admitted to the Society, of whom nineteen stood fast, and later this number increased. Unfortunately, this led to opposition. The room at the South was considered "a very important auxiliary to this Mission in consequence of its being in the very centre of three of the regiments stationed here".<sup>16</sup> However, it was also near to the hospital where two or three medical officers lived who were opposed to the Methodists. They complained that the sound of singing and prayer four times a week was offensive to them and an annoyance to the patients. The patients, however, expressed the opposite view and said they did not mind, but nevertheless Croscombe was sent for by the chief magistrate. He seems to have held his own well during the meeting and left feeling that there was nothing the civil authorities could do. The medical officers then turned their attention to the regimental commanders. The colonel of the 27th regiment issued an order forbidding the men from attending worship. This involved thirteen members of the Society. They prepared a memorial to the colonel to challenge the order but no details are given as to the outcome of this. They were not forbidden to attend the chapel in town but in fact were unable to do so because of the distance from the barracks and the nature of their military

duties. In addition the 64th regiment was removed from its barracks at the south and quartered in several different barracks which meant that the opportunity to meet with the sergeants was lost and several had backslidden. Croscombe does not say whether this move had anything to do with the opposition to the Methodists but he did report that the Garrison chaplain was hostile to their cause and that "Our own good friend the Doctor [Coldstream] has had a dreadful time of it since his return from England."<sup>17</sup> The result of all this was that the attendance at the room at the South became poor, although the chapel in town was reported to be well attended. Then, in the autumn of 1822, Coldstream and his regiment, the 26th, left Gibraltar. This involved a loss of sixteen members of the Society, including three leaders, which meant for Croscombe a loss of many whose fellowship and support he valued.

The room at the South was in fact in rather a dilapidated condition and was rented for \$4 a month from the "Jewish Poor", on a rather uncertain tenure. A memorial was sent to the Governor in July 1822 asking for the grant of a piece of land at the South in order to build their own place of worship. They had consulted with the Chief Engineer and "obtained his consent and professional good wishes", but two months later they were informed that the Governor would not consent to their request.<sup>18</sup> This would probably have meant moving further from the hospital and might have avoided further complaints, but it seems the general opposition to them was too strong for their plans to succeed. There was further correspondence on this subject between Croscombe and the Committee about the possibility of the Committee writing directly to the Governor. It is not clear whether they did so, but certainly no land was granted at this time.

Croscombe also kept in contact with some of the soldiers after they had left the Rock. He placed a small group in the 80th regiment under the care of a young corporal when they were sent to Malta. He kept in touch with the progress of the work there and he wrote to the Committee on several occasions to plead for a missionary to be sent to Malta, which did eventually happen.

Croscombe also fulfilled the ordinary functions of a missionary, preaching, visiting people in their homes, in hospital and in prison, ensuring that the work went forward through class meetings, prayer meetings, Bible study and fellowship. He sent extracts from his journal to England giving accounts of some of this work and of conversations and conversions. The Auxiliary Missionary Society continued to raise money with some success although latterly Croscombe was frequently compelled to complain at the lack of support from England through their failure to send regular supplies of *Missionary Notices* and other missionary publications which he felt were essential for the maintenance of interest in missionary affairs. A Sunday School was formed in March 1822. Bailey was asked to act as Superintendent and, despite feeling that it was "an office quite novel to me", he accepted the post working with a committee of nine members.<sup>19</sup> By October the Town branch had 108 scholars with an average morning attendance of 24 and afternoon attendance of 60, but the removal of the 26th regiment left only 49 scholars. At the South branch average attendance in both the morning and afternoon was between 10 and 15. There were some difficulties at first over the children's behaviour, but these seem to have been effectively dealt with. Special anniversary services were held in 1823 and 1824 and, by then, there were 103 children with 12 teachers and an average attendance of about 80. Much satisfaction was expressed at the success of this venture.

There were also practical matters to be considered. There was correspondence about the need for a water cistern at the Mission House, which illustrates the difficulties in Gibraltar with the water supply. Croscombe wrote:

Persons not acquainted with Gibraltar can scarcely conceive the difficulty the inhabitants labour under in obtaining a regular supply of good water, especially at the hot season of the year this invaluable article is the most wanted. All the tanks within the Garrison belong to the Government and are filled with rain water. The troops, the navy and all persons in government employ are supplied from this source and if there is any surplus the inhabitants can have it by paying for the carriage of it. But in the event of a dry season we have no access to it and are reduced to the necessity of using water brought from Neutral ground which is in general brackish.<sup>20</sup>

Most houses of any size or respectability had their own cistern "even if they have to build them under their sitting rooms, which is frequently the case". The cost of building one was estimated at about £50 which in the long run would be much cheaper, as they had to pay between 2s 6d and 3s a week with the "inconvenience of being at the Mercy or Caprice of your waterman". There was also correspondence about the best way of seeking a renewal of the lease before it ran out on 1 January 1829, when it was noted that the debt on the premises was \$1,600.<sup>21</sup>

Finally, there was concern about the best way to open up work amongst the Spanish. In February 1823 Croscombe reported that a Benevolent Society had been formed in the Garrison with the aim of assisting sick and distressed foreigners. One of the main visitors was a Mr. John Quirell whom he described as "just beginning in the good way" and as a member of the Spanish church.<sup>22</sup> He was often asked by the Spanish to read the scriptures and to pray in Spanish and had asked them if they would like a missionary of their own, who would learn their language. This idea, first suggested by Rees, had been well received. Croscombe, Bailey and Pyne all wrote separate letters to the Committee in support of the idea. In addition Quirell had been asked for tracts and information from people from the interior of Spain. This led to the hope that work could be done not only amongst the Spanish inhabitants of the Rock but also in Spain itself, especially in towns like San Roque just across the border. At the end of 1823 Croscombe reported that several Spanish gentlemen had taken refuge in Gibraltar after the fall of Cádiz to the French. Forty or fifty of them attended some services in the chapel and seemed to have benefited from this despite the language difficulties, which Croscombe felt was a further indication of the possibilities in Spain if a work could be started there.

Thus, under Croscombe's ministry, the work of evangelisation expanded considerably with many new initiatives. He reported that the Society was in a settled state; "all is harmony and love"<sup>23</sup> and "a most happy degree of unity and affection presides among us."<sup>24</sup> He had healed the divisions and enabled people to work together to take the church forward in many different ways. In June 1823 he began to think about his own next appointment. His

health had been good most of his time in Gibraltar. There were no serious fever outbreaks although in 1821 there was sickness among the children. The Croscombe's children "have been spared to us while I have followed many of our neighbours to the silent tomb" as scarlet fever, measles and other distressing complaints had been "alarmingly prevalent among the children in this Garrison".<sup>25</sup> It is not clear how many children they had. The chapel accounts up to December 1823 included an allowance for three children which probably did not include Elizabeth Emma who was born on 17 December 1822 and baptised by the Rev. James Pringle, a Presbyterian minister, who spent some time in Gibraltar but did not stay long enough to establish a proper church. Croscombe wanted to return to Nova Scotia but, in fact, was offered a post in Newfoundland which he accepted. He then received some distressing news of his family in England and felt it was his duty to return home. He does not give any details about the nature of the problem in his letters to the Committee asking permission to defer his appointment, but he was clearly very concerned about his family. It seems that permission was not given, although he was offered the opportunity to go to England in 1825. Croscombe accepted this with amazing equanimity, seeing it as the will of Providence.

The Croscombes hoped to leave Gibraltar at the end of May 1824, but the Committee wrote to them in March to say that they had not succeeded in finding a successor. They had already partly packed but were quite happy to stay on a few months. However, Croscombe cautioned the Committee "against sending a man to Gibraltar in whose preaching abilities and sound judgement and experience of mankind you have not the fullest confidence" as it was "on some accounts a difficult station."<sup>26</sup> Although Croscombe never criticised Rees directly in any of his letters he does not seem to have fitted this description very well.

In June 1824 Croscombe heard that the Committee had appointed James Dixon. He was very concerned about the planned timing of his arrival in the summer. "I almost tremble for himself and family as the summer is extraordinarily hot".<sup>27</sup> Croscombe had hoped, and had been instructed, to welcome Dixon before leaving, but opportunities of passage to Newfoundland were becoming scarcer as time went on and in the end he was forced to

leave shortly before Dixon arrived. He sent a last letter from Cádiz in August explaining this.<sup>28</sup> He had been delayed there for several days but then sailed on to Newfoundland, where he was soon serving as the Chairman of the District. He remained in Canada for the rest of his ministry. Findlay and Holdsworth said of him that "scarcely any man has inspired more affection amongst all classes of people".<sup>29</sup> His ministry certainly turned round a very difficult situation in Gibraltar and enabled the church to move forward together.

The new missionary, James Dixon, was born on 28 October 1788. He became a Methodist at the age of twenty. He then spent several years in study and at some time in his life gained a doctorate. He was accepted on trial in 1812 when serving in Hereford and Ledbury and was admitted into full connexion in 1816 while stationed in Cardiff. Gibraltar was his seventh appointment. He arrived with his wife Mary and their children in late July or early August 1824. Unfortunately, the fears so often expressed about the foolishness of sending missionaries to arrive in the summer were all too quickly realised in their case. Pyne reported to the Committee that:

Our new missionary, Mr. Dixon, appears to give satisfaction to the Society and congregation but I am sorry to say he has suffered much from the climate having come here in the summer ..... strangers from England coming here during the sultry months have enough to do to maintain tolerable health and have seldom energy enough to attend to any labours.<sup>30</sup>

The health needs of his family, who were all affected by the climate, and himself, were to predominate in the short time they were in Gibraltar and there are few records of Dixon's work there. A long letter from him appeared in *Missionary Notices* concentrating almost entirely on the plans for a Spanish Mission. In fact Conference had already agreed to send a second missionary, as suggested by Rees and Croscombe, for this work. The 1824 Missionary Society's Report gave the reason for doing so as "the opportunity which presents itself for visiting numerous foreigners, and particularly Spaniards, conversing with them on religious subjects, and distributing among them the Scriptures and useful Tracts. This will probably lead to the establishment of a public and regular service in the Spanish language at the Mission Chapel".<sup>31</sup> Dixon described one of the key figures in this new

development, John Quirell, already mentioned by Croscombe. His great great grandson today lives in Valdetorres and has provided some useful information from his researches into his family tree. John Baptist Quirell (sometimes known as Juan Bautista) was born in Gibraltar on 4 August 1795. He married Antonia Cerudo, from Tarifa, on 25 February 1818 in the Roman Catholic Church in Gibraltar. His parents Claudio and Anne Rose Bremon were both French. At some time he became involved with the Methodist Society and four children were baptised in the Methodist chapel, three daughters born in December 1821, June 1824 and March 1830 and a son born in May 1832. As already stated, in 1823 Croscombe described Quirell as "just beginning in the good way" and as a member of the Spanish church but it seems that his connection with Methodism had started before that. Dixon described him as "a man of deep piety and an excellent spirit" and reported that he visited between a dozen and twenty families sometimes with some of their neighbours to read and expound the scriptures and to pray. He was also involved in visiting Spanish ships in the Bay, working with the Bethel Society Committee from spring 1824. Weekly Spanish services had just begun, one in the chapel and one at the South, at which Quirell preached. Although attendance had not been good, it was hoped it would form the basis of a greater and permanent work. Those who understood Spanish reported that Quirell's preaching "both as to matter and language is highly respectable" and Dixon added that he thought "from his excellent spirit he is likely to be of great use in the work". He hoped they might soon be able to form a Spanish class. Dixon himself was attempting to learn Spanish but "owing to my engagements and afflictions I do not make the progress I desire". He also urged the formation of a Spanish school and recommended Quirell be attached to the Mission "either as a schoolmaster or Assistant Missionary" and felt he would be very useful in either or both these tasks.<sup>32</sup>

Thus there were already the beginnings of a new work for the new missionary to build on. Although, he had been appointed solely to work amongst the Spanish speaking inhabitants in Gibraltar, it was also hoped that there might be possibilities for work in Spain itself, despite the difficulties there. The missionary appointed was William Barber. His brother, Aquila, also a Wesleyan minister, later compiled a biography of William using material from

his letters and journal. There is therefore a wealth of information available about his life and work which gives a greater insight into what life was like for this young missionary particularly in Gibraltar.

William Barber was born in Bristol on 25 April 1799 into a Christian family, his father being a Methodist and his mother a Baptist. He had several brothers and sisters. In June 1814 he and Aquila gained a more personal sense of joyful salvation while being prayed for at a private prayer meeting. William was already a Sunday School teacher and in 1816, when nearly seventeen years, he was received as a local preacher in the Bristol Circuit. He devoted himself to study and in 1818 was unanimously recommended to Conference to become a minister. He himself was drawn to missionary work, but his mother's opposition and ill health caused him only to offer for work at home, which was of great regret to him. However, although he was accepted by Conference, he was put on the reserve list. So, in the meantime, he accepted a teaching post. Unfortunately, his health then began to decline, and he developed a serious chest condition. The Conference of 1819 passed with no appointment for him because of financial problems within the Methodist Connexion. His health deteriorated further and at times friends doubted that he would recover. He began to feel that his health would prevent him becoming a minister. He opened a school in Gloucester instead but also continued preaching and leading a class. On 19 February 1822 he married Anne Howell who, unlike her husband, had always had very good health. They lived at the school together and were clearly very happy there, but this was to be short-lived as, after only six months of marriage, Anne died of typhoid at the age of twenty one. One of the ministers who visited her during this illness was James Dixon, and William kept in touch with him afterwards regarding him as a very good friend. William was devastated by grief and, as the typhoid outbreak occurred at the school, it had to be closed. He felt he had lost everything, his wife, his health, his livelihood and he also incurred debts because of the enforced closure of the school. He said, "I have lost almost everything that a man can lose except his character and his soul".<sup>33</sup> He did find comfort in his faith and managed to continue his teaching career in the hope of earning enough to pay off his debts.

However, his heart was not in teaching, for he still very much wanted to be in the ministry and to be a missionary. When he heard that Dixon was going to Gibraltar he wished he could go with him, little knowing that the way was opening up for him to do just that. His doctor urged him to go to warmer climes, the family rallied round to help with the debt, and his mother had died so her wishes no longer needed consideration. In September 1824, William was summoned to London to meet the Missionary Committee, and he was appointed to Gibraltar as a missionary to the Spanish on the Rock. He was delighted with this chance of a new beginning but he was still in poor health, still grieving and by nature a little prone to depression and doubts about his own worth.

On 17 November 1824 Barber was ordained in London with three others. He took leave of his friends at the Mission House on 26 November and sailed from Blackwall on Sunday 28 November. He did not feel it right to sail on a Sunday but of course was in the hands of the captain. However, as they proceeded down river a brig ran foul of them carrying away the gib-boom and damaging the bow-sprit. They therefore had to stay at Gravesend to repair the damage. Barber went ashore to find the local Methodists and preached to them in the evening and felt much blessed at receiving the sacrament. Although happy with his appointment, he was anxious about the voyage, missing family and friends, particularly his wife. He had arranged with Aquila, and anyone else who cared to join them, to remember each other in prayer every day at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

Windy weather delayed their departure from Gravesend and when they left they passed a ship's mast sticking out of the water and another ship aground. However, they reached the Downs in safety, although once anchored there the gales returned with a ferocity that alarmed everyone on board and caused Barber to be sea-sick. The captain had to put out a second anchor as the first was dragging. Other ships did likewise, including a large convict ship bound for Botany Bay. The cables on a nearby brig parted, it drifted away and Barber feared it was lost. They finally left the Downs but conditions were so adverse that almost three weeks passed before they reached the Lizard. They entered the Bay of Biscay on Sunday 19 December. Barber preached to the sailors on deck, but gales soon struck them

again. Barber was obliged to lie flat on his cabin floor unable to sit, stand or kneel because of the motion, and even so was thrown about the cabin, though he found he could stand "in the companion-stairs".<sup>34</sup> He prayed earnestly for deliverance from the storm and believed his prayers were answered. They finally sailed into Gibraltar bay on Wednesday 5 January 1825 after what had been a long and hazardous journey. The ship, the *Edward Protheroe*, was lost later in the year.

Barber had been given a letter of introduction from the Committee to John Pyne whom he described as a solicitor. After reading it, Pyne welcomed Barber warmly and sent his son to show him the way to the Mission House. Dixon was not expecting him as the letter informing him of the appointment had not yet arrived. They greeted each other with great warmth and affection, Barber reporting it to be "one of the most memorable and affecting days of my life".<sup>35</sup> He described Dixon as being "much esteemed and beloved here, the people know and value his worth." They soon began to study Spanish together and Barber felt warmly welcomed by the whole family and reported that the people generally were delighted by his arrival.

Barber explored the Rock and sent back descriptions of the town. "Its houses are crowded, its streets narrow, its windings intricate, and its population swarming". It had no appearance of order unlike "The South" with its "superior pleasantness" which was "the result of British arrangement and labour". The distance between the two was "nearly an hour's walk". He referred to General Don, the Lieutenant-Governor, "who has conducted himself here with the most manly and liberal public spirit, and thus won the gratitude and esteem, I should think, of every body", and was impressed with the recent improvements he had made in laying out a "grand parade and beautiful public gardens".<sup>36</sup> The latter are still a lovely part of Gibraltar. He reported that there was little communication with Spain as a result of the French occupation of the country, which also meant French goods were used there to the exclusion of British ones, with the result that Gibraltar's commercial importance was much reduced, though much smuggling went on.

As to the Society, members were mostly ordinary soldiers and non-commissioned officers. Life was very hard for Christian officers and he felt that "the existence of vital piety in an officer is very precarious; - his situation becomes distressing; - and the persecution he has to endure is very galling: in fact, he must either resign his commission, or almost every comfort of existence."<sup>37</sup> In addition he felt "Methodism is not here what, in England, it is commonly supposed to be. I had a most erroneous expectation regarding this. Our cause is despised, and shut out from mixing at all with the world ..... few or no persons of influence and responsibility in the world's estimation give us their decided countenance."<sup>38</sup> This does seem from the evidence of previous years to have been a rather exaggerated view but generally he felt there was a lack of interest in religion and in education. There was a scarcity of books, and other diversions and fashions were more important. However, despite this, the congregation was between two and three hundred on a Sunday morning and the chapel was filled at night. In the South there was "erected a neat room", where preaching took place on Thursday evenings. He reported on Quirell's work in similar terms to Dixon, describing his visiting and his preaching in Spanish at the chapel on Thursdays which eight to twelve people attended. Quirell was also of the opinion that there were four or five people who would join a class if a Spanish Society was formed.

Barber's main priority was to learn the language but he also became involved in the general affairs of the Society. In his journal he reported that on 6 February 1825 he had assisted Dixon for the first time in administering the Sacrament. In the afternoon he preached to about fifteen people on board a ship on behalf of the Bethel Society. On the following Wednesday he reported that Quirell had formed a Spanish class which neither he nor Dixon had known anything about, but he felt it was a pleasing development. His health continued to cause concern, not helped by an incident at the end of February when he had to run hard to escape from a runaway mule. The result was that he began to cough blood and had to curtail his activities for a while. As the year wore on he became further debilitated by the climate, but was also very concerned about the Dixon's state of health as "neither of them has ever been well since their arrival".<sup>39</sup> He felt it was impossible for Mrs. Dixon to live in Gibraltar and that the family would have to return home.

In fact Dixon wrote to the Committee in May 1825 to inform them that his wife's state of health was such that without a speedy improvement they would have to leave the Rock. She had spent time at the South and San Roque where it seems the whole family had lived for a time, but all to no avail. Just over a month later he wrote again to inform the Committee that he was returning. He enclosed a doctor's letter confirming that he felt a return to England was essential for Mrs. Dixon.<sup>40</sup> The children had also been adversely affected, one had recently had dysentery and another, Eliza, had a painful eye condition. Dixon was distressed at having to take this course of action but felt he had no choice and that Barber could supply the station with the help of Davis until another missionary could be sent.

The family left Gibraltar on 13 July 1825 and was stationed in Wakefield. Mrs. Dixon rallied on the voyage but relapsed again later. She never regained her health and died in the summer of 1828. Dixon himself had hoped for a missionary career but his experiences in Gibraltar led him to feel that this was not the future for him, and he spent the rest of his ministry in England serving in many major cities. He was soon well known for "in due time he became one of the most able preachers and speakers of the day" becoming "one of the most prominent men in Methodism."<sup>41</sup> In 1841 he served as President of Conference. Gradually however his eyesight failed until he was totally blind but for a further nine years he still preached. Despite his blindness and dependence on others to read the Bible to him he said, "Dwelling much as I do alone, I have been enabled to obtain views of God such as I never before had".<sup>42</sup> He died in Bradford on 28 December 1871 aged 83.

So Barber was left alone on the station rather overwhelmed by the responsibility and also very lonely. He had never before lived without family prayers and so invited others to join him early in the morning for this purpose with some small success. Quirell agreed to sleep at the house which gave him more opportunities to speak Spanish, and he hoped that Mrs. Quirell and their two children might join them there. He and Davis agreed to take services in the chapel alternately, with Barber doing the Bethel preaching in addition but, soon after Dixon left, Davis developed such a severe attack of gout that his life seemed to be in danger



and all the work therefore fell on Barber. He stopped the Bethel preaching, organising someone to read to the seamen instead, and changed the Thursday evening preaching at the South into a prayer meeting. As soon as Davis was restored to health they shared the duties "with great cordiality till Mr. Pratten's arrival" just over three months later.<sup>43</sup>

Joseph and Fanny Pratten arrived, after "a very long and rough passage of five weeks", on 20 October 1825, during which both suffered from seasickness but their little girl, Elizabeth, was reported to be an excellent sailor.<sup>44</sup> Pratten was born in 1792 and joined a Methodist Society at the age of fourteen. In 1815 he was accepted on trial and was stationed at Banbury where he stayed two years. He was admitted into full connexion in 1819, while at Kettering, and went to Gibraltar as his seventh appointment.

Once they had arrived Barber could again concentrate on the Spanish work. He had reported earlier in the year that Quirell's class was "dissipated and his congregation entirely gone" although he does not state the reasons for this. He expressed his discouragement about the work.<sup>45</sup> However, he also had some ideas about the need for a separate place of worship for the Spaniards who were reluctant to go to a Protestant chapel which was, in any case, only free for them in the afternoons, a time dedicated to the siesta! His first priority was to become more proficient in Spanish and he therefore engaged a Spanish master which he probably should have done earlier but he had been worried about the expense of doing so. On 8 December 1825 he read his first sermon in Spanish on a stormy evening with only five people present. However, the following week there were 35 in the congregation. He was keen to preach extempore and contemplated a visit to Cádiz to practice his Spanish. Pyne and Pratten encouraged him in this plan but for a variety of reasons he did not go though he did eventually visit Algeciras for a few days in March 1826. However, by this time he had made better progress in Spanish. On 24 February he had begun a Spanish prayer meeting at Quirell's house when about 12 people were present and on this occasion he had managed a short extempore address.

Work amongst the English congregation had continued, much as before, with the usual

changes in the Society inevitable in Gibraltar. However, congregations remained fairly steady in size despite the fluctuations. The Sunday school continued and the Auxiliary Missionary Society. The work of the Bethel Society was very much reduced in 1825 when one of its key supporters left leaving them with double boat hire which was beyond their means, but links with the Bible Society had continued through Lieutenant Bailey. However, in October 1824 he reported that his wife was "alarming ill" and he feared for her life.<sup>46</sup> She lived for a while but died in early 1825 and shortly afterwards Bailey left Gibraltar for a new post in the Isle of Wight. He was not in fact a member of the Methodist chapel but the Society nevertheless lost a most important and valuable friend when he departed. He continued his links with the Bible Society, who received letters from him from Cowes and later from Lisbon. Dixon first took over as secretary of the Corresponding Committee, and later Barber, with Pyne acting as treasurer, but communication lessened once Bailey had gone who had been so energetic in this work.

In February 1826 the Secretaries of the Bible Society wrote to the Gibraltar Corresponding Committee as they did to all their contacts and agents, to inform them that the Society would no longer be printing or circulating any copies of the scriptures which included the apocryphal books. The Gibraltar Committee did not at first realise that this meant they were no longer at liberty to circulate books already in their possession which included the apocrypha. When they did understand this they were rather dismayed, and wrote to the Society on more than one occasion to express their concern that the "resolution must in a great measure terminate their usefulness with reference to the Spanish population", because in their experience Spaniards generally enquired if the apocrypha was included.<sup>47</sup> However, they accepted that they were bound by the wishes of the parent Society and were "fully prepared to rejoice if contrary to their fears, the Spaniards shall be found willing to accept the unadulterated copies of the Scriptures when they shall have learnt that they can obtain no other."<sup>48</sup> They therefore agreed to return all books containing the apocrypha. This was decided at a Corresponding Committee meeting held at the home of Dr. Hennen in August 1827. The others present were Pyne, Stokes, Mrs. Nicklin, Pratten and Barber. Dr. John Hennen was at this time the Principal Medical Officer in Gibraltar and was very much

involved in the Corresponding Committee, as many of the meetings were held at his home. It is unlikely that he was actually a member of the Methodist Society, but he was clearly in sympathy with them and did all he could to support them including offering his free professional services to the missionaries and their families. Barber became very friendly with him and his family and obviously valued his support and friendship very much indeed. The Methodist Committee in London sent him a set of books in gratitude for his services to Methodism. In his letter of thanks he stated his particular pleasure that the books had included one on "the life of the venerable founder of your Society, for whose name and virtue I have ever felt the most sincere respect, and whose person is still present to my recollection, although it is nearly forty years since I saw and heard him."<sup>49</sup>

The Committee also sent gifts of books to Davis, now clearly fully restored to favour, and to Quirell, in recognition of their contributions to the work. The English department was of course primarily Pratten's responsibility but unfortunately he too, like his predecessor, had been looking after a very sick wife, though it seems her illness was not entirely due to the Gibraltar climate. In his first letter after arriving in Gibraltar, Pratten mentioned that his wife had developed a severe cold on landing on the Rock but added, "when this shall be passed off I am much inclined to believe that her health will improve in this climate."<sup>50</sup> In April 1826 he reported that she was nearing the end of a pregnancy and described her as a "considerable sufferer" in these circumstances.<sup>51</sup> There is no record of any baptism, but it seems a second daughter was born. However, after the birth, Fanny Pratten's condition gradually declined and eventually the doctors judged her to be in the last stage of consumption. She died on 10 November 1826 at the age of 33, and her funeral was held the following day when Barber officiated.

Barber had been living at the Mission House with the Pratten family, but during Mrs. Pratten's illness it was increasingly inconvenient and presumably uncomfortable for him to do so. He ate all his meals away from the house and would have moved out if he had had somewhere else to go. However, after her death, he began to consider moving into a new house Quirell was building. His occupation in the baptismal register was given in 1821 as

"storeman" and in 1824 as working in the Ordinance Department, but apparently shortly after Dixon left he was "obliged to give up his situation", though it is not clear why, and ever since had "gained a livelihood by teaching English to the Spaniards, an employment which keeps him fully engaged from morning to night".<sup>52</sup> This meant of course that he had less time to work with Barber. However, Quirell then began building a new house in apartments and, with the approval of Pratten and Pyne, Barber felt it would be a good idea to move there himself. This would provide a more acceptable meeting place for the Spaniards and would enable him to work more closely with Quirell, as well as giving him more independence. The work was moving forward and they had recently held a watchnight service on 31 December at Quirell's house with about 25 Spaniards present which Barber reported as "the first Methodist watch-night service ever held on the Continent of Europe, in the Spanish language."<sup>53</sup>

However, before Barber could move, Pratten fell ill. It is not entirely clear how much his illness was physical and how much he was affected by grief. He himself later wrote that "there is reason to believe that my illness was more from domestic afflictions than from the climate" but he does seem to have had physical problems such as an asthmatic affliction and problems with his bowels.<sup>54</sup> Dr. Hennen advised him to spend some time away from Gibraltar, and he therefore went to Lisbon via Cádiz and was away for about six weeks, returning much restored in health. It is not clear whether his daughters went with him or not.

Pratten left Davis to cover for him while he was away so that Barber could continue the Spanish work. Davis preached a few times and then fell ill again with another attack of gout and Barber had to shoulder most of the work himself. He coped much better on this occasion and enjoyed preaching in English for a change which he found much easier than Spanish. At the same time, in January 1827, he moved into Quirell's house where he had "the use of two excellent rooms", and was clearly much happier there feeling that the move was of great benefit to his work amongst the Spanish.<sup>55</sup> As soon as Pratten returned he began an additional Spanish service at Quirell's house on Sunday mornings. On the first

occasion about thirty attended and by this time the Thursday evening congregation had increased to about fifty.

Then, in April 1827, Barber received unexpected instructions from the Committee in London to leave Gibraltar immediately and to move to a new post in Malta. At the same time the Committee ordered William Harris Rule to leave his post in Malta and to proceed to Gibraltar to succeed Barber. The news appears to have caused some consternation in Gibraltar, and it gradually became clear that the reason for the orders was because Barber had consistently played down his progress and sent rather discouraging and negative reports to London. His tendency to depression and doubts about his abilities, together with a somewhat mistaken view of the need for humility, lay behind this and he was instructed by Pratten and Pyne to send a more accurate account to the Committee about his work and to present a case for staying in Gibraltar. However, as this involved him in disobeying the Committee's orders, he was not allowed to fulfil many of his duties in Gibraltar while he waited for the Committee's reply.

Barber wrote at length giving more positive details about his work with the Spanish population. He spent many evenings talking with the Spaniards in private houses as well as holding the regular meetings - the Thursday evening service, the Friday prayer meeting and the Sunday morning service which were all increasingly well attended. He also pointed out that a move at this stage would be a waste of all his hard work in learning Spanish. He really had made very good progress since his arrival in Gibraltar, despite his poor physical health and his tendency to depression. By August Barber had conducted a Spanish communion service for the first time when seventeen Spaniards participated including Quirell and his younger brother. This was a big step forward, as evidence of real commitment and conviction was required before anyone could be admitted to the Lord's Table. Quirell also wrote to the Committee asking that Barber be allowed to stay, and it seems that no one in Gibraltar thought he should leave. Once the Committee had the facts and felt more encouraged about the progress of the work they did order Barber to stay, and also increased his salary which had been very low. However, by this time, Rule was already

on his way to take up the post! He left Malta on 31 May 1827 and arrived in Gibraltar on 9 July after a forty day voyage. He stayed thirty six days in Gibraltar and was very well received there, making quite an impact on the people. Both Quirell and Pyne wrote to the Committee to say that they felt Rule could be very useful in Gibraltar. Pyne wrote:

We are very sorry to lose Mr. Rule after so transient a visit to us. He appears to be a young man of much ardent piety and of a steadiness and solidity beyond his years; and I have no doubt that both he and his partner would be very useful in this place. They have already highly commended themselves to the people belonging to and connected with the Methodist Society here and I would humbly suggest that on a future occasion the Committee could hardly send to Gibraltar a more suitable missionary than Mr. Rule.<sup>56</sup>

This is indeed what they did do eventually, but that comes later in the story.

One of the difficulties for the whole Society at this time was the lack of a female missionary. The wife of a missionary was expected to play her part in the work though little reference was ever made to this. Now that Pratten and Barber were both widowers the lack was felt keenly. Barber lamented the loss of Mrs. Rule "because a pious and affectionate female missionary such as Mrs. Rule is so much needed here and would be very valuable - there is no one to lead the female young persons of our congregations - we have no female leader".<sup>57</sup> Barber himself had given much thought to the question of marrying again. He was very lonely and felt that a wife would be a great support and help in his work. He even contemplated returning to England to seek a wife, but was not sure how he could set about this. Then, in August 1827, more visitors arrived in Gibraltar.

Lady Georgiana Wolff and her husband Joseph, who were missionaries, though not Methodists, arrived in Gibraltar on their way to Jerusalem. They were warmly received by General Don and his wife and Mr. Wolff preached several times in the chapel. They were in Gibraltar for about three weeks waiting for the packet to take them on to Malta. Lady Georgiana had a companion - Miss Eliza Duck, who was in fact a Methodist. At the time of their arrival Barber was staying with the Hennens and so it was a few days before he met

them. When he did he was immediately drawn to Miss Duck. For the next few days he could think of no one else and discussed his feelings with his friends in Gibraltar, with Lady Georgiana and presumably with Eliza herself. The outcome was a happy one though apparently only concluded a few hours before the party left for Malta. Eliza went too, to give Lady Georgiana time to find a replacement and for everyone concerned, Eliza's family and the Committee in London, to give their approval and permission for a marriage to take place. Barber therefore wrote most joyfully to the Committee expressing his delight that "a kind and gracious Providence has heard my prayer and pitied my unhappiness ..... and has kindly sent me most unexpectedly the very person whom he has selected for me."<sup>58</sup> He described Miss Duck in glowing terms and asked their permission to marry her, which he was obliged to do as he was still on probation and had not yet been received into full connexion.

The Committee replied by refusing their permission for the marriage to take place on the grounds that Barber was still on probation, which Barber had assumed was drawing to a close as it was usually for a term of three years. His bitter disappointment comes over strongly in his letter of reply. None of the Committee's outgoing correspondence to Gibraltar for these years has survived but it seems that the Committee planned to keep Barber on probation until he received a medical testimonial that he was fit to work anywhere in the world, which he felt was never going to be possible as certain climates did not suit him. He therefore felt he was being condemned to a life of probation and celibacy. He also pointed out that Pratten had been ordered by the doctor to leave before the summer, because he was unwell, "while I the weak gloomy brother have gone on so regularly that I suppose I have not missed six services in all since the short illness I had soon after landing."<sup>59</sup> He added that on several occasions he had been left alone on the station to carry out the whole work. Nevertheless, he knew he had no choice but to comply and he had therefore sent a copy of the Committee's letter to Miss Duck with a "suspension of the engagement for the present on my part - with the option of making it final on hers".

There is no record of the private correspondence between the two but Miss Duck was by

then living with Keeling, the Methodist missionary in Malta, who reported that "this unhappy intelligence came to Malta; and I believe it has caused considerable pain to both parties."<sup>60</sup> When Lady Georgiana left Malta Miss Duck remained behind as she "had reason independent of her connection with Mr. Barber for going no higher up with Lady Georgiana, which would abundantly justify her in your judgement." Lady Georgiana had given her the money for a passage to England but Keeling invited her to stay with him and his family and told the Committee: "I can assure you we esteem it a privilege to have her in the house". He thought this the best plan in case Conference did permit the marriage but asked for the Committee's opinion. Miss Duck had belonged to the Methodist Society for about four years. She attended Mrs. Keeling's class throughout her stay in Malta and seems to have made herself useful there. Keeling described her as "exceedingly active, tidy and industrious, and both pious and polite in her manner - and every way adapted for a missionary".

Dr. Hennen wrote to the Committee to support Barber's cause, stating that he felt Barber's health and vitality would be considerably improved as a result of any marriage. He felt he was a man who particularly needed the comforts of a home life which had been shown by the striking improvement in his health that summer while he had been staying with the Hennens. He added that he and his family held Barber "in a very high degree of respect and esteem".<sup>61</sup> Pratten also wrote in support of him, explaining how hard he had worked in Gibraltar. He acknowledged the limitations of his constitution but ended by saying, "I can only say that in Gibraltar or a similar climate he is able to do the work of a regular missionary".<sup>62</sup>

So Miss Duck waited in Malta and life went on in Gibraltar. In May 1827 a memorial had been sent to the Governor asking for a renewal of the chapel lease which was due to expire in 1829. This was signed by Pratten, Pyne, Barnard, Herbert, Caulfield and Davis so clearly many of those who had been involved in the dispute with Rees were now back in positions of leadership. There was further correspondence about the lease which was mostly handled by Pyne. He kept the Committee in London informed of events but was clearly

disappointed at times by their lack of response to him. Eventually, Mr. Bell, the Deputy Receiver General, was instructed to liaise with the Methodists about the terms of the renewal, but was planning to do so "on the terms of a fair and equitable rent according to the value of the property, as would be the case if let to any other individuals".<sup>63</sup> This would have involved the chapel in paying a much higher rent, which they could not afford, and Pyne was worried that as Bell was "no friend to the cause, I do not expect he will be disposed to shew favour on the present occasion."<sup>64</sup> Pyne therefore wrote to General Don in December 1827 to plead their case and stating also that they still had a debt of £400 (About \$1,845). Pyne also wrote to the Committee about all this saying:

It would have been a comfort to us to have heard from the Committee on this subject ere this, as I can assure you we have been in considerable trepidation as to the issue of this affair: there are several persons to whom the Lieutenant Governor is in the habit of referring matters of this kind, who are no friends of ours, who would thwart us if they could; but I took the liberty of pressing on Sir George Don the propriety of his bestowing his own sole personal attention on the subject and he has done so.<sup>65</sup>

In fact General Don wrote to the Secretary of State for the Colonies recommending a further lease of 21 years at the same rent of \$1 or 4/4d per annum. The reply, when it eventually came early in 1828, was favourable, so Methodism was once again indebted to Don for his support. In April 1828 Pyne submitted a list of seven trustees in whose name the lease would be granted. These were Dr. Hennen, Davis, Pyne, Herbert, Robert Barnard the younger, Henry Stokes and John Nicklin. The names were all approved and plans went ahead to renew the lease before its official expiration on 1 January 1829.

Pyne wrote at some length to the Committee in March 1828, about the future of the work in Gibraltar. He was aware that there had been a reduction in the Missionary Society's income and wondered if Gibraltar actually needed two missionaries, suggesting therefore that one who could preach in both English and Spanish might be sufficient. This view was later endorsed by both Pratten and Barber. Pyne felt that the best person for the job would be a "steady, middle aged married man, with few or no children, a master (grammatically) of the

English language and if already acquainted with the Spanish so much the better".<sup>66</sup> He also felt it would be better if the three year rule could be waived so that the missionary, if acceptable, could stay longer. He somewhat reluctantly went on to say that, while he had a great respect for Barber, he did not think he was the man for the job as his preaching was not liked. "He consumes in discussion and definitions a great part of that time which ought to be employed in admonishing and exhorting sinners and in edifying and comforting the people of God". If his sermons were anything like his extremely long winded and detailed letters it is hardly surprising that Pyne was worried about the congregation falling away! Pratten also expressed a similar view and stayed a little longer in Gibraltar than he had originally intended, despite his poor health, because he was worried about the effect on the congregation of Barber only doing the preaching. To be fair, it is clear from his correspondence that Barber himself was aware of the problem and hoped to improve.

In April 1828 Barber went into Spain on a visit to Almería and Granada. There are few details of this trip but his passport dated 9 April 1828 still exists and is in the church archives. In it Barber is described as being tall with brown hair, grey eyes and a regular nose! He returned in good health to further correspondence about his future. Dr. Hennen wrote again to the Committee in May 1828 to report that in the previous three months the improvement in Barber's health had been very marked. "He has made a tour to Granada, from which he has recently returned, apparently, in a state of perfect health."<sup>67</sup> One wonders how much this improvement was due to his hopes for a future with Miss Duck, still faithfully waiting for him in Malta. Mr. Keeling had also expressed an interest in having him as a colleague there. Barber himself was willing to do whatever the Committee instructed, but was now hopeful of being brought into full connexion at Conference that year. Indeed Conference did agree and, in his absence in Gibraltar, William Barber was admitted to full connexion and was therefore now free to marry Miss Duck.

The last letter from Pratten in Gibraltar, dated 22 May 1828, refers to a letter from the Committee to Barber about the possibility of someone coming out to assist him.<sup>68</sup> Pratten therefore planned to stay in Gibraltar until the new missionary arrived, but if he did not

come he had decided to wait until the end of June and then return overland. As no one did arrive he presumably followed this course of action and left for England, where he was appointed to Swansea. He had feared his state of health might necessitate his resignation from the ministry but it must have improved once he was back in England for he served in Swansea for three years. He then had a variety of other appointments elsewhere before returning to Wales in 1841. In 1844 he was stationed in Brecon and served as the Chairman of the District for a good number of years. In 1854 he retired because of ill health and went to live in Carmarthen where he died on June 16 1862 in his seventieth year.

So Barber was once again left alone in Gibraltar, though he did have the assistance of Davis. He therefore moved back into the Mission House after Pratten left. However, before long he had much more serious matters to deal with for once again fever struck the Rock.

## CHAPTER FIVE THE FEVER EPIDEMIC OF 1828 AND ITS AFTERMATH - A New Missionary is Sent (1828-1832)

On 10 October 1828 Barber wrote to the Committee in London to describe events as the fever epidemic took hold in Gibraltar. Two days later he wrote to his father giving further details. He described how at the end of August the alarm was first raised "by the successive illness of several of the members of a very respectable family, in the habit of attending our chapel."<sup>1</sup> The family's servant became ill and died. Another woman before this had concealed her illness till it was too late to do anything about it. Benady states that the disease did indeed start in the area near the Methodist chapel and that the inhabitants there tried to keep it secret as they did not want their possessions to be burnt in an attempt to limit the spread of infection.<sup>2</sup> Barber reported that "alarm began to spread about the 4th of September; and on the 5th, an order was issued from the Government, that every individual living in the district infected, should immediately leave home, and encamp on the Neutral Ground, tent-equipage being provided for them there".<sup>3</sup> This was in fact a sensible measure though, at the time, no one understood the cause of the yellow fever. It is spread by mosquitoes who bred in the water supplies in the town but being poor fliers were less likely to affect the people camped on the Neutral Ground or indeed at the South, who fared much better. As the Mission premises were at the centre of the infection Barber had moved to the South to stay with Mr. Barnard and his family whom he described as "very dear and kind friends". His servant, Paulo, had insisted on staying at the Mission House but he paid a heavy price for doing so as he caught the fever and died soon afterwards. Barber reported that nearly 2,500 cases had already occurred and more than 450 had died, out of a population he estimated to be about 30,000.

On 7 September the chapel was opened for the last Sunday services (an order to close all public meeting places was to take effect from 9 September), "but the congregation was so diminished, that we occupied no more than the lower part".<sup>4</sup> In the evening Barber preached, but in the morning Davis preached while Barber administered the Lord's Supper and baptised the son of Sergeant and Mrs. Grey of the Royal Artillery, though there is no

record of this in the baptismal register. He described it as a happy occasion for they were close friends of his, but he also recalled that "our circumstances were very solemn; we apprehended that it was the last time the chapel would be open; and everyone seemed to feel the uncertainty of ever meeting in it again".<sup>5</sup> In fact, not long afterwards, both Mr. and Mrs. Grey died though the baby survived. Barber spent much time with them during their illness and acknowledged that he felt their loss keenly.

The Governor had requested the use of the chapel as an emergency hospital. Barber, in consultation with some of the leaders, agreed to this request. The Rev. Robert Hatchman, the Chaplain to the Forces, died of the fever on 12 October at the age of 31. As soon as he became seriously ill Barber offered to take on his duties, despite the risk to himself. His offer was accepted by General Don and his name appeared in Garrison Orders as Acting Chaplain to the Forces. He refused to accept any payment for this service, asking for it to be donated instead for the relief of the poor living on the neutral ground. The duties meant that twice a day he had to officiate at burials. He went "to the ground on horseback, at 8 o'clock in the morning and at four in the afternoon. He likewise had to visit the sick in the hospital, which was running a great risk; but as he saw that it was the path of duty, he did not shrink from it."<sup>6</sup> He was, of course, aware of the danger he was in, and told the Committee:

I feel deeply at the possibility, that this is the last letter I shall write to you; for I have no constitution to stand against a violent attack of fever. But should that be the case, I now leave my deliberate testimony, that I believe salvation by Jesus Christ to be the true and only worthy object of human life as a whole.<sup>7</sup>

In his letter to his father he referred to the congratulations he had received from friends in England at being received into the full connexion of the Methodist Church but added:

What do they all avail now? - Eliza, dear lovely girl, is, by a special Providence, detained, and that in a remarkable manner, at Malta; and, by this time, she must have received my letter, to direct her to wait sometime longer in safety, where she is. But now, after all, I shall, perhaps, have to leave her *an unmarried widow*. Should that, unhappily, be the case, I am sure, that I

shall not commend her in vain to your earnest affections, if you should ever see her.<sup>8</sup>

On 16 October both Hennen and Barber wrote to John Pyne who had gone to England on a visit and happily for him had been detained there away from all danger. Hennen reported that there had been 566 deaths noted in the official returns (daily statistics were in fact printed in the *Gibraltar Chronicle*) but he felt it was likely a hundred more had died without being reported to him. Five medical men had already died. His wife had been ill but was now better. He planned to send some of Barber's letters to Conference "which place him at the very head of the class of men of *practical piety*". He felt they ought to be published but in the end they were never sent. Hennen ended his letter with the short but telling sentence: "Do not come here".<sup>9</sup> In his letter to Pyne, Barber praised Hennen's work saying, "I regard it as one of the most special mercies of God, amidst the judgments of this awful time, that Dr. Hennen was stationed here before it began .... To his vigorous and decided measures we owe it, under God, that we have not one universal waste of disease and death".<sup>10</sup> The fever was thought to have been as deadly as that of 1804, though the effects had not been so serious because of "the superiority of the measures adopted" which were, of course, also in large measure due to Don's administration of affairs.

Barber's letter to Pyne is also a distressing and moving account of what was happening to him in Gibraltar. He wrote:

Every remaining friend is to us, now, very dear indeed. What a scene surrounds us! What a scene have I before me every day on the Neutral Ground! ..... no man can calculate upon a single hour; and deaths are very, very numerous, at three or four days illness ..... I have lost some of my most intimate friends in the Society, to whom my warmest affections were linked, for their piety and love. Great God! how terrible is this! A fierce disease, which you can neither see, nor hear, nor touch, springs invisibly on its victims; and not by ones or twos, but by scores and hundreds, we are putting them into the grave. The number of dead is so great, that to bury them in single graves is impracticable. Trenches are dug, and the coffins (for, thank God, as yet coffins can be had, though only by the most praiseworthy vigour of the Government) are laid side by side, in regular and most afflictive order. Yesterday, for example I read the funeral service over nineteen bodies in the Protestant Ground. More than that number, of course, were likewise interred in the grounds of the Catholics and Jews. This morning I had to

discharge the same melancholy duty for ten more; and how many will follow in the afternoon, I cannot guess ..... never have I had duties so melancholy to discharge. The burial ground and the hospitals are spots of intense infection, and I am every moment with my life in my hand. But, "What do ye more than others?" There are very many who deserve infinitely higher praise, if praise at such a moment can be thought of with innocence, than I. With a very, very sinful heart, and a life that looks to me only in the light of something worse than a blank, I fling myself at the feet of Jesus, and hope for every thing through His atonement alone.

Barber continued his duties but on the evening of Tuesday 21 October, after returning from visiting a sick man in the hospital, he complained of feeling ill himself. Later that night his condition worsened and a doctor was sent for, but he too was ill and unable to come. Indeed he later died. However, Dr. Hennen came with a colleague who were obviously concerned for him. Hennen returned the next day with three other medical men but there seemed to be little hope. On the Wednesday night Mr. and Mrs. Herbert sat up with him and he seemed a little better in the morning. He was clearly given the best nursing and medical care but his constitution was against him. On Saturday night the Barnards sat up with him and early on Sunday morning Davis and Caulfield visited him. He gave good testimony to his faith and died at quarter to four in the afternoon on Sunday 26 October in the presence of many of his friends. He was twenty nine years old. Mrs. Barnard wrote, "It was a great trial to part with one, who had lived seven weeks under our roof, and who was become as one of the family. We all loved him much."<sup>11</sup>

The following day at 8 o'clock in the morning Barber was buried in the Methodist part of the cemetery near to the grave of Fanny Pratten as he had requested. Many of the Society were present. Davis officiated as there were now no clergymen left alive and he reported that many were in tears. A plaque in his memory was placed in the chapel and eventually a tomb-stone was erected in the burial ground, though no trace of this can be found today.

Shortly afterwards another tragic death occurred for Dr. Hennen too became a victim of the fever and died on 3 November at the age of 49. There is a plaque in his memory in the King's Chapel giving these details and adding the following words:

This tablet is erected by his personal friends, not with a view of perpetuating his name, for that lives in the more imperishable memorials of his own Genius but as a testimony of Regard for a man whose zeal was indefatigable and who, in the day of great calamity sacrificed all consideration of his own safety for the public weal.

He had apparently continued to work until the day before his death. His passing was a great loss to Methodism too and to the cause of the Bible Society.

So, once again the Society was ravaged by an epidemic fever and left to try and make sense of it all. News of the tragic loss of William Barber was sent to London and to his family and also to Eliza Duck waiting vainly for him in Malta. It was particularly tragic that, after so much sadness in his life, just when his work in Gibraltar was bearing real fruit, when he had regained his health and found someone else whom he wished to marry, he should be struck down by the fever. It was also a tragedy for Eliza. She stayed on in Malta until December when Keeling reported that she was leaving for England.<sup>12</sup> He felt she would have been very useful in their Mission School but she wanted to return to Bristol where one hopes she had some family to comfort her. The only other reference to her is in a letter from the next missionary dated January 1831 which refers to her request to have Barber's books sent to her. This they had done apologising for the delay having been unable to find anyone to take them earlier.

The *Gibraltar Chronicle* gave the final death toll as 1,618 but other estimates gave a figure of 2,300, which may have been more accurate as some inhabitants could have failed to report deaths. Whatever the final figure, it was considerably lower than that of the 1804 epidemic but nevertheless the Rock had been devastated by the disease. Many members and friends of the Society died in the epidemic and once again those who remained were left without a missionary, but the ever faithful Thomas Davis stepped in to lead as best he could. His long letter to the Committee in November 1828 ends as follows:

I would beg leave to call your attention to the distressed state of the little church in this place - we are, you perceive left without any visible head or guide, and like sheep scattered on the tops of the mountains. As to the

chapel, the sick are removed from it, but in order to prepare it for the reception of the sick, they removed the pulpit and reading desk, broke down the backs of the seats in the galleries and built two platforms for the sick to be placed on, and also made two windows in the back part of the chapel. In this state they have left it, and what government intends doing towards replacing these damages I do not know but I believe it is thought by all who know anything of the real state of the chapel, that we will not be able to open it when permission is granted, till it goes through a general repair. I hope then Rev. Sir, both you and the Committee will see the great necessity of sending us a missionary to take the oversight of the Church, and to superintend these repairs. As to myself I promise to do what I can when this trying scene is over, to gather the little flock together and to keep them together. My intention is to open the room in the South for public service as soon as it will be permitted, until a preacher arrives among us, but please remember Sir, I am now an old man and only fit to be laid by.<sup>13</sup>

The official termination of the epidemic was finally announced in a proclamation from General Don printed in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* on 12 January 1829. Don ordered all places of worship to open on 16 January so that the day could "be set apart as one of Solemn Thanksgiving for the mercy here vouchsafed to us, and to propitiate a continuance of the Divine favour." Shops and places of public business were to be closed as they were on Sundays. All public meeting places re-opened on 17 January and so on Sunday 18 January Davis was able to open the room at the South where he preached to a crowded congregation. He continued to do so, both Sundays and Wednesdays until Sunday 8 February when he was finally able to open the repaired chapel in town. He took both morning and evening services, the latter taking the form of a memorial service for Barber. Classes had been meeting since then and Davis had tried to meet with the leaders of them once a fortnight as was customary but had not been able to meet with them all. Caulfield had been taking care of the Mission House and the chapel had been repaired by the government. Davis and two others had "waited on the proper authorities" and were "most graciously received". They were thanked for giving up the chapel to be a hospital and condolences were given on the loss of Barber. Perhaps his willingness to serve the Garrison encouraged the authorities to be generous in their turn for the chapel had been returned to them in "the most handsome state of repair".<sup>14</sup>

Work with the Spanish congregation also continued under the care of Quirell. He reported

progress to Dixon and asked him to approach the Committee on his behalf. He first expressed his sorrow at "losing my dearest friend", William Barber, and said that some of the Spanish flock had also died.<sup>15</sup> He had visited some of them when they were ill and felt those who had died had done so as Christians should, professing their faith. He, of course, was now left in sole charge of the work, and on 18 January the group had met for worship in his house for the first time since August. Congregations on Sundays, Thursdays and Fridays amounted to between forty and fifty people and between twelve and fourteen of them were accustomed to take the sacrament. This presumably was not now possible in the absence of a missionary. Quirell was clearly not a wealthy man and in order to pay his way he was forced to work teaching English from seven in the morning to nine at night. This meant he could not "pay all the attention that is necessary or as I would wish to the little flock which grieves me very much, for the Lord knows the Spanish cause lies at the centre of my heart". Barber had paid him rent for his room when he lived with him and also for the meeting room in which the Spanish congregation gathered. Quirell wondered if the Committee would be willing to continue this. He was also aware of the cost of sending out another missionary who would probably also have to learn Spanish and offered his services instead. He was willing to work part-time teaching and part-time for the Mission but would clearly need some remuneration. If someone else was appointed he offered to work under them and to help them learn Spanish.

At the end of February word came that a new missionary, Joseph Stinson, had been appointed to Gibraltar. He was born in Leicestershire into a Methodist family, and was himself converted by the age of twenty. He became a local preacher and was accepted in 1823 to be a missionary and was appointed to East Canada. He was admitted into full connexion in 1827 while in Montreal and then returned to England where he was stationed in Manchester for one year before being appointed to Gibraltar. He set sail for Gibraltar with his wife, Hannah, arriving there on 4 May 1829 after a voyage of thirty four days. No mention is made of any children sailing with them but a daughter, Selina, was born to them in April the following year. In his first letter from Gibraltar, written just a few days after arriving there, Stinson reported that they "were very affectionately received by our friends

who had been long and anxiously looking for us."<sup>16</sup>

The very next day he held his first leaders' meeting and began a record of these in a special minute book which continued in use until 1895 and is currently in the church archives. Both Caulfield and Davis were present at the meeting, and Herbert was unanimously appointed as Society and chapel steward. As a result of the epidemic membership had declined and was given as 59. The Committee had apparently sent Davis a book as a gift in appreciation of all he had done for the Society.

On 6 May Stinson met General Don and thanked him for his help with the chapel repairs and with the lease. He was well received and felt there was "every reason to conclude that he will continue to exercise towards us that kindness which has so marked His Excellency's conduct".<sup>17</sup> The renewal of the lease had in fact been delayed because of the epidemic and the death of Hennen who had been proposed as a trustee. Pyne had returned to Gibraltar after the fever had abated and in April submitted a new list of trustees which was somewhat different from the original one as it included officials in the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. It consisted of twelve names, the Rev. Messrs. Morley, Townley and Farmer who were the Secretaries of the Missionary Society and the Rev. Mr. Taylor, its Treasurer. Stinson and Pratten were included as well as Davis, Pyne, Herbert, Robert Barnard the younger, Henry Stokes and John Nicklin. The lease was eventually drawn up in their names and signed by General Don on 15 May 1829 and registered in the court as required by law on 4 June under the same conditions as the original lease.

Stinson reported that he felt the Spanish cause was rather low as a result of Barber's death and other losses to the group. He promised to give another more informed opinion as to "the propriety of making Brother Quirell a regular allowance for his labours". Quirell was apparently under the impression that the Committee was likely to do so and Stinson reported that "he is to all appearances a very pious man and I should think a very fair preacher in his own language".<sup>18</sup>

Stinson was rather disappointed to find the Mission House "in a most uncomfortable state" as it had never properly been cleaned since the epidemic when Barber's servant had died in it. There was little furniture and "the roof is broken in several places, the water spouts are split - the plaster is off the walls and altogether it presents a most dreary aspect". He planned to repair and furnish the house as cheaply as possible. Finally, in this first letter he reported that Pyne was to leave Gibraltar and would be greatly missed. He does not give any reason for his departure though it may well have been a result of the epidemic.

Gradually Stinson, with the help of the leaders, began the work of building up the church and in July 1829 he reported that membership had increased from 59 to 73. He described the Society as one that was "as affectionate and united as ever I saw" adding "I believe that the leading members of our little church are particularly anxious that the end for which this mission has been established may be fully answered and I do receive from them that sympathy, that kindness and that co-operation which is so necessary for the comfort and success of a missionary".<sup>19</sup>

Quirell had been unanimously appointed to act as a local preacher at a leaders' meeting held in July but the Spanish cause remained low. Stinson commented as follows:

Although Brother Quirell is a pious and active person - yet truth obliges me to say that he has not talent to command a Spanish congregation - as is evidenced from the fact that he seldom has more than twelve or fourteen hearers whereas Mr. Barber used to have sixty and seventy - on this account I have resolved not to pay anything for a separate room but get him to meet them in the chapel when it is not occupied by the English congregation. That he may be useful in distributing religious books and visiting people from house to house I have no doubt - and if the Committee allow him 4 or 5 dollars per month for doing this it might be well - but this if granted at all, should only be continued until I am able to do the work myself which I hope will be before too long.

It seems that Stinson did not have quite the same regard for Quirell's abilities as his predecessors and that perhaps he had not, in so short a time, fully understood the situation. The figures of sixty to seventy do seem to be an exaggeration and, in any case, the Spanish

congregation had also experienced its losses during the epidemic. Some left Gibraltar afterwards, as did many of the inhabitants, fearing further fever outbreaks. The reduction in numbers could not be wholly attributed to Quirell, whose time for this work was limited. In addition, Stinson does not seem to have understood the difficulties of expecting the Spaniards to meet in a Protestant chapel which had been a problem in the past and had led to the successful use of a separate meeting place. Since Stinson was learning Spanish himself he presumably felt that when he had done so he could dispense with Quirell's services and he may well too have been trying to keep expenses down. The Society was struggling to pay its way and the Missionary Society in England was not very wealthy, but what Quirell felt about all this is not recorded.

Sadly, the next information about him appears in the minutes of a leaders' meeting held in August when "a charge was brought against Brother J. Quirell by Mr. T. Rich for taking fixtures from the House which he lately occupied which did not belong to him, and for defamation of character, the latter having called the former an old rogue". The result of this was that Quirell was forbidden to preach to any congregation and was excluded from the Society for three months.

By this time Pyne had left Gibraltar and was no doubt much missed by the Society. He had been Treasurer of the Auxiliary Missionary Society which had been much disorganised by the fever. Stinson began to revive it, though once again there were complaints about the lack of *Missionary Notices* and other missionary publications being sent on a regular basis. Thankfully the summer passed without a fever outbreak. Stinson reported that "all strangers were strongly recommended to spend three months on the neutral ground where the troops were encamped" and that this was the reason he took "part of a shed".<sup>20</sup> Membership continued to increase and in October he opened a new and "very large room in the South", as the previous one had proved too small.<sup>21</sup> It seems from the minute book that a decision had been taken to send a memorial to the Lieutenant Governor for a plot of land in the South to erect their own preaching place, but there is no further information about this and so presumably, if the request was made, it was not granted.

In November 1829 Quirell was summoned to appear before the leaders' meeting. He answered their questions satisfactorily and agreed that his sentence had been a just one. He was therefore re-admitted to the Society on trial and in February the following year, it was unanimously agreed at a further meeting that he be allowed to preach to the Spanish congregation but not to the English. In March of that year Stinson wrote to the Bible Society. The Corresponding Committee had been temporarily suspended as a result of the epidemic largely because some of the most active members, such as Barber and Hennen, had died, but others were now coming forward to take their place. The Committee had "employed a person who understands the Spanish, Portuguese and French languages to visit the poor people in the Garrison and to go on board the small vessels which lie in the Bay - to sell or give away copies of the Scriptures as circumstances may require".<sup>22</sup> This person, who was not named but was probably Quirell, had been employed in the first instance for three months. Many Spaniards were reported as being keen to receive the scriptures despite the strict watch of others opposed to the "spread of divine knowledge". Stinson felt there was evidence that many Spaniards supplied from Gibraltar regularly read the Bible and persuaded others to buy one. He used every opportunity to send Spanish scriptures and tracts into Spain and some time in 1830 he sent some with a ship's captain who took them up the coast to Almería and other nearby ports and found that Barber's visit there was still remembered. He soon distributed his stock and could have sold many more. This work continued throughout Stinson's time in Gibraltar, and the following year Quirell was named as the distributor. His notebook for 1830, giving details of this work of distribution, is in the church archives. Quirell was paid \$4 a month but the proceeds from the sale of books were only just sufficient to pay this and the cost of the depository.

A new venture was also begun in Gibraltar as Stinson reported that they had "established an evening school for Spanish children in which they are taught to read in English and that about 40 attend every Tuesday from 7 till 9 o'clock".<sup>23</sup> This was in addition to the Sunday schools which continued to thrive and also included Spanish children. By July 1830 Stinson reported that nearly 70 Spanish children were attending the sabbath and week schools where they were taught to read the Bible. In addition to the work with the Spanish, Stinson

reported having baptised two Jewish young men, but both were very harshly treated by their own people as a result - one was severely flogged and the other sent away. He thought the latter had retained his faith but not the former.

There were continuing problems over the finances. At a leaders' meeting at the end of 1830, it was "resolved that in consideration of the embarrassed state of the chapel each member of the leaders' meeting shall collect for its relief during the ensuing year no less a sum than ten dollars". This measure was only carried by a majority as presumably some were concerned about their ability to raise this amount of money. Commerce in Gibraltar was on the decline. There is a printed notice in the church archives dated 1828 which is a public appeal for help stating that the debt upon the premises was \$2,000 and that the chapel was in urgent need of repair - the exterior presumably, as the interior had been repaired by the government. The leaflet included a list of subscribers and as Stinson is included either the date of 1828 is incorrect or the subscriptions continued much longer. The grand total collected was just over \$742, which was a considerable sum but still not enough. A special meeting was held in September 1831 to devise a way of liquidating the debt as a new roof was needed as well as other fairly major repairs. The main means resorted to was one of subscription. The Governor was approached for help but replied saying that there were no funds available. The Committee was also asked for help but the matter remained unresolved during Stinson's ministry.

In January 1831 Stinson reported that his wife was not in good health: "she has been so ill that I have thought of sending her home next spring as I fear if she does not gain strength now it is cool she will not be able to bear the hot weather".<sup>24</sup> He reported his own health to be "generally good" but, as so often happened, it seemed to be the wife who suffered the most. He does not give the cause of her problems, but clearly was concerned about the heat of the summer. She did not improve and in the summer Stinson described his wife and little daughter as "almost always ill".<sup>25</sup>

In February 1831 Quirell was once again in trouble and his case was discussed by the

leaders' meeting who unanimously agreed he should be excluded from the Society. Stinson was instructed to communicate this fact to the Committee which he did in April. He referred to his earlier suspension "for defaming the character of a gentleman with whom he was connected in business and in then denying it, in the face of the strongest evidence of his guilt". This time he was called to account for "a similar offence, only attended with more deliberate wickedness. I brought him before the person whose character he had endeavoured to injure (a very respectable female). He so far acknowledged his guilt as to ask her pardon, and she was by that means prevented taking him before the courts."<sup>26</sup> He had, however, refused to attend the leaders' meeting, saying that he was not accountable to them and that he would no longer remain in the Society. This inevitably injured the Spanish cause and Stinson felt their main hope of converting anyone was now through the schools. He himself had made good progress in learning Spanish, and preached to the Spaniards on Tuesday evenings in a private room which, he now realised, suited them better than the chapel. Average attendance was about ten. He reported that they had nothing to do with Qirell who was calling himself a reformed Catholic and was still preaching in his own house to about a dozen people, including his own family.

Discipline was clearly strict throughout the Society and no one was exempt. At a meeting of the leaders, in June 1831, the following resolution was passed unanimously, "that the conduct of Brother [Michael] Caulfield had been in many respects very inconsistent with the Christian character: but that in consideration of his age and long standing in the Church he shall not at this time be excluded the Society". Instead he was prohibited from taking any part in prayer meetings, class meetings or leaders' meetings, and they hoped his future conduct would be more circumspect and justify these more lenient measures.

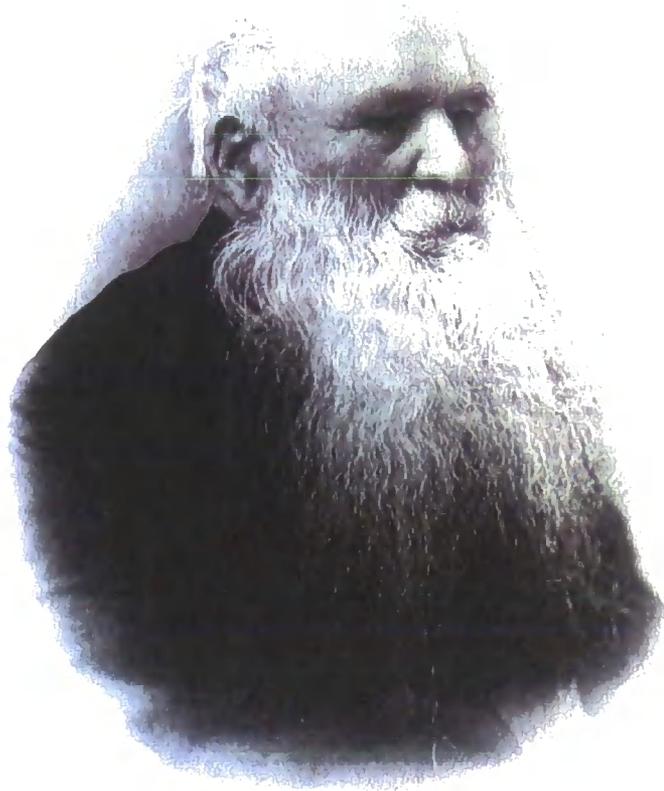
So Stinson's time in Gibraltar drew to an end. His wife had not returned to England, indeed in January 1832 he had written to say that his "dear partner and two little daughters are much better than usual".<sup>27</sup> This is the first mention of a second daughter but it is not clear what age she was - there is only a record of one child being born in Gibraltar. The improvement was only short-lived though as by March he referred to his wife as "far from

being well", so it was probably a good thing that the family was about to leave the Rock.<sup>28</sup> During their time there the membership had almost doubled and under Stinson's leadership much of the work, so badly affected by the epidemic, was revived and taken forward. Throughout his ministry in Gibraltar no major opposition was reported, though Stinson does refer to "some petty opposition from without".<sup>29</sup> Whether this involved the soldiers, who formed the majority of the new members, is not clear. Unfortunately, the Spanish cause did not revive. It never recovered from the loss of Barber and Quirell, who had worked so hard for the cause, was lost to it. However, the start of the school was seen to be an exciting new venture and provided some education for many Spanish children.

Meanwhile in England a new missionary had been appointed, William Harris Rule, who, of course, had already visited Gibraltar and therefore knew something of the work. He arrived in February 1832 before Stinson left, so they were able to work together and had "many very serious conversations" about the work considering the best way of going forward. As a result of these conversations, Rule wrote to the Committee to "express our conviction that there is an opening for more extensive effort and probably for more extensive usefulness among the foreigners on this rock", and the development of this work was to be Rule's first main aim.<sup>30</sup>

Stinson left Gibraltar in mid April and returned to England for one year and then in 1833 he resumed his work in Canada where he was for some time General Superintendent of Missions and part of the time President of the Canadian Conference. He went back to England in 1842 and served in a number of different appointments before returning to Canada where he was re-appointed as President of the Canadian Conference in 1858. His health began to deteriorate in 1861 and, after some months of illness, he died on 26 August 1862 in Toronto in his 61st year.

Meanwhile, back in Gibraltar, Rule had begun his ministry which was to last for ten years and was to take the work forward in many new and exciting ways.



*Your most affectionate*

*W. H. Rule*

Portrait of **William Harris Rule** (1802-1890)  
with an inscription in his own hand

Taken from his autobiography  
*Recollections of my Life and Work at Home and Abroad*  
published in 1886

## **CHAPTER SIX THE MINISTRY OF WILLIAM HARRIS RULE (1) EXPANSION**

### **- A System of Education, Forays into Spain (1832-1836)**

William Harris Rule was born in Penryn in Cornwall on 15 November 1802. His father was a surgeon but, as he was serving with the Navy, he did not see his son until he was nearly three years old. Father and son do not seem to have got on and William was thrown out of his home by his father when he was seventeen years old. He stayed in the area and he and some friends formed the Falmouth Philosophical Society, and later one at Truro, for the purpose of reading and debating together. One of these friends was Richard Treffry whose father was a Methodist minister. His whole family welcomed William into their home and he was impressed by them. Later he left Cornwall and lived as a student, earning a basic living as an artist, and ending up in London. The Treffry family moved to Rochester and Richard sent William a Bible in the autumn of 1822 informing him of his own conversion. William decided to read it for Richard's sake but was soon reading in earnest for his own sake. At Christmas he went to Rochester for a week and was much impressed by the Methodists he met there. He returned to London and began meeting with Methodists there and some months later after "anxiously seeking peace with God" he found it at a prayer meeting in Exeter and "left the house of God rejoicing".<sup>1</sup>

Later, the Rev. Richard Treffry senior encouraged him to give up his itinerant life and so, instead of following his cherished plan of touring the continent as an artist, he became a village school master, preaching two or three times every Sunday. Three months later he was accredited as a local preacher and offered as a candidate for the ministry. In August 1825 Conference received him as a probationer and he was summoned to London to wait for an appointment as a missionary. He spent the next few months studying. In February 1826 he married Mary Ann Dunmill, after receiving permission from the Missionary Committee to do so. On 14 March he was ordained in London and on 22 March he and his wife set sail for Malta, passing through the straits of Gibraltar on the way. He had been sent to Malta to prepare for a mission in Palestine but the project had to be abandoned when war broke out there and instead, in 1827, he was directed to Gibraltar. His time in Malta

was somewhat controversial as there clearly were differences of opinion between him and the Rev. John Keeling, his superintendent there.

As already described, in chapter four, the Rules sailed to Gibraltar but found that their services were not in fact required there and instead they received instructions in a letter from the Missionary Committee to return to England. After a month in England Rule was appointed to the West Indies. He and his wife set sail and arrived in November 1827, ministering there for the next few years. However, Mrs. Rule's health rapidly declined at the beginning of 1831 and, as Rule felt there was "no hope of her living much longer" if they remained, he booked a passage for England.<sup>2</sup> They left in March 1831. Mrs. Rule was so weak she had to be carried on board and with them went their only child, "a fine little boy not yet three years old, whom we loved most tenderly".<sup>3</sup> It was not a good voyage, the captain was often drunk, provisions were scarce and their little boy suddenly fell ill and died in his father's arms on 27 April. He was buried at sea and just a few days later on 3 May they landed in England, seeking "among the sympathy of our nearest friends to rise above the sorrow, but it was too heavy".<sup>4</sup>

Rule expected to be disciplined by the Committee for disobeying orders in returning to England without permission but he was, in fact, received with much kindness. He described their domestic circumstances as requiring a short stay in England. It seems that Mrs. Rule was pregnant and at some stage a daughter was born to them. Rule was given a "nominal appointment to the Sevenoaks circuit" which he held from August until January, also preparing for his next mission station which was to be Gibraltar.<sup>5</sup>

Rule embarked at Falmouth, with his wife and daughter, on 10 February 1832 and completed the voyage to Gibraltar, including a visit to Lisbon, in an amazing six days. This was because the ship was a steam packet and Rule believed he was the very first missionary to have the advantage of travelling aboard such a ship. On arrival in Gibraltar they were kept in quarantine for five days on a ship in the bay as there was cholera in London and the authorities did not want it brought into Gibraltar. However, some of the congregation came

out to visit them, surely making a nonsense of the notion of quarantine! Rule unwittingly upset some of them by failing to call them 'brother' or 'sister' referring to them instead as 'Mr.' or 'Mrs.'. They apparently called a special prayer meeting afterwards to pray for him! He reported that not everyone shared this view, but nevertheless they "had great trouble in consequence" of it.<sup>6</sup> He obviously won the day for in the minute book the use of 'brother' and 'sister' largely ceased. Stinson wrote to the Committee to report the safe arrival of the Rule family saying that Rule "is very acceptable to the people and is likely to be very useful".<sup>7</sup>

However, this controversy marked a somewhat difficult beginning for Rule, and in many ways his time in Gibraltar was characterised by opposition and controversy. Physically small in stature, he was large in vision and possessed phenomenal zeal, commitment and enthusiasm for his work as a minister of the gospel, but he found it hard to accept those who did not share his energy or his viewpoint. He was probably the most gifted man so far to be appointed to the station. He was an academic, later gaining a doctorate, and a theologian who favoured a more formal approach to worship. He apparently even had a vestry built near the entrance to the chapel to display his gowns! He was also a natural linguist and by the end of his life was said to be able to read eleven languages and converse in several. He soon mastered Spanish. He was extremely energetic and dynamic as well as forthright and outspoken in his views and it was perhaps, therefore, inevitable that some would not like his approach. In addition he was a born missionary and, unlike most of his predecessors for whom the English cause had come first, Rule's passion was for the Spanish cause both in Gibraltar and Spain which was always of paramount concern to him. There were some who did not like this emphasis and many of those who had been so impressed with him in 1827 were no longer in Gibraltar. Letters were sent to England complaining about Rule acting with an "iron hand",<sup>8</sup> about his sermons and the dull formal prayer meetings which now lacked "earnestness and fervency in prayer".<sup>9</sup> He was compared unfavourably with Stinson, and John Allen speaking for several members urged the Committee to remove Rule. Rule, on the other hand, was clearly most distressed by their complaints which gave him "unspeakable pain in my own mind".<sup>10</sup> He did his best to

talk with those concerned, to understand their position and to put things right.

The controversy continued for several years causing division in the church. He was described by some as a "little tyrant", and exception was taken to the tightening up of discipline. Rule insisted that members of the Sunday School Committee be approved by the leaders' meeting and all those "engaged in the singing pew"! The choirmaster, Mr. Rich, was so incensed by this that he and his singers said they would withdraw if this measure was insisted upon. Rule accepted his resignation acknowledging "his indefatigable attention to the advancement of the singing during the last four years".<sup>11</sup> However, Rich must have relented as shortly afterwards he was requested to form a choir and from then on the names of those wishing to belong to it were submitted for approval to the leaders' meeting.

General discipline continued to be strict with cases of drunkenness and theft usually leading to exclusion from the Society. One of the leaders, Mr. Newman, "having repeatedly manifested a quarrelsome disposition at our meetings, is no longer to be a leader", though he was eventually restored to the position.<sup>12</sup> Michael Caulfield was re-instated as a class leader in March 1835, after an absence of nearly four years. A penitents' meeting was set up in April 1833 to be run by one of the leaders on alternate Saturdays. It only ran for a year and was then changed into a prayer meeting, so perhaps had not been well supported.

At this time the Rule family itself was not without its own troubles either. Rule reported in January 1833 that he had had to undergo an operation, though he does not give any details about this, and that his wife had been suffering "a long and severe attack of bowel complaint, which has been here a prevalent and sometimes fatal disease".<sup>13</sup> The result of this illness was the premature birth of their son, Barrow, born on 14 January 1833 who thankfully was a healthy baby. However, two days later their daughter died. It seems she too had been ill for some time. There is no mention of this in the burial register. The effect of all this was that Mrs. Rule was laid low for some time and unable to participate in any missionary activities. In fact she was so unwell that she was unable to take part in family affairs either for a period of three months. She then began to recover and was eventually

restored to health, although she did suffer further bouts of sickness.

Rule does seem to have done his best to weather the storm of criticism and continue with his work. Gradually some of his main opponents left the Rock, but there were some resignations from leadership positions, and a small group left the Society in September 1834 including John Allen and his wife. The reasons for the rift were never explicitly stated, but on one occasion Rule referred to the groups as Warrenites. Samuel Warren, a travelling preacher from 1802 until his expulsion in 1835, had several followers known as Warrenites, who wanted "lay representation in the Conference and self-government for local congregations".<sup>14</sup> This was an issue that had caused many problems in England.

Wesley's death in 1791 had led to debate and discussion about several issues which were potentially very divisive. The question of the leadership of the Methodist movement was resolved by the annual appointment of a President of Conference as suggested by Wesley himself in his Deed of Declaration in 1784. The question about the administration of the sacraments has already been discussed and, despite the opposition of some Methodists, the travelling preachers gradually all came to give communion, baptise, bury and later marry their own members, thus severing the links with, and dependence on, the Established Church. The third large issue was that of lay involvement in decision making. The laity played a very significant role in the Methodist Societies, as leaders, stewards and trustees, but they had no power and no representation at Conference. Wesley's Deed of Declaration had given the power to one hundred of the preachers and he himself was strongly opposed to any lay involvement. After his death, this issue was to cause the most problems. Lay people were heard to say, "Mr. Wesley was our father; the preachers are our brethren and they have no right to rule over us".<sup>15</sup> Some of the preachers themselves agreed and one of them, Alexander Kilham, became the outspoken leader of this movement. As a result, in July 1796, he was expelled from Methodism and just over a year later, along with three other preachers, he formed a break-away group which was called the Methodist New Connexion in which the preachers and the laity were to work together. About 5,000 people joined the movement.

There were other break-aways and developments too, including that known as Primitive Methodism, but Gibraltar remained Wesleyan until the different branches of Methodism united in 1932. However, the question of lay involvement does seem to have been an issue there. Life on Mission stations was rather different from that in the home circuits for in Gibraltar the work had been founded and developed by lay people and on many occasions they continued the work in the absence of an appointed preacher. Those missionaries who understood this and were prepared to work with the lay leaders fared best but those like Rees and Rule who took a more authoritarian stance ran into difficulties.

Developments and events in England were bound eventually to be known about in Gibraltar and it may well be that the group who left wanted more say in the workings of the Society than Rule is likely to have allowed. Their resignations were accepted, but those who had resigned continued to live in Gibraltar which made life difficult and divisive for the Society.

Opposition aside, Rule's ministry was certainly a dynamic one, and the work developed during his ten years in Gibraltar in many different ways. He generally concentrated on the Spanish cause and other missionaries, namely Garrett and Sweetman, were sent to assist him mainly in the English work. A system of education was established, the church building was enlarged, further negotiation with regard to soldiers' rights was undertaken, a Spanish Society was formed and a mission to Spain was launched. However, the first main development was an unplanned one in the field of education and was begun before Rule's first assistant arrived.

It has sometimes been said that Rule began the first schools in Gibraltar but this is not, in fact, strictly true. Traverso's work on the history of education in Gibraltar shows that even early on into the English occupation of the Rock there were some private educational establishments in Gibraltar but these were small and not therefore very significant.<sup>16</sup> However, the Duke of Kent, at the end of 1802 or early 1803, recommended the establishment of regimental schools which were begun. As has already been mentioned, General Don too was interested in education and around 1816 he re-organised the

regimental schools into two, one for the Northern District on Castle Road and the other at Buena Vista in the South. These were organised by a Committee consisting of the regiments' commanding officers and the military chaplain. These schools were open to civilians on payment of one Spanish dollar on admission and one dollar a month thereafter. The students were not always children as non-commissioned officers and privates could attend also. The fee was, of course, too great for many inhabitants, but Traverso found evidence that on a few occasions Don "gave permission for the children of very poor families to be admitted to the schools free of charge."<sup>17</sup> At some time in the 1820's there were 70 civilian children attending out of a total of 180. By 1821 the schools had a proper timetable for the morning and afternoon sessions and by 1825 annual examinations were followed by the giving of prizes.

However, unfortunately in 1828 the schools had to be closed, because the premises were demanded by the Barrack Master, and had to be handed over as "no sufficient authority had been granted by the Board of Ordinance in London for their use".<sup>18</sup> Don expressed the hope that the schools would be re-established and suggested the £310 remaining in the school fund be kept in Gibraltar to be used if other schools could be set up.

As has already been described, Stinson had started an evening school in addition to the Sunday Schools in which children were also often taught to read and write. It is not clear how these fitted into this new work under Rule, for Rule's description of the work implies that it was a completely new development, but it may be that some of the former children were incorporated into the new schools. Education was something Wesley himself had been most concerned about. Edwards wrote:

John Wesley's importance as a social reformer lies chiefly in his service to education. He promoted the growth of schools in a century in which provision for education was glaringly inadequate. He even started Day Schools, in Bristol, Newcastle and London, and his school at Kingswood has become one of the finest public schools in the kingdom. His Methodist people, stimulated by his example, became in the next century the greatest force (apart from the Established Church) in popular education.<sup>19</sup>

Gibraltar was to be no exception. Education was seen to be a means of social reform but it was also seen as a means of proselytising and hopefully converting children and their families into Methodists, which was certainly the aim in Gibraltar.

In his own accounts of events Rule attributed the start of the work to his wife and paid tribute to her support for him by saying, "My dear wife's help was *meet for me*, the very help most meet for a missionary, as will appear when I come to tell some of the work she did."<sup>20</sup> She too began to learn Spanish and became a fluent speaker of the language. When they arrived in Gibraltar, the Stinsons were occupying the Mission House and so the Rule family went into lodgings in a neighbourhood where there were several poor families. About a month after their arrival, one of their neighbours approached Mrs. Rule and asked her if she would teach her eldest child to read, hoping this would enable her daughter to find better work in the future. Mrs. Rule agreed and the little girl came every morning for a lesson. Her brother soon joined her and, as the word spread, more parents sought lessons for their children until Rule himself had to help his wife "to teach no inconsiderable school the first letters".<sup>21</sup> The children were at first mainly Roman Catholic but soon Jewish children joined them and when the numbers became larger they were taught in the chapel, "for want of a more suitable place".<sup>22</sup> Thus Rule felt he "became, unawares, founder of the first charity-school in the garrison".<sup>23</sup>

Rule then began to consider how religion should be taught in his school, which had really developed in an unplanned way. Somewhat unusually for him, he felt it was wise to be cautious and to take a middle way and so there were no prayers at school only a morning reading class from the Bible. However, as time went on, he became more and more unhappy with this approach and sought for an opportunity to change it. The Jews finally removed their children anyway, as the rabbis were not happy about their being taught in a Christian school. Then a new educational initiative was suggested for Gibraltar itself and a meeting was convened to consider setting up a proper free public school. The meeting was chaired by the Lieutenant Governor, now Lieutenant General Sir William Houston. Rule felt this initiative was a result of his efforts and it may well be that his work had reminded

the authorities of the need to re-establish the schools of the past. Anyway, a public school, funded by local voluntary subscriptions, was opened in September 1832 in a building, situated on Flat Bastion Road, which the government provided free of charge. Rule transferred his children there immediately. A managing committee was set up which included the heads of the Catholic and Protestant churches along with lay representatives of the Catholic Church, the Church of England and the Jewish community, although the Jews apparently later withdrew. Methodism was not represented and, because of the different religious backgrounds of the children, it was agreed that religion would not be taught. Rule was unhappy about that and felt it opened the way for him to open a proper Mission School. So, as soon as he was informed that the Methodist Conference was appointing a second missionary to the station, he decided to open another school and announced his intention of doing so in October 1833.

This time he made it clear that religious education would be a compulsory part of the curriculum and, most controversially, that the children would be required to attend the Sunday morning services in the Methodist chapel. At first only two children were brought to the school, but after three months there were ten and by the end of the first year there were thirty pupils. No exceptions were made to the rule of attending Sunday worship and, as most of the children were Roman Catholics, it is not surprising that this stirred up considerable opposition from the priests who tried hard to persuade the parents not to send their children to the school. Their opposition was not just aroused because of the existence of the school, but also because of Rule's growing work amongst the Spanish population in Gibraltar.

As soon as he arrived in Gibraltar Rule's interest in the Spanish side of the work was evident. He reported that the work was at a low ebb but felt that much could be done. Quirell was still continuing his work and had also gathered together a Sunday School and Rule, after investigating the case against him and discussing it with others in Gibraltar, felt there was a possibility that Quirell had been misjudged to a degree and therefore decided to give him the benefit of the doubt. He therefore began to preach to the Spaniards at Quirell's

house and reported at first that he had no reason to regret this decision. In May 1832 he baptised the Quirell's son Juan. By this time Quirell was regarded by the Spanish "as a sort of priest" and had even been administering the Lord's Supper to them. However, Rule insisted that he would have nothing to do with them unless he was acknowledged as their sole pastor and he undertook to pay "the trifling expenses of lighting his room, and any such incidental cost".<sup>24</sup> However, after a trial of two months, Rule ceased to preach at Quirell's house because, as soon as he had developed a good congregation, Quirell took a room "to set up for himself". Rule felt it was clear that as "I have no hope of establishing with him a Christian Society, I must be disencumbered of him and avail myself of that co-operation of a few good people among ourselves who willingly give encouragement to this infant cause without wishing to be at the head of a party or desiring pay as assistant missionaries".<sup>25</sup>

It is probably not surprising, by this stage, that Quirell took this course of action as he had been leading the people for twelve months and obviously enjoyed his success and status as the leader. His congregations in fact continued to increase and sometimes amounted to two hundred. However, as they continued to call themselves Methodists this caused considerable problems for Rule, because people linked them all together. Rule reported that many of Quirell's congregation were from the poorest sections of the population and that he proposed setting up a Christian brotherhood as a kind of benevolent society. He had sought subscriptions for this, continuing to call himself Methodist and also preaching against Catholics. Apparently the fame of these Methodists had reached Rome with the result that the Spanish clergy had been warned against all Methodists and they had been denounced at each mass held in Gibraltar one Sunday. Rule tried to tell people that Quirell and his followers were not Methodists, and felt he had convinced some, but he was worried that by openly opposing them they might gain from the publicity. He thought therefore that his best course of action was to establish a proper Spanish Methodist Society himself, but he argued that he would need an assistant in order to do the work properly.

Rule gave no further information about Quirell. It seems though that he continued teaching for an advertisement, quoted by Traverso, appeared in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* in August

1832 referring to the planned opening of an academy "under the auspices of a Mr. J.B. Quirell".<sup>26</sup> His younger brother, Luis, continued as a Methodist and at the end of 1835 was entrusted with a letter from Rule to the Committee as he was about to visit London. So he may well have called at the Mission House. There is one other reference to Quirell, in 1836, in the Methodist correspondence, which stated that "John Quirell has got a situation, he is now clerk in the Protestant Church, so both brothers are now employed there".<sup>27</sup> After Quirell's wife died, he married Rosa Noguera Sanclaudio on 28 July 1857 in the Protestant Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in Gibraltar. They later moved to Cádiz, with Quirell's son Juan, who opened a shop there to sell pianos and other musical instruments. A daughter, Rosa, was born to them in Cádiz on 28 October 1859. She went on to have eleven children so there are many descendents of Quirell alive today. He himself died in Cádiz on 16 February 1866 aged 71.

As the Catholic opposition in the South was strong, Rule concentrated his efforts in town for the time being. He held two Spanish services every Sunday in the chapel, one at mid-day when he read the liturgy of the Church of England and expounded one of the lessons for the day. A similar service was held in the evening after the English congregation had left. Ten to fifteen Spaniards attended and in the evening some of the English congregation stayed, presumably to add their support. Rule visited the Spanish and talked and prayed with them. He had six communicants and had formed a small class in January 1833. The workload was heavy, particularly on Sundays when he had four services altogether. He felt his engagements on that day "are more than I can well get through and attention to them generally leaves me in a state of painful exhaustion."<sup>28</sup> There were few local preachers at this stage. In April 1832 Rule had reported "old Mr. Davis has resigned, his days of labour being past"<sup>29</sup> but it seems he continued to help out as the following year when Rule was under so much pressure he reported that "there are remaining old Mr. Davis, who is quite worn out and two sergeants each of which are in situations which render their attendance at any time precarious indeed and often quite impracticable."<sup>30</sup> Rule continued to press the Committee to send a second missionary so that he could concentrate on the Spanish work, but in the meantime he continued to try and do all the work himself.

According to Rule it was the custom for the Roman Catholic preachers during Lent "to declaim against the religion of the Protestants", and they "usually closed that part of their mission by collecting Bibles and burning them".<sup>31</sup> Rule reported that the Protestant community "submitted in silence" to this. He therefore sought a "friendly interview" with the Lenten preacher for 1833 but was not successful, so instead he became a "frequent hearer" at his services, which he also thought would help him in his study of Spanish.<sup>32</sup> This action was rather provocative and, as it brought Rule more public attention, he decided to advertise his own preaching in the *Gibraltar Chronicle* with the result that "a large multitude of people" came to hear him and there was not enough room for them all in the chapel. However, they were disappointed that Rule did not use the opportunity to speak against their own preacher, choosing instead to preach an ordinary sermon - it was, in fact, Good Friday. So, as much interest had been generated, Rule decided to give a course of lectures "bearing directly against the whole scheme of popery".<sup>33</sup> He advertised them and they took place in the Methodist chapel from April to July 1833. However, all this took up even more of his time and he was delighted when the news came that another missionary had been appointed.

The Committee appointed John Garrett who arrived in Gibraltar around the end of October 1833. He had been accepted on trial in 1829 and was stationed at Bingley for the following two years, and at Kendal in 1832. In 1833 he was admitted into full connexion and sent to Gibraltar. There is little information available regarding the details of Garrett's ministry in Gibraltar. He appears to have written only one letter, shortly after his arrival, to the Committee.<sup>34</sup> In it he described his voyage from Falmouth to Gibraltar and reported that on arrival he was informed he would have to stay in quarantine. It seems however that he was able to speak with Rule and his wife before being sent to Malta for fourteen days quarantine there. When he returned to Gibraltar the Rules welcomed him with great kindness. As there was no room at the Mission House lodgings were arranged for him in the home of Mr. Keys, a member of the congregation and the builder who was to be involved in the enlargement of the chapel. Here Garrett had the exclusive use of two rooms.

Garrett had been appointed to work with the English congregation and so presumably he carried out most of the ordinary day-to-day activities connected with this part of the work. However, Rule had the overall responsibility as superintendent minister and it was Rule who continued to chair the leaders' meetings recording the details in the minute book. Rule rarely commented on Garrett's work in his letters but he reported in early 1834 that, despite suffering from rheumatism in his feet, Garrett had entered into the spirit of his work and he felt he would be an assiduous pastor.<sup>35</sup> Rule also later reported that those who were critical of his ministry welcomed the arrival of Garrett and "flew to him as to their Saviour" in the hope that he would support them against Rule whose removal they were still seeking. "But all was in vain. Mr. Garrett saw their unholy spirit and told them what he thought of them".<sup>36</sup>

By this time Rule had already begun negotiations with the Governor about the possibility of enlarging the chapel, which he had several times described as small, inconvenient and often excessively hot. His first memorial for a grant of land adjoining the premises was turned down. This land had in fact been unoccupied for a few years. The epidemic of 1828 had started in this area, and afterwards some land was cleared as a health measure to improve the ventilation of the area and reduce overcrowding. There was a reluctance to reverse this policy because of a continuing fear of further epidemics. However, Rule had some health concerns of his own and he was therefore advised to memorialise the Governor again using these grounds. He pointed out that "one half of the dwelling house is almost entirely enclosed. Not even an outlet could be found for a drain, but by carrying it under the ground floor of the house, nor any free channel for the passage of air through the premises ..... The stagnant atmosphere of the house is loaded with a noxious effluvium from the drain which flows beneath it".<sup>37</sup> He felt this was a health hazard and indeed it could help to explain the repeated illnesses of so many of the missionary wives. The chapel was too small and the atmosphere within it also became very oppressive.

The premises were therefore inspected and the inspector agreed with Rule and so, on this occasion, his memorial was successful. A small piece of the adjoining land was therefore

granted to them, sufficient to enlarge the chapel, but leaving the rest unoccupied on the grounds of health for the reasons already stated. Rule hoped that the enlargement might also provide enough room for Garrett to live on the premises. However, they still had the problem of paying for the work and there was also an outstanding debt of \$1,032, or about £227, on the premises. Rule estimated the cost of the enlargement as £585 making a total of over £800, including the debt. He outlined a plan to the Missionary Committee of repaying the debt over ten years from seat rents and special subscriptions but he asked them to advance the £585 in the first instance.

It was some time before Rule received an answer to his request. Indeed communication between himself and London often seemed particularly slow and caused him several times to express his annoyance and frustration. He sent a Spanish hymn book to London for approval and seems to have had to wait about two years for permission to print it, despite numerous reminders. On this occasion seven months after sending his request he wrote to say he felt they were in danger of losing the grant because of the excessive delay. "The result of this must be either to stifle the work of God for want of room, or after all this trouble, to make fresh memorials, abandon the premises, and go to some other part of the garrison. In such a case, the whole inconvenience and expense will have been the consequence of procrastination".<sup>38</sup> Just over three weeks later he wrote again saying, "We look for a letter on that subject like they that wait for the morning."<sup>39</sup>

In fact a letter, giving permission to go ahead, was already on its way though it seems that the Committee did not agree to advance the money. This had to be raised by local loans instead and moreover Rule had, by this time, prepared a slightly different and more expensive plan, as he wanted to incorporate a class-room into the building too. The school was still meeting in the Mission House which must have been very inconvenient for everyone. His proposals meant that the chapel would end up measuring 46 by 36 feet. There would be four rooms underneath: 26 by 12.6; 13.6 by 9; 15 by 12.8 and 12.8 by 10.6 feet. They would provide a classroom, a room for class meetings and general purposes and "two light, dry and airy rooms for the second preacher".<sup>40</sup> In addition space was found for

a much needed safe and dry depository for the Bibles and tracts. This plan seems to have been approved and the work began, with Mr. Keys as the builder. The lease was drawn up to expire at the same time as that on the original premises. The trustees were again a mixture of London officials and people in Gibraltar. The latter were Rule and Garrett, S.C. Osler, Thomas Davis, J. Elms, J. Humphries and J. Guilbert.

The work went ahead and the congregation moved to temporary accommodation. This was difficult to find and added to the expense, costing \$50 a month, and the agreed term was for five months. Rule managed to raise much of the money but found himself urgently short of \$1,000, about £220. He therefore took the difficult and highly irregular step of drawing on the Committee without seeking their permission first. He sent urgent letters explaining his reasons for doing this and acknowledged that he did it "with a trembling apprehension of being exposed to your censure".<sup>41</sup> The Committee's reply is one of only two letters to Rule to have survived. The Missionary Society's Treasurers refused to take responsibility for the bill but the Committee finally and very reluctantly agreed to do so but only as a loan and "on the express condition that it shall be repaid as early as possible".<sup>42</sup>

The new chapel was opened on Sunday 5 October 1834. Rule reported, "The building was admired, I believe without any exception and what is far better, was well filled and in the evening more than filled."<sup>43</sup> It was also a happy day for the Rule family for their son Martin Luther, who had been born on 5 July, was baptised by Garrett.

Garrett had only stayed in his lodgings with Mr. Keys for a few weeks and then found alternative lodgings for himself. After a short while he moved again insisting that living at the South was necessary for the good of his health. This meant that he did not immediately move into the rooms available on the Mission premises following the enlargement of the chapel. However, he did eventually do so and in April 1835 Rule reported Garrett to be living on the premises at a saving of \$10 a month which he had been paying for his lodgings.<sup>44</sup>

Once the enlargement of the chapel was completed and Garrett well and truly in post, Rule could turn his attention more fully to the Spanish cause. He continued his work with his small congregation in Gibraltar and the work of the school, all of which provoked further opposition.

In Lent 1834 he had been attacked in the Roman Catholic Church. Apparently the Lenten preacher for that year had announced his intention of speaking about the errors of Protestantism. Rule decided to go and listen, so he could defend his own position, and in order to do so effectively he felt he needed to take notes. This was likely to be seen as a provocative action and on the second night men were positioned near to him to prevent the note taking by force if necessary. Afterwards Rule informed the magistrate that he anticipated further trouble and asked for protection. So, on the third evening, policemen were sent to the church to protect him and the men trying to prevent Rule from taking notes were quietly removed. Father Zino, the Vicar Apostolic, then marched towards him asking him not to break the peace and, when he made no impression on Rule, he called out an order to turn him out. Several men armed with bludgeons rushed out of the vestry to do just that. Only one blow struck Rule and only slightly as it was turned aside by someone else. Others were not so lucky and two young Englishmen were dragged to the ground and beaten. The police sergeant suggested Rule left and he did so. The service then continued and Rule "walked quickly home and saw through all how deeply I had been indebted to the providential care of our Heavenly Father".<sup>45</sup>

The Governor was appealed to and seems to have supported the priests. Rule remained totally unrepentant and reported to the Committee that although there were some repercussions following this incident he did not have time to relate them and "all is now as though it had never been", which seems rather unlikely. In fact elsewhere he reported that by this time the Pope had warned "the clergy of Andalusia to be on their guard against the heretic in Gibraltar who was acting, he said, against the Catholic religion".<sup>46</sup> Rule saw even this as a good thing as he felt it gave him increased influence as a preacher amongst the local inhabitants.

The work of the school continued. From time to time the Roman Catholic priests threatened the parents with excommunication if they let their children attend, and some children were withdrawn, but there were always more to fill their places. Rule reported: "There is a public school patronised by the hierarchy of the place, where poor children are taught gratuitously but they send them here in preference."<sup>47</sup> So why did Catholic parents send their children to schools openly teaching Methodist doctrine? It may have been the quality of the education, for even the opposition acknowledged that the education provided was good and that the children were well disciplined as one might expect from Rule and his wife. Traverso suggested it might have been due to Rule's personality or the fact that the classes were smaller than elsewhere or that it was a "reflection of liberal and anti-clerical factors" which had begun to show themselves in Spain.<sup>48</sup> Whatever the reason the school flourished and by May 1835 there were fifty pupils. Rule therefore decided to take on an assistant, on a small salary, as the task was becoming too much for him and his wife. Girls and boys were always taught separately and so Mrs. Rule's help was invaluable.

The assistant was Salvador Negrotto, one of the very first pupils to have attended the school. Not all the children in the school were Spanish. In fact, Gibraltar's population was very mixed as H.W. Howes describes at length in his book *The Gibraltarian*. Indeed he felt that "far too much has been made of the idea of the alleged complete domination of Spanish influences on the population of Gibraltar, and not enough of the Portuguese, and above all the Genoese".<sup>49</sup> Rule's evangelical spirit no doubt embraced everyone, including the Jews, and so his work amongst the 'Spanish' was rather more generic than the name implies. Negrotto's parents were Genoese struggling to make a living, but prepared to sacrifice Salvador's help to gain an education for him. However, when he decided he wanted to become a Protestant his parents tried hard to dissuade him, and his father occasionally whipped him. Father Zino apparently offered him a job but Negrotto persisted in his intention. He was fifteen years old when he became assistant at the school, and during the previous eighteen months, without being asked, he had come an hour early each day to help with the preparations. His mother and sister by then were also attending the Spanish services. He later became a master in the school, and in May 1841 Rule married him to

Catherine Parody who had been a pupil in the girls' school. Eventually they left for South America with William Parody and his wife, who had also come through the schools. In 1855 Rule received a letter from Negrotto who was running a school in Buenos Aires on similar lines to the school in Gibraltar. He also held several offices in the American Methodist Episcopal Church there and wrote: "I think it will gratify you to know that the seed you kindly and generously sowed in this poor stony heart, in my childhood, is now, blessed be God, yielding some fruit". He enclosed a £5 donation to the Missionary Society "to which I consider myself indebted, for sending you to open the eyes of my understanding to behold the truth as it is in Jesus".<sup>50</sup>

By June 1835 there were fifty five children in the school and Rule reported that they were having to turn children away. He wanted to erect a school house and possibly also a chapel to provide separate premises for the Spanish work. He memorialised the Governor on several occasions for the remainder of the land adjacent to the premises. The authorities seem to have found his persistence in doing so rather irritating and he was never successful. The fear of further epidemics was still strong and the decision to keep the land cleared was strictly adhered to. In fact there were no further yellow fever epidemics, but in June 1834 cholera struck Gibraltar for the first time and 380 people died. Spain suffered much more severely and Benady reports that there were 5,231 deaths in Madrid in just one fortnight.<sup>51</sup> So it is understandable that health fears were still strong in Gibraltar, although Rule gives only a passing mention to the cholera in his letters to the Committee.

Rule also began looking for a master for the school and in September 1835 he appointed James Lyon. He had arrived in Gibraltar in 1834, aged 25, with the rank of pay sergeant in the 92nd Highland Regiment. He did not come from a Methodist background, but soon became a class leader and went on trial as a local preacher. As a boy in Glasgow, he had had some teaching in Latin and Greek and he now began to learn Spanish. He obtained his discharge from the army in order to take up the position in the school, thus giving up a promising career to do this work. Shortly afterwards Rule and Lyon also began a Sunday school for Spanish children, separate from the day school. Together they had gone out one

Sunday afternoon, and gathered forty two names of prospective pupils. Lyon was to superintend this but in the beginning Rule reported, "I must take charge of it until he [Lyon] can use the language, and we get the wild children into some order."<sup>52</sup>

Any new development was bound to increase Catholic opposition but, by this time, the Catholics had decided that the best way to oppose Rule was to open their own school. Accordingly two Christian Brothers from Ireland, Patrick O'Flaherty and Thomas Anthony, arrived in Gibraltar in November 1835 to be the teachers. Caruana gives a detailed account of what happened next in his book *The Rock under a Cloud*, but in essence it seems that the decisions about the school were made by a Junta of Elders, supposedly working with Father Zino, but in reality wielding the power. This group had come into being following an incident in 1726 when two Catholic priests were judged to have broken the King's Laws and were therefore expelled from Gibraltar. They had excommunicated a member of the church for having refused to pay his contributions at a recently increased rate which he regarded as unjust. The priests were accused of having acted in a way "tending to the Inquisition" which was against General Orders.<sup>53</sup> It then transpired that other priests had been removing treasures from the Gibraltar churches and taking them into Spain. The Governor therefore did not want any more Spanish priests in authority in Gibraltar. Instead he suggested that a Committee of lay people should be formed to "assist the priest-in-charge on matters concerning the maintenance of the church and its contents", and to ensure that payments were made to priests and others who gave service to the church.<sup>54</sup> Members were to be approved by the Governor with elections taking place every year. The Committee or Junta of Elders soon came to have considerable powers as can be seen in this instance.

From the start there were disagreements about the type of school and about the way it was to be run. The school opened in February 1836 when "so many destitute candidates turned up that not even one half of them could be accommodated".<sup>55</sup> It seems likely therefore that, despite the increase in the number of schools, there were still not enough places, which may explain why Catholic parents had persisted in sending their children to Rule's school. At the end of the month though there were 260 children in the school and Rule had lost half his

pupils to it. However, this meant that more staff were needed. In addition most of the children did not speak any English and the Brothers did not speak Spanish. There were also problems over discipline. Then the Junta decided the school would not close for a summer holiday which meant the Brothers could not take a break. They threatened to leave. Various discussions followed and a new Junta was elected, but the main points of difference were not really resolved, although another Brother, Francis Corcoran, was sent to help. By 1837 the Brothers had been in post for over a year, without a break, and their health was beginning to suffer, although Rule always maintained that they were drunkards. However, as no other schools had holidays, there was a continued reluctance to change the policy which it was thought would give an advantage to the Methodists. Brother O'Flaherty, after taking advice from his order, took matters into his own hands and dismissed the pupils, ordering them to take a holiday. The Junta responded by telling the Brothers that their services were no longer required and measures had been taken to find new teachers. They therefore left Gibraltar in the summer of 1837. The school did continue but no longer provided much of a threat to Rule's work which once again prospered.

During all this time Rule had not lost interest in Spain itself. He had also continued the links with the Bible Society but at first reported little success in the work of distributing Bibles. "The poverty of the foreigners here, their indifference to all that is good, and the diminution of the floating population of the bay from decay of commerce, have reduced the sale of Scriptures".<sup>56</sup> In fact it was so low that they had stopped paying a distributor. Books were still available from the Mission House and Mrs. Nicklin's shop. The Committee met regularly and for a time at least included "both the military and civil chaplains".<sup>57</sup> In fact Rule had "studiously cultivated a friendly correspondence with the chaplains" and seems, at first, to have had better relations with them than many of his predecessors, though there was some opposition later on.<sup>58</sup> Every opportunity to distribute Bibles was taken and, at some stage, Rule "canvassed the whole town, in order to ascertain who of the humbler classes had copies of the Holy Scriptures, and who had not. Many families were supplied; *a very few* declined accepting them; but the remainder were furnished with Spanish, Italian and Portuguese Testaments".<sup>59</sup>

In the summer of 1834 Rule obtained the addresses of thirty five booksellers in the principal towns and cities of Spain, from newspaper advertisements. He wrote to them to ask if they were willing to receive Bibles from the Bible Society to sell on commission. He received a surprising number of favourable replies, which he found encouraging, but there was one insurmountable problem. All books printed outside Spain were prohibited so it was difficult to get them into the country and dangerous to sell them. Rule managed to get a few books taken to Cádiz, Granada and Madrid by private means but that was all. He decided therefore that he needed to visit Spain to try and discover for himself what opportunities there were. After receiving permission from the Committee, he set out at the beginning of January 1835, leaving Garrett and Mrs. Rule in charge of affairs in Gibraltar.

Rule arrived in Cádiz on 11 January and visited the Consul, John Brackenbury. He was away but his son, the Vice-Consul, was also interested in the cause and both were correspondents of the Bible Society. He introduced Rule to Manuel Barleta, editor of the *Diario*, a Spanish newspaper in Cádiz, who had once worked in England as a translator. He and Rule had several discussions about ways of introducing the Bible into Spain and a useful relationship was formed. Rule visited several booksellers in Cádiz and then travelled on to Seville. He had been persuaded, rather against his will, to travel incognito as travelling openly as a Protestant clergyman was thought to be rather dangerous. However, at Jerez, where they stopped to eat he was recognised and addressed by name! He reported from Gibraltar some weeks later, "It is known all over Spain that this is a Bible Society and a Mission station and enquirers begin to make their appearance."<sup>60</sup> His fame was clearly spreading. His fellow travellers to Seville were five young students from the University there. Rule entered into animated discussions with them about religion and their openness left him with the impression that a considerable opportunity existed for work amongst them.

Rule reached Seville on 14 January and called to see Ramírez, a tradesman, who had some months previously visited Gibraltar. He had heard Rule preach and had subsequently had several deep conversations with him. He insisted that Rule stayed with him and his family and he took him round Seville. Ramírez felt there were many Spaniards interested in

Protestantism. Rule left Seville rather reluctantly for Madrid on 18 January, arriving four days later having narrowly escaped being robbed on the way. Again he visited booksellers but it seemed impossible to resolve the difficulty of getting a supply of books to them. He also twice visited Don Félix Torres Amat, Bishop of Astorga, and translator of the Bible into Spanish. He had spent many years working on his translation and had struggled against considerable opposition to get it published. "Only the financial assistance of Anglican friends in London allowed the work to appear between 1833 and 1835 after numerous delays".<sup>61</sup> Rule reported that Amat's work had been subjected to a rigorous examination and that he had been asked to add notes to several passages and to say that the reading of the Bible was not necessary for salvation. He gave Rule a copy plus some of his other writings. He planned to give a hundred to the clergy of his diocese as many were ignorant of the Word of God. Amat had also examined Protestant versions of the Bible and reported favourably on them to the Pope. He had encountered some hostility because of his work and views, and he and Rule held a long and interesting conversation on the subject of religion and the hope of more liberal attitudes developing in Spain. Rule later read some of his writings and came to the conclusion that "Amat speaking, and Amat writing, are not the same man ..... He wrote under *censorship*" and Rule felt some of his writing was needlessly intolerant.<sup>62</sup> Expressing more liberal views in private conversation was one thing but it seems it was still too dangerous to commit such views to paper.

Rule had hoped to visit Granada and Málaga but this would have been expensive and time consuming, as well as dangerous because there wasn't a sufficient escort available for travellers. Spain was actually in a state of civil war and travelling alone was not recommended. He therefore returned to Seville and finally reached Gibraltar, via Cádiz, on 5 February. On the return journey Rule thought deeply about Spain, and decided that what was needed was a version of the Bible in Spanish, translated from the original and accompanied by a carefully written commentary. All Bibles in Spain at this time had to be printed with notes, but the Bible Society was not interested in such a project as they concentrated on translating the Bible only. So Rule decided to start the work himself and set about translating the four gospels. He actually finished this task and the work was

printed in Gibraltar in June 1841. He reported that his successors left most of them to rot, but that he sold some and those he gave to the Missionary Committee were gradually put into circulation in Spain and Spanish America. In addition Rule used the press extensively to produce school books, hymn-books and a variety of religious books, some of which he wrote himself.

Rule settled back into his work in Gibraltar but continued to think about the way forward in Spain. He desperately wanted to become a Spanish missionary but knew that it was not yet possible to preach openly in Spain. He still hoped for a time when missions and possibly schools could be established in Spain on a circuit basis. He discussed with Barleta the possibility of operating a press to print religious works in Spain itself to overcome the ban on such books, printed outside Spain, being brought into the country. Barleta clearly felt this was possible. The works could then be distributed throughout Spain and the missionary in charge of the press might be able to gather together a few people in his home for conversation, fellowship and prayer.

So keen was Rule to try anything to further the cause, that he began open-air preaching on the neutral ground between Gibraltar and Spain in May 1835. This met with limited success. He also visited Tangier, at his own expense, as a member of his Spanish class had moved there. He reported on an interesting visit and felt there were opportunities there too. He also had correspondents in Portugal whom he kept supplied with Bibles for distribution, but he did not have the time to develop any of this work himself.

In July 1835 Rule wrote to the Committee asking to be relieved of the task of superintending the English side of the work so that he could concentrate entirely on the Spanish work. He felt however that he could not recommend Garrett for the task partly because of his health problems and partly because Rule felt his ministry was not acceptable. This was the first time that Rule had criticised Garrett and over the next few months more details of his concerns were given. Rule explained his former silence on the subject by saying that some of the facts had only just come to light and he had not wanted to pass on

suspicions without proof. He was also very much grieved by the necessity of having to do so.

However, it seems that from his arrival in Gibraltar there were some concerns about Garrett's behaviour. The captain and fellow passengers had reported that his conduct on board ship had been "highly discreditable to his profession", although Garrett denied this.<sup>63</sup> Some concerns were expressed about the company he kept in Gibraltar and about his personal appearance. Although intending to study he never managed to do so. Rule had tried meeting with him for conversation and prayer but after a few attempts the meetings were abandoned. Rule reported that Garrett had avoided the Mission House despite invitations and said he could not walk far, because of the pain in his feet, but was usually out when Rule called to see him. Rule felt Garrett also suffered from hypochondria and there were allegations of drunkenness and also of being in debt. Rule quoted from a letter Garrett had sent him describing himself as

one of the most inconsistent and restless beings in the world; a well without water, a cloud without rain. I cannot rest in company at home or from home. I make resolutions and then break them. When I shall be more consistent I know not. But if I cannot read, write, pray, study or preach as I once did and as I long every day to do, I will not disturb any brother or friend who can.<sup>64</sup>

Rule was aware that in England a special district meeting should be called to discuss the case but he could not do this in Gibraltar. However, he felt the matter was clear and he could no longer work with Garrett. He did state that "all things considered I hope his return will not be regarded as censurable" but later he seems to have changed his mind because of his concern as to how Garrett might behave in England.<sup>65</sup> In October 1835 Garrett's doctor recommended that he should leave Gibraltar on health grounds. He referred to Garrett's rheumatism and also an eyesight problem had recurred which some months before had caused the temporary loss of sight in one eye. He also reported that his general health was affected. Before leaving, Garrett sent a letter to the leaders' meeting asking them if they considered him worthy and also asking them to state either their joy or

sorrow at his departure. The reply stated that they unanimously recommended that he did not press the matter.

Should an investigation take place, there is no doubt, but that much information would be elicited which would be disagreeable not only to your feelings, but also to ours. Under all the circumstances of the case, we consider that the best plan you can adopt will be to leave Gibraltar for England agreeably to the medical recommendation.<sup>66</sup>

Garrett did this, leaving in the middle of November and Rule was once again left in sole charge of the work. He expressed the "distress with which I find our hands weakened when we need them for the work's sake to be strengthened. However, I am at present favoured with tolerable health and trusting in divine goodness for a continuation of this blessing I will strain every nerve to hold on until you can relieve me by an English preacher".<sup>67</sup>

Despite being on his own, he continued to take every opportunity that arose and so when Nicolas Lovero and his wife, members of his Spanish class, moved to San Roque he decided to visit them there. After several visits Rule hired a room for himself in the hope of assembling a small congregation. On 29 December 1835 he arrived at San Roque, having issued some private invitations to friends to meet with him. However, the woman to whom he had entrusted the invitations had informed the authorities. On his arrival Rule felt that all was not well and, having heard rumours that the authorities were planning to take action against him, he decided to forestall them and went to see the chief Alcalde, or mayor, of the town. In a short space of time, the Judge of First Instance, the Vicar Apostolic, the military commander of the district and the parish priest had been notified as well and all gathered together to confront Rule. Thus the civil, military and ecclesiastical authorities were united against him. A reasonably amicable conversation followed in which Rule was asked to obey the Spanish law prohibiting the exercise of the Protestant religion. Rule acknowledged their right to uphold the law but pointed out that he acted under the higher command of Jesus Christ who had instructed his disciples to preach to all the world. He agreed to take further advice on the matter and was allowed to leave.

After this Rule knew he could not continue his work in San Roque but he did send a letter of remonstrance to the authorities in Madrid. He did not receive a direct reply but reported that Lovero and his wife were not directly persecuted as a result of these events. He kept in touch with them and occasionally visited them. However, some four years later Lovero was imprisoned on a trumped up charge brought by the vicar. Clearly these were dangerous times for Protestants in Spain.

In January 1836 Rule was informed that a married man, Edward Sweetman, had been appointed to Gibraltar to take charge of the English work, and to his delight Rule was, at last, appointed solely to the Spanish work. Sweetman and his wife, Sarah, seem to have been delayed at Boulogne and they did not arrive in Gibraltar until 26 April. Edward Sweetman had been admitted on trial in 1834 and sent to Sydney. Apparently he was shipwrecked on the way and his name does not appear in the list of stations the following year. He presumably must have returned to England and was then sent to Gibraltar. At first they stayed in the Mission House with the Rules and then found a house of their own. In his first letter Sweetman reported that there had been a great deal of unpleasantness in the church but that many of those involved were now attending his services. Some months later he was able to report: "that those days of discord and disgrace have apparently passed away. The people have received me with great kindness and are willing to do their utmost to assist me to build up the waste places of Zion".<sup>68</sup> In addition to his ordinary duties, he paid special attention to the Sunday school which he felt had been rather neglected and he also hoped to revive the Missionary Society. His wife wanted to help too and had two classes under her care.

Meanwhile the case of Garrett had not been resolved as Conference had decided to investigate the matter fully. Evidence was requested from Gibraltar and Garrett produced some testimonials himself mainly from those with whom he had lodged. Clearly he had some support in Gibraltar and there were those who felt he had been very harshly treated by Rule. Rule and Sweetman together interviewed a number of people and took several statements which certainly seemed to provide overwhelming evidence of drunkenness on

several occasions. Garrett had returned to his family in Bradford and while there soon became involved in preaching and his behaviour gave no cause for concern. Garrett's letter to the Committee is a much more coherent one than those written in Gibraltar and in it he protested his innocence. Perhaps his behaviour in Gibraltar had been out of character. He certainly had a great deal of freedom there and many tempting opportunities. Perhaps too, he did not get the sympathy and understanding from Rule who wanted a competent assistant so that he could get on with his work amongst the Spanish and, as Garrett was not a probationer, he may have assumed that he did not need a great deal of support. It certainly seems odd that it took two years for all of this to come to light.

The Conference of 1836 finally made its judgement:

**It appears 1:**

- that there was a want of proper confidence and cordiality between Brother Garrett and his Superintendent,
- that the Methodist Society in Gibraltar was in a divided state,
- that the character of the community by which brother Garrett was surrounded, required special prudence on his part,
- that he was himself labouring under much bodily indisposition and depression of mind, during his residence on the Gibraltar station,
- and that he did not experience that tender consideration from his Superintendent, which he might reasonably have expected.

2. That Brother Garrett does not appear to have acted with that wakeful caution which is requisite in such a community. He is not however, proved to have been guilty of those acts of intemperance with which he has been charged - the evidence produced against him being utterly inadmissible, partly from its own character, partly, from the time and circumstances in which it was obtained and partly from the fact that he was not permitted to meet his accusers face to face.

**Resolved** that he be placed under the care of a Superintendent in whose house he shall reside.<sup>69</sup>

Rule's reaction to this news was one of incredulity as he saw it as an acquittal and he was obviously convinced of the truth of the charges of drunkenness. He said he would have rejoiced if Garrett had confessed and repented but to protest his innocence and be acquitted shook Rule's confidence in Conference. He felt he himself must have been portrayed as a "vexatious litigant" and that his own reputation was now in question.<sup>70</sup> If he could have anticipated such an outcome he would have begged to appear at Conference. He hoped he

might be able to visit England to exonerate himself, but such a visit did not take place. However the Conference judgement did not entirely clear Garrett of blame and it seems unlikely that that was the end of the matter for him, though it is not clear exactly what did happen next. In the 1837 *Conference Minutes* he was listed as stationed at New Mills but was reported in 1838 to have retired from the work. However in 1839 he was once again admitted on trial and was stationed at Bangalore where he remained for the rest of his ministry, being admitted again into full connexion in 1842. Garrett had been a printer before entering the ministry and in India he managed a printing press set up in the Mission compound in Bangalore. The press was to prove an invaluable resource and Garrett operated it for seventeen years without leave. Findlay and Holdsworth reported that he did "excellent work in this department" and was regarded by many as a missionary of great ability, standing in for the Chairman of the District in his absence. However, when he did finally return to England in 1856 his financial records in India came under scrutiny; no checks having been made before then. The records were not felt to be satisfactory. Garrett protested his innocence and returned to India to justify himself but unfortunately was unable to do so. In 1858 he resigned from the ministry. Findlay and Holdsworth reported his loss to be a "matter of infinite regret" and clearly felt he had done much good work in India.<sup>71</sup>

In Gibraltar, Garrett's successor, Sweetman was now established and well accepted in his post but the church had to face the loss of two of its older members. Mary Anne Davis, wife of Thomas Davis, died in February 1836 at the age of 67. She had lived through so many trying times supporting her husband in his work and was clearly well thought of and much missed. Then in August Caroline Nicklin died, aged 73. She had been a staunch supporter of the Bible Society, selling Bibles in her shop, and was a great loss to this work.

Rule could now turn his attention at last to Spain. On hearing of his appointment as a Spanish missionary he had written:

I know not what to say, for it seems to introduce me into a field so dear to me and at the same time so important, and, except through divine help, so far above me, that I can only offer my devout thanks to God for the favour and

honour he confers on me, and express the gratitude, yet deep beyond expression, with which I receive this token of confidence on the part of the Committee.<sup>72</sup>

He already knew working in Spain was no easy task, but perhaps his enthusiasm caused him to underestimate the obstacles in his way which were by no means small ones.

## CHAPTER SEVEN THE MINISTRY OF WILLIAM HARRIS RULE (2) CÁDIZ - The first Spanish Methodist Society (1836-1839)

Rule's aim in Spain was to convert as many Spaniards to Protestantism as possible by establishing Missions, and possibly Methodist circuits and schools. He put his trust in God and enthusiastically and hopefully set about his task, but he faced a political past and present which made life very difficult for him. This was a country in which religious fervour had driven out both Jew and Moor, despite the fact that such expulsions robbed the country of many who contributed a great deal to Spain's economy and prosperity. This same fanatical zeal to enforce religious orthodoxy had led to the establishment of the Inquisition in 1478. When the Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492 those who converted to Christianity were allowed to stay, but these *conversos* were often suspected of maintaining their Jewish faith in secret and the Inquisition therefore set out to investigate and stamp out such heresy. Later it became involved in censorship and lists of prohibited books were drawn up to ensure that any critical or controversial material was banned. In the 16th century the Inquisition took decisive action to ensure that Protestantism could not gain a foothold in Spain and its role eventually widened to include the punishment of activities like witchcraft and immorality.

In the 18th century the Roman Catholic Church in Spain was a wealthy and powerful institution strongly linked with the state under an absolute monarch and it enjoyed many privileges as a result. It provided employment for a significant number of people and fulfilled a charitable role by providing a considerable amount of relief to the poor. However, it was not a unified organisation and there were considerable divisions, particularly between the wealthy clerical elite and the humble parish priests, who were often inadequately trained and paid, and also between the Church and the religious orders. When the French invaded Spain and while the Spanish monarch was in exile, the Church's position inevitably began to change and it lost much of its privileged and protected status. The Church's wealth was used in the struggle against the French and although, at first, aid was given voluntarily, more and more was demanded. In addition there were those within the

Church who saw the need for reform, particularly with regard to improving the status of the parish priests and reducing the influence of the religious orders. Both reformers and traditionalists wanted to see an increase in faith throughout the country, but the reformers wanted to see internal change in the organisation of the Church and the traditionalists wanted to maintain the institutions and privileges of the past. The Church did not therefore present a united front to fend off the attacks from without.

While the Spanish king was in exile, the Spanish people began to set up regional committees to organise resistance against the French and to run their own affairs and in 1810 the Spanish parliament, the Cortes, which had not met for some time was reconvened in Cádiz. In 1812 it drew up a new and more liberal Constitution for Spain. Amongst other measures the Inquisition was abolished and the press allowed more freedom. There was considerable debate about the religious houses, most of which had been suppressed by the French in 1809. Many of the monks and friars had then joined in the military campaigns against the French. The Cortes did not pass any legislation and so many of the religious houses were re-occupied when the war was over. Some of the work of the Cortes probably undermined the Church's position but it had no intention of undermining the importance of the Catholic religion itself. Article 12 of the Constitution, approved unanimously, stated "the religion of the Spanish nation is and will be forever Catholic, Apostolic and Roman, the only true religion".<sup>1</sup>

In 1814 Ferdinand VII returned to Spain and annulled the new Constitution, arresting those who had been involved in drawing it up. Over 12,000 people were exiled and the press once again came under rigid censorship. The Inquisition was restored and the re-occupation of religious houses continued. However, the liberals hit back with a military coup d'état in January 1820, restoring the Constitution of 1812. The Inquisition was again abolished and many of the religious houses were suppressed because it was felt that "communities devoted to contemplation and prayer, contributed nothing to the pastoral or economic benefit of the kingdom".<sup>2</sup> Then in 1823 French troops marched into Spain to restore Ferdinand's more traditional approach. However, this time Ferdinand did not re-

establish the Inquisition, possibly seeing it as a threat to his absolute power but the religious orders were allowed back again.

As Ferdinand's life drew to an end the question arose as to who would succeed him. In the end, when Ferdinand died in September 1833, his infant daughter, Isabella, came to the throne with her mother, María Cristina, acting as regent. She turned to the more moderate liberals for support. However, there was also support for Don Carlos, Ferdinand's younger brother, who promised a more traditional regime. The Carlist movement was formed in support of his claim to the throne and when Ferdinand died a bitter civil war broke out. There were clerical supporters on both sides, with some of the dispossessed monks and friars supporting the Carlists, especially after the closure of further monasteries was ordered. However, generally Callahan felt that "the prevailing tendency among the clergy was to wait uneasily on events".<sup>3</sup> It was the hope of more liberal attitudes gaining ascendancy in Spain which spurred the Methodists and others to seek opportunities there, but they may well have failed to realise that, despite the political differences, there was an overall consensus regarding the importance of the Catholic faith itself.

Rule had kept in correspondence with the Bible Society sending reports of his efforts, information about Spain and details of his hopes for the future. Together they watched and waited for a chance to develop work in Spain and eventually three people entered the country, Lieutenant James Newenham Graydon, George Borrow and Rule himself. In due course the Rev. Andrew Brandram, Secretary of the Bible Society from 1823 until his death in 1850, had the task of corresponding with all three of them, and sometimes must have found it very difficult to deal with the differing views and behaviour of these three very different personalities. George Borrow was later to write a best selling book *The Bible in Spain* and Rule also wrote several books with the result that their work is much better known and Graydon's work has largely been ignored or criticised. However, he was the first to start working in Spain itself.

Graydon was one of nine children. His mother was the daughter of an Irish baronet and his

father a colonel in the army. Graydon entered the navy at the age of fourteen and during the Peninsular War served on the coast of Spain. After the end of the war he petitioned the Admiralty for work on the Spanish Main because he spoke Spanish, and also French and Italian, but his services were not required anywhere and he was pensioned off on half pay. He retired to the Continent partly for reasons of economy and at some stage "was brought to a knowledge of the truth by the simple reading of the Bible".<sup>4</sup> He lived for a time in Berne and then returned to Ireland and settled in Dublin. Here he involved himself in raising funds to provide a chapel for sailors and by his efforts raised £1,200 of the total cost of £2,000. When the project was completed he looked for other opportunities of service. During an after dinner conversation with a friend in London, John Radley, who was a member of the Bible Society's Committee, the suggestion was made that Graydon might work for the Society in Spain which would put his knowledge of Spanish to good use. As he had some means of support, Graydon was willing to work without a salary providing his additional expenses were met and the books supplied for distribution. Towards the end of 1834, after an interview and the receipt of satisfactory references, Graydon was appointed. He decided to start out from Marseilles as he had a cousin, the Swedish Consul, there "who has a most extensive Agency house .... he would give me no doubt much needful assistance in the way of procuring me friends in Spain."<sup>5</sup> In addition Graydon was introduced to the Courtois brothers, Frank, Armand and Louis, who were bankers in Toulouse and agents of the French Bible Society. They too had many Spanish contacts.

So, although Graydon was not a regular paid agent of the Bible Society, he was certainly sent off on his mission with its sanction and approval. However, many of Borrow's biographers seem unaware of this, taking their cue from Knapp who stated:

In the course of his wanderings, Lieutenant Graydon landed at Gibraltar in 1835 and made soon after the acquaintance of Mr. Rule. From that moment he became interested in Spanish evangelisation and, being an independent gentleman, seeking neither money nor office, he easily drifted into relations with the Bible Society.<sup>6</sup>

Graydon and Rule did meet briefly in Gibraltar in October 1837 but there are no records of

any earlier meetings. However, possibly as a result of Knapp's statement, many of Borrow's later biographers assumed that Graydon had worked "in the warmth and security of Gibraltar" which is simply not true.<sup>7</sup> Even Canton states this in his *History of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, although Knapp himself reported that Graydon established his headquarters in Barcelona, which was indeed the city from which he worked.<sup>8</sup>

Graydon, in fact, left England in December 1834. He decided at first to travel as a private individual rather than as an official of the Bible Society as this was thought to be safer, and most of his early correspondence was sent to Radley rather than to Brandram, the Bible Society's official secretary. Graydon planned to make contacts, to see if he could establish Bible depots and find a way to introduce the Bible into Spain. He visited the Paris Bible Society where he was given some books to take with him, made contact with the Courtois brothers who gave him advice and introductions to people in Madrid and Barcelona, and visited Perpignan where he tried to organise a supply of Bibles for Spain through a bookseller there. Graydon reached Marseilles on 23 December and Barcelona early in 1835. Here he met Prat, the translator of a Catalan New Testament, and on his recommendation placed a few books with a bookseller. Some of this stock was seized by censors who had called at the shop to remove another prohibited book and thereby came across the New Testaments, but Graydon did manage to sell a few books himself and placed others with another bookseller. An offer to supply books to schools was turned down on the grounds that "things were not sufficiently ripe for such a step" as "the posture of the national affairs were too precarious".<sup>9</sup>

Graydon left Barcelona on 14 March, spent half a day in Tarragona and arrived in Valencia on 18 March having had an armed escort because of the unsettled state of the country. He spent three weeks in Valencia, making contact with booksellers and schools. Again his offer to supply the schools was greeted with interest but turned down because the law prohibited the New Testament without notes. He felt he could have distributed many books but could not take many with him. He arrived in Madrid on 5 April, having again travelled with an armed escort. Here he visited Razola, a bookseller Rule had also contacted, but the

problem of getting supplies into the city still remained. In any case Graydon felt the booksellers had no love for the Bible, only an interest in making money. He felt quite disheartened about his lack of progress and therefore enquired into the possibility of printing an edition himself. Graydon met with the Count de Toreno, before he came to power as head of the government in June 1835. He was well received and discussed his difficulties of getting Bibles into Spain, but in the end no help was forthcoming. He also met with Sir George Villiers, later Earl of Clarendon, the British Minister in Madrid and asked for his help in getting books into Spain. This was reported to be a friendly interview but Villiers felt he could not help. All in all Graydon thought that there was little he could do in Madrid and so he returned to Barcelona arriving on 27 June, after another difficult and dangerous journey in which he "witnessed a spot on the road, where the blood was almost fresh that had been shed in combat to carry off the previous diligence!!"<sup>10</sup>

Graydon went on to Perpignan to organise a fresh supply of scriptures. 200 Catalan New Testaments had been sent there for him. He divided them into small packages and sent four parcels off by diligence. They never reached Barcelona because the driver of the diligence from Figueras was too scared of the priests to take them. However, Graydon was able to send more to Figueras in the hope that he could get them to Barcelona later.

The weather was hot, Graydon was feeling unwell, and there were fears of a cholera epidemic in Barcelona and so Graydon decided, on the advice of a doctor, to go to Switzerland for a few weeks rest. He was also rather discouraged by his lack of success, feeling that he had very little to show for the expense to the Society. The Bible Society does not seem to have shared his view and Brandram wrote to him in August to say that he felt his journeys had been of considerable importance even if no great results had flowed from them because they now had more information about Spain.<sup>11</sup>

While Graydon was away from Spain further political changes took place. Juan Álvarez Mendizábal came to power heading a more radical and liberal regime. He suppressed most of the monasteries and ordered a sale of their property to benefit the public treasury. The

sale later extended to other Church property. The Church's position was thus further undermined as it was even less able to fulfil its charitable role because it lacked the resources to do so and, as many of its teachers came from the religious orders, its control of education was also weakened. Graydon, on hearing the news, decided to return to Spain immediately although it seems he had only been in Switzerland a few days. He obviously hoped that the political changes would enable him to make better progress with his work. However, he now decided to acknowledge his relationship with the Bible Society and seems to have felt unhappy at the deception he had practised in acting as a private individual, which he had been advised to do for his own safety.

In many cities revolutionary juntas had been formed and it seems that Prat was the Vice-President of the junta in Barcelona. Graydon petitioned it seeking permission to introduce his scriptures into Spain. He was refused but Prat agreed to send the petition on to the Minister of the Interior. Graydon never received a reply which led him to doubt Prat's sincerity. His difficulties in importing books continued but he reported growing evidence of anticlerical feeling and of the diminishing power of the Church which he hoped would aid his cause. Also the way seemed to be opening up to print books instead of importing them. Graydon had made contact with a printer and bookseller called Antonio Bergnes who provided some estimates of the cost of printing. At the end of 1835 Graydon received the Committee's authorisation to print 5,000 copies of the Catalan New Testament, although in the event it seems only 3,000 were printed.

It is not clear when the printing began because all of Graydon's letters for 1836 and 1837 are missing, as is the Committee's minute book until the end of 1836. However, it is known that Graydon went to Madrid to seek permission to print and probably saw Mendizábal. In a much later letter he referred to two interviews with Isturitz, Mendizábal's successor, in May 1836, and claimed he was given an informal, verbal permission to print quietly in some provincial city, but was also warned not to print a Bible without notes or the apocrypha!<sup>12</sup> Printing must have started some time after this.

At some stage in 1836 Graydon visited London but the loss of so many of the records of this period means that little information has survived. It is very likely that he also continued his travels in Spain during 1836 and Rule reported in November that a "great step has been gained on the eastern coast by Mr. Graydon and I am thankful to be engaged in handing onward to him when being confined by duties to this Garrison, I cannot do more myself".<sup>13</sup> He was involved, when possible, in sending scriptures on to Graydon. The Committee's minute book states that in the four months before January 1837 Graydon and his agents had distributed 556 copies of the scriptures, chiefly by sale, for the sum of £61 15s. Shortly afterwards the printing of the Catalan New Testaments was completed and Graydon was authorised to print 2,000 New Testaments and 3,000 Bibles. Bergnes also agreed to act as depot keeper as well as printer. The Catalan New Testaments proved very popular and were soon selling well and although Graydon reported "that a great opposition had been raised against the printing of the Bible at Barcelona", the work does seem to have proceeded.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile the Bible Society had decided to appoint a paid agent to Portugal and Spain. It is not clear why they took this step at this time. Graydon's activities and hopes may have influenced the decision, along with the changes in the political situation, and the availability of a suitable person who was George Borrow. Much has been written about this somewhat eccentric and controversial man. He was born in July 1803 and, as his father was in the army, he spent a rather nomadic childhood without the benefit of a regular and settled education. He became interested in languages and also in the gypsy way of life. In 1819 he was articled to a solicitor for five years but seems never to have planned to practise as a lawyer and, as soon as these years had passed, he went to London in the hope of developing his interests in languages and writing. In December 1832 he was introduced to the Bible Society by the Rev. Francis Cunningham, Vicar of Lowestoft, who described Borrow as able "to read the Bible in thirteen languages. He is independent of circumstances, of no very exactly defined denomination of Christians, but I think of certain Christian principle".<sup>15</sup> Collie commented "Borrow's christianity remained conveniently ill-defined throughout his life" and, although he did excellent work for the Bible Society, many of his biographers

acknowledge that there was a conflict between this work and Borrow's desire to be an adventurer, explorer and writer.<sup>16</sup> On hearing that the Bible Society wished to interview him, Borrow apparently walked the one hundred and twelve miles from Norwich to London, where he was accepted as an agent of the Society. His first appointment was to St. Petersburg where he produced a Bible in Manchu. He was then asked to go to Portugal to investigate opportunities there and if possible to consider the situation in Spain. In the event he devoted all his energies to Spain.

Borrow sailed to Portugal in autumn 1835 landing at Lisbon and eventually travelling on to Madrid. He hoped there to get permission to print New Testaments in Spanish, thus overcoming the problems created by the laws prohibiting books printed outside Spain from being imported. He unsuccessfully sought an interview with Mendizábal, the Prime Minister. He then met Sir George Villiers whose help and support was to prove invaluable. He used his influence to obtain an interview for Borrow with Mendizábal. This meeting did not result in permission to print and Borrow was advised that he would have to wait until the war was over, whenever that might be. However, before long Mendizábal's government fell and Isturitz came to power. Again Villiers offered his help and around July 1836 permission to print was given. Matters were not straightforward though because the law still prohibited Bibles without notes being published. However, Borrow reported that "measures have been taken by which the rigor of the law can be eluded and the printer be protected, until such time as it shall be deemed prudent to repeal the law made, as is now generally confessed, in a time of ignorance and superstitious darkness".<sup>17</sup> Shortly afterwards, in August 1836, the revolution of La Granja occurred and the Queen Regent was forced to restore the Constitution of 1812 until the Cortes was able to meet to draw up a new Constitution for Spain, which was completed in July 1837. Yet another government, under Calatrava, was formed.

Borrow briefly returned to England for consultation with the Bible Society, sailing again for Cádiz in November 1836 which he found in a very unsettled and dangerous state because of the war. However, he travelled on safely to Madrid and, with the support of Villiers, made

preparations for the printing of the New Testaments. He also obtained the help of Don Luis de Usoz y Río a man of noble birth, who was very much in sympathy with the aims of the Bible Society, and later became one of its subscribers. He held the chair of Hebrew at Valladolid and was an editor of *El Español*, one of the main newspapers in Spain. He had connections all over the country and was a valuable help and support to Borrow in getting the books edited and printed. Borrow also engaged in the work of preparing a copy of St. Luke's gospel in the Romany and Basque languages which were eventually printed.

Thus, by the end of 1836, both Graydon and Borrow were establishing their work in Spain and both were involved in printing editions of the New Testament. At the same time, Rule began to develop his own work also undeterred by the dangers and difficulties. In May 1836 he made another journey into Spain visiting Cádiz, Málaga and Granada. He had written to Brackenbury in Cádiz beforehand and so met him to discuss the possibility of a mission in Spain. Although this was a difficult and dangerous proposition it seemed that a need already existed in Cádiz which could provide a useful and legitimate starting point. In the previous year 332 British and American ships had entered the port, staying between two and six weeks and containing 3,302 men. Rule also reported that there were three to four hundred British, American and German Protestants living in Cádiz. The only form of worship available to them was the reading of prayers at the Consul's house, where a sermon was also preached on Sundays whenever possible. Both were poorly attended and there was really no adequate provision for their spiritual needs. Brackenbury offered his support in such matters as gaining access to the hospital, but he counselled caution as the authorities were bound to suspect Rule's motives in doing this work. He did, of course, plan to look "for opportunities to make the Gospel known to the inhabitants of the city", and to circulate the scriptures.<sup>18</sup> Rule met Barleta again who introduced him to Don Pedro Urquinaona, the Governor of Cádiz, "well known in Spain as a tried friend of civil and religious liberty" who promised Rule support and protection if he went to Cádiz provided that he did not gather together a public congregation of Spaniards as this was still against the law.<sup>19</sup>

Rule went on to Málaga where he met William Mark the Consul there. He had been doing

everything in his power to aid the circulation of the scriptures and Rule was much impressed with him. He travelled on to Granada where he stayed with yet another of his correspondents. He spent several days exploring the city and entering into conversations whenever possible. He felt there were opportunities in all three cities but Cádiz seemed the most promising of all.

In June 1836 Rule sent a full report to the Committee in which he suggested that James Lyon be sent to Cádiz "to act there as the Society's agent for Seamen".<sup>20</sup> He could take over much of his work in the school in Gibraltar now he was freed from the English work. He was, of course, willing to go to Cádiz himself and the reason he suggested Lyon is not clear. He obviously thought very highly of him and may have felt his arrival would be less likely to arouse immediate interest as of course Lyon did not have the reputation Rule had gained for himself. The Bishop of Cádiz was well aware of the events at San Roque because he was in charge of the Vicar there. Probably Rule was most needed in Gibraltar and in addition Mrs. Rule was very much involved in teaching the girls. If they went to Cádiz a replacement would have been necessary and moving the whole family would have been much more expensive.

As usual Rule had to wait as patiently as he could for the Committee's decision. He urged them to grant permission and insisted that if they were worried about the political situation or his safety they should trust in God. He did not tell them, however, what he reported to the Bible Society in November 1836: "A horde of Carlists has just been here. We have watched their columns from our windows .... Their object seems not to be victory, but plunder". He still felt though that all this would "work together for the advancement of the gospel" because the behaviour of these "dragoon-friars shall have demonstrated in every corner of the land that their religion is characterised by bloodshed".<sup>21</sup> He seemed unconcerned about his personal safety. In August 1836 Razola, the bookseller from Madrid, had visited Rule informing him that an English gentleman had called on him, using Rule's name. This man must have been Borrow because he was reported as trying to gain permission to print Bibles. Rule wanted to know more about him and in November he

referred to Graydon's work: "Is there not now in Catalonia .... an active and devoted agent of the Bible Society, well known and highly successful? There is. He affords the precedent which I had hoped we should have provided".<sup>22</sup> He used these examples to press home his case for Cádiz and also wrote to the Bible Society asking them to put in a word on his behalf. "If you can in any conversation you may have with any of our leading missionary men, throw in the weight of your influence in favour of this design, [the mission in Cádiz] you may greatly contribute to a great work, in the prosecution of which our Societies are eminently kindred, and must I am persuaded go on hand in hand".<sup>23</sup>

While he waited to hear the Committee's decision Rule was of course not idle. In the autumn of 1836 he rode out again to San Roque, this time to distribute Bibles there. They were so well received he returned a few days later with some more. However, the authorities were prepared for him this time and a burly constable appeared to escort him to the Judge of First Instance. Rule was in his carriage so the constable, carrying a large club, walked beside the horse. Rule later reported:

At the proper moment, just when we should have turned off short into town, I gently tickled with my whip at once the horse's right ear and the man's left, for the two ears were not very far apart. Man and beast, both startled, shied away in different directions, - the horse forward, the man sideward, - and we were on our way to the Rock again before the bewildered constable could recover full consciousness of his position.<sup>24</sup>

For the next few days soldiers were stationed on the road to prevent any further visits from Rule. Sweetman may have been with Rule on this occasion and was summoned some days later to see the Governor's civil secretary. He was informed that as people connected with the Garrison often went to San Roque for relaxation the Governor did not want any "variance between that town and this". He was requested not to introduce books there as this was "likely to induce unpleasant feelings in the minds of the inhabitants of that place towards the Garrison". He agreed to this, but does not say whether the same request was made of Rule. However, he went on to say that he thought the Spanish would "probably kill him [Rule] the next time they can take him in Spain".<sup>25</sup>

However, Rule seemed undeterred and when the Committee finally gave its permission for a six months trial, he and Lyon immediately set out for Cádiz even though it was Christmas time. They travelled on horseback on 22 December as no ships were available. Lodgings were found and Rule stayed with Lyon for a few days writing to the Committee to report their delight over the decision, their progress so far and the fact that the Consul was assisting them.<sup>26</sup> On the last Sunday in December they had raised the Bethel flag in the bay and the work in Cádiz had begun.

Lyon continued preaching to the sailors, with the largest number being reported as thirty six. He sometimes attended morning service at the Consul's house on Sundays, preaching in the bay in the afternoon. He soon began a small Bible class, after discussing the matter with Barleta who was keen to send his own two children. At the first meeting there were three boys and two girls. They continued to meet two evenings a week and the meetings went well. In addition Lyon sought out booksellers to sell Bibles and managed to find outlets in Port St. Mary, La Isla and later in Jerez. People began coming to him too to buy Bibles and tracts. Next Lyon began to read a sermon or tract in Spanish to a few neighbours in his lodgings and, as his Spanish improved, he began preaching sermons of his own. Once people heard that he had been a schoolmaster in Gibraltar it seemed a good idea to open a school in Cádiz. Children were brought to him rather than being sought out and by August 1837 there were seventeen children. The number soon increased to twenty six despite the fact that the children would receive religious education. Most of the children were from the middle classes but it is not clear whether or not they paid a fee. Lyon was aware of the risks he was taking but kept consulting friends, including Brackenbury and Rule. The Bishop of Cádiz was reported as saying, "I have no objection to the school, provided he teach nothing contrary to our doctrines; but to preach on Sundays is another thing. I wish I could put a stop to it". Someone apparently challenged this saying that he thought the Bishop had the power to stop the preaching. He replied, "O that I could! The civil authorities of Cádiz will not support me. They say it would prove that we are not yet free".<sup>27</sup> However, the school did begin to create a problem because in Spain boys and girls were never taught together. Lyon was a single man with no immediate prospects of

marriage, and Rule therefore asked that a married couple be appointed to the work in Spain.

By this time Rule also had other areas in mind. In January 1837 Graydon had written to him at length asking him to come to Barcelona to preach the gospel there. Although there was no immediate urgency to this request he had talked the matter over with many people in Barcelona, including the Consul who offered the use of his house for services. Graydon had by this time been in Barcelona for about two years so Rule felt he had a good understanding of the possibilities there. Graydon wished he had the talents of a preacher himself but felt his calling was to distribute the scriptures. Rule asked the Committee for their views suggesting that a young couple be sent out immediately to start learning the language and by the time they were ready they could either undertake work in Spain themselves or go to Gibraltar thus freeing the Rules. Rule felt his wife particularly needed a change. He reported:

Mrs. Rule does her utmost, but she is very feeble. Often she has been overcome by the effort of teaching in the school, and often fainted in it from exhaustion, for she is very weak. And now she is near confinement again, so that I know not what to do. She will willingly give her last grain of strength to a cause so dear to her as it is to me, but after all I must ingenuously confess that I should like her to be delivered from the climate of this rock, having resided here five years without the least change and with severe afflictions.<sup>28</sup>

In Gibraltar itself the school had continued to grow and in March 1837 there were sixty five pupils. Rule again petitioned the Governor for the waste ground alongside the chapel "notwithstanding repeated denials".<sup>29</sup> A further rejection meant that even he had to give up this plan. Instead he proposed the demolition of the Mission House and a complete rebuilding to incorporate the Spanish congregation and the school, as well as the missionary's quarters, which could be achieved partly by building under the chapel and by adding an extra storey to the building. As this did not involve the acquisition of any more land there were no objections from the authorities and Rule went speedily ahead, with work starting as soon as Mrs. Rule had had the baby, Melancthon, who was born on 26 April 1837, and baptised by his father on 21 May. By 31 May the house was down and the new

walls were rising. The work cost \$2,300 (or about £500). The Missionary Committee paid the whole presumably because this was more for missionary work than the chapel had been which was mainly used by the army. By October the new building was in use though some work was still going on fitting it out. By this time there were ninety seven children in the school. In November the Rev. Thomas Hull and his wife stayed briefly in Gibraltar on their way to Malta. He preached in the chapel and reported "I have been highly gratified with the very neat and commodious chapel and dwelling house which have been so recently completed - they do much credit to our cause and your liberality".<sup>30</sup>

Now that there was appropriate accomodation in Gibraltar to meet the needs of both the English and Spanish departments, Rule continued to press for further help in Spain. He still wanted another couple for the Spanish work and also pressed for some kind of recognition for Lyon who was doing such good work in Cádiz. In addition to the request from Barcelona and the on-going work in Cádiz, Rule thought there might be opportunities in Valencia because of a contact made there by Graydon. He had gone to the city to distribute scriptures which he had previously forwarded there. Here he met Don Pascual Marin y Candado, a Roman Catholic priest, whom he described as being very anxious to help in the work of distribution. He had been thinking deeply about religion for some time when he came into contact with Graydon. After conversations with him he obtained leave of absence from his Bishop and Graydon paid his fare and gave him a letter of introduction to Rule in Gibraltar.

He arrived in June 1837 and for over a month he and Rule studied and talked together. Rule welcomed him into his home, shared family prayers with him and wrote to the Committee that he was "most anxious to have him as a fellow labourer in Spain".<sup>31</sup> Marin had to return to Valencia to look after his mother. It seems that he intended to leave the priesthood. He had a doctorate in law which might enable him to earn a living, and Rule wrote to the Committee, the Bible Society and the European Society to ask if any of them would employ him. Marin left after staying just over a month. On his last Sunday on the Rock he preached a farewell message to Rule's Spanish congregation "couched in the most

cautious language so as not to give a handle to the Papists".<sup>32</sup> However, when he returned to Valencia events overtook him and he was stripped of his priestly office, because the Vicar Apostolic in Gibraltar had laid a charge of heresy against him. Apparently some of the information presented had come directly from Rule's own household through a servant who had eavesdropped on their private conversations. Had it not been for the new Constitution, Rule felt he might well have been thrown into prison.

The Constitution of 1812 stated: "The religion of the Spanish nation is, and shall be perpetually, the Catholic, apostolic, Roman, only true. The nation protects it by wise and just laws, and prohibits the exercise of any other". Under the new Constitution of 1837 the article relating to religion now stated: "The nation obliges itself to maintain the worship and Ministers of the Catholic religion, which the Spaniards profess".<sup>33</sup> The prohibition of any other religion had been lifted and Rule felt the new Constitution "may be so interpreted as to allow the liberty of conscience".<sup>34</sup> On the other hand it could be interpreted that any means to maintain the Catholic religion were justified, and in fact no law had been passed granting religious toleration.

In some ways Marin's case was a test of the new Constitution. The theologians of Valencia met to consider it and declared Marin to be a 'mixed heretic' and demanded that he recant and do penance. Marin refused to submit to this judgment and appealed to the Cortes. There were liberals within the Cortes so he had some support there, and letters were sent on his behalf, including one from Rule, making it clear that Marin's sermon in Gibraltar had in no way been anti-Catholic. Rule desperately wanted to visit Marin but felt he could not do so without permission from the Committee. After discussion with Sweetman he sent him some financial support as Marin was now without pay. The Committee did in fact later authorise Rule "to afford him [Marin] such aid as would enable him with his own resources to keep from want", but cautioned against extravagance.<sup>35</sup>

The Cortes referred Marin's case to the Ecclesiastical Commission who reported in September 1837 that they felt "the ecclesiastical governor of Valencia should not have

regarded the business as one of those cases which are of the greatest importance".<sup>36</sup> Marin's actions were not unusual in countries where there was toleration of various forms of worship and they did not feel his sermon in Gibraltar had been controversial as attested by Rule. They therefore referred the matter to the Government, which was busy with many other matters and could not do anything for Marin unless he recanted and was reconciled to the Church. This he was not prepared to do. However, the Cortes would not allow him to be punished, which in previous years could have meant imprisonment, exile or death. They could not, of course, prevent the ostracism and petty persecution which was meted out to Marin, but he stayed in Valencia and began to write and to try and gather together a congregation, keeping closely in touch with Rule by letter.

In September 1837 problems also arose in Cádiz. On hearing of the difficulties Rule immediately went to Cádiz where he discovered that there had been a meeting of the Board of Public Instruction to discuss the fact that Lyon was running a school, while unqualified, which was against the law. Various meetings and discussions took place with some sympathy expressed by a number of people but Brackenbury advised that the school be closed until the law was satisfied. So, the school was closed. A petition was drawn up to present to the Civil Governor, not now Urquinaona, and Rule was hopeful of ultimate success. He preached several times to the small congregation Lyon had gathered, before returning to Gibraltar, and was encouraged by this. It was now nine months since Lyon had been in Cádiz and they had received no word from the Committee despite numerous letters from Rule with repeated requests for more workers.

The Board of Instruction referred the matter to a municipal body which reported that they did not want to place any difficulty in the way of the school, "believing that it will be useful and convenient to the public, since the youths of this city may avail themselves of the commendable talents and good methods of instruction which it is so well known adorn the preceptor".<sup>37</sup> The Governor forwarded this favourable decision to a provincial body who did not oppose it but felt that the matter should be discussed in Madrid. Rule was hopeful of a positive outcome there too and in the meantime Lyon was allowed to reopen the

school. Rule continued to urge the Committee to send another couple as a female missionary was desperately needed as he feared another attack might be made on the school on the grounds that Lyon was teaching girls. His letters got more desperate as time went on. "What would I not give to hear your mind as to Spain".<sup>38</sup> As he still heard nothing he authorised Lyon to take a larger house as the school had risen to forty pupils.

Rule continued a detailed correspondence with the Bible Society. Membership of the Committee in Gibraltar fluctuated and the military chaplain left preferring to work for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Rule introduced Lyon as an agent for the Bible Society and encouraged him to maintain a depository and to use ship's captains whenever possible to aid in the work of circulating the scriptures. Thirty New Testaments were given to be used by the children in the school in Cádiz. Sometimes Rule was sent books to be forwarded on to Graydon and, as this was not always successful, Graydon visited Gibraltar, in October 1837, to see if he could persuade the Spanish Consul there to release some of his books. He was not successful but he did visit Rule. It seems from his account of the meeting that Rule did not quite know what to make of him. "Our kind brother paid me a curious visit. He came on us quite unawares, after having rapturously embraced Mrs. Rule as his 'dear sister in Christ' he gave me the osculum caritatis ..... However we were, are and I trust ever shall be, good friends, and I cannot but love him as a good man, although rather anomalous".<sup>39</sup>

No word came from the Missionary Committee, so Rule and Lyon continued as before until early in 1838 when Lyon travelled to Gibraltar to consult Rule. The Spanish Government had made an unfavourable judgment about the school and the Governor of Cádiz, "the third Governor since the matter has been on hand", had ordered the school to be closed. The Government decree stated that Lyon could not be allowed to teach unless "he lose the character of foreigner, with which the authorised exercise of that calling was incompatible".<sup>40</sup> Rule notified the Committee of this news in a postscript to a letter in which he stated that he and Sweetman wished to recommend Lyon as a candidate for the ministry. They had examined him together on 23 February 1838 and strongly recommended

him, sending a statement from Lyon giving an account of his faith and experience. As far as the school was concerned Rule felt that the only course of action open to him was to go to Madrid in person to argue their cause. He felt it was a matter of some urgency and so did not wait for the Committee's permission. He informed them of his plans and proposed visiting Valencia and Barcelona also, which he had wanted to do for some time, to see for himself what opportunities there might be in these cities.

Rule went by sea to Cádiz landing there on Sunday 11 March. He found everything in order at the Mission House and in the afternoon preached to a few people there. In the morning he attended the service at the Consulate. Barleta gave him a letter of introduction to the Under-Secretary of State and Brackenbury a letter to Sir George Villiers. With Brackenbury he "had some interesting conversations as to the principles in which we have to conduct our Mission here, and whose scruples and apprehensions I endeavoured to remove".<sup>41</sup> This is the first hint of any concern from Brackenbury about what they were doing. He apparently thought Rule "was doing wrong in coming into Spain at all", and it was only with reluctance that he gave Rule the letter of introduction.<sup>42</sup> This sounds like a change of heart but in fact the previous contact and support had all come from the Pro-Consul, Brackenbury's son. On this occasion Rule refers to meeting the Consul-General, John Brackenbury, and presumably father and son did not agree about what Rule was trying to do in Spain.

Rule travelled on to Seville by steamer and had to stay there several days trying to find a way of getting to Madrid. However, he did not waste time there, engaging with a bookseller to sell Bibles, meeting and discussing with students and visiting establishments looking after abandoned and orphaned children. He was eventually able to travel on, often with an armed escort, through countryside showing the ravages of war. It was a dangerous and uncomfortable journey but he arrived safely in Madrid on 29 March.

As soon as he could he visited Razola, the bookseller, who directed him to Borrow who gave him "a most cordial welcome".<sup>43</sup> Rule later reported that "It was rather amusing to

find him receiving a morning visit, and taking wine with two gipsy ladies, whom he did me the honour to introduce, one as 'an accomplished highwaywoman', and the other as 'an expert pickpocket'.<sup>44</sup> He felt Borrow was "somewhat anomalous in habits and predilections" but seemed impressed that he had written a history of the gypsy race and published Luke's gospel in their language. Borrow described Rule as "a gentleman who has much interested me, and of whose zeal, piety and discretion I have formed the highest opinion".<sup>45</sup> They talked at some length on many subjects, including Marin, who had already written to Borrow twice. He had replied to the first letter "very cautiously" but after discussing the situation with Rule actually sent Marin "a small sum on my own account to relieve the pinch of utter need, till more can be known of him".<sup>46</sup>

Rule soon met Villiers who received him well and promised to help by using his influence with the Prime Minister, now the Conde de Ofália. He soon discovered that "the representation adverse to the Mission did not proceed from Cádiz, but from Gibraltar".<sup>47</sup> Rule discussed the situation with several people and considered memorialising the Queen Regent but decided instead "to place the school under the ostensible direction of a Spaniard".<sup>48</sup> As long as he had the necessary qualifications it was felt there could be no objection to the school. Rule was very grateful to Villiers informing the Committee that "we are greatly indebted to the British Minister for valuable advice, and for the cordial sympathy he has manifested in the interests of our mission".<sup>49</sup> Rule also met Don Luis de Usoz y Río who was helping Borrow. He was very impressed with him and his offer of "assistance to any of our Christian Societies".<sup>50</sup> He was then aged thirty one and a man of considerable learning.

Rule decided against visiting Barcelona but did go to Valencia to see Marin. He found him living in poverty with his mother who "ceased not from pouring on him the bitterest reproaches".<sup>51</sup> Marin showed him round Valencia including the church, where his former room had been emptied of furniture and the plaster stripped from the walls. His name had been erased from the priest roll and he was subjected to much petty persecution. Rule had planned to take him back to Gibraltar but Marin felt there would be a problem in getting a

passport and was concerned about his mother. It is also unlikely that the authorities in Gibraltar would have let him stay there for any length of time. They considered Barcelona, Cádiz and Madrid, finally settling on the latter. Graydon was no longer convinced of Marin's sincerity, which excluded Barcelona. Cádiz was in a delicate stage of development unlikely to be helped by the involvement of an ex-priest, but in Madrid Rule hoped Marin might be able to help with the work of distributing the scriptures and begin to gather together a congregation. Rule gave Marin his fare to Madrid and a letter of introduction to Usoz but wrote to Borrow directly himself. He was furious when he received Rule's letter and certainly did not want any responsibility for Marin. Rule stated that he held himself responsible for Marin's expenses and only invited Borrow "to assist us by your advice as long as you may be in Madrid", believing that they were both engaged in a "common cause".<sup>52</sup> He did expect Borrow to help him out in the short term though because, as he was on a journey, he didn't have enough money with him to do much more than pay Marin's fare. However, he hoped that the Bible Society might offer some allowance for any work done in Madrid. They had previously authorised Graydon "to engage his services for a few months at a suitable remuneration" if he could "be usefully employed on behalf of this Society".<sup>53</sup> Graydon had not done this and, on this occasion, the Bible Society did not agree to employ Marin, possibly not wishing to compromise their policy of non-political involvement which such an appointment might well have done. Borrow was an individualist and certainly did not want to be saddled with Marin, especially as his own circumstances were becoming increasingly difficult. Rule was, however, only doing what Graydon had done to him and seems to have been a little surprised by Borrow's reaction.

By this time Borrow had completed printing the New Testaments and had spent time travelling round Spain distributing them, and organising depots wherever possible. After returning to Madrid he opened a shop there in November 1837 to sell his remaining books. He put up a sign to say it was a depot of the Bible Society. He advertised his stock widely throughout the streets of the city and in journals and periodicals. The Spanish authorities were not happy about this and eventually ordered the shop closed and the stock to be seized. In May 1838 Borrow was arrested and imprisoned. It is unlikely that he was in a

great deal of danger. He had the support of Villiers and the Spanish did not want to antagonise the English to any great extent, but selling Bibles without notes was still illegal in Spain. Marin arrived while Borrow was in prison and visited him there. Borrow was not in the least impressed with him as he "favoured me with a scene of despair, abject despair which nearly turned my brain. I despised the creature, God forgive me, but I pitied him; for he was without money and expected every moment to be seized like myself and incarcerated".<sup>54</sup> He, of course, would have had none of the protection available to Borrow as a British subject. Borrow did, however, give him some financial help and Brandram also sent £10. As soon as he heard what had happened Rule sent Marin some money and also asked the Committee if they would offer him a small salary. Borrow was eventually released from prison after a stay of about twelve days.

Meanwhile Rule had returned to Gibraltar and found himself travelling on the same steamer as Graydon who was on his way to Málaga, and other southern cities including Cádiz. They thus spent two or three days together, but Rule was not impressed with Graydon's state of mind describing him as "in a perfect fervour - irritable and restless to an extreme", and he resolved to have no further personal correspondence with him.<sup>55</sup> Graydon himself had admitted to having a temperament prone to highs and lows and felt very passionately about his work in Spain, but it seems that Rule did not want him to visit Cádiz. Both he and Borrow had written to the Bible Society asking them to stop Graydon visiting Cádiz and Seville where Borrow had contacts. Rule felt Graydon would hinder his work by creating greater opposition as had happened at Valencia.

In August 1837 Graydon had informed the Committee "that a complete stop had been put to his operations in Valencia".<sup>56</sup> Unfortunately, without his letters for 1837, details of what happened there have not survived. It may have been partly a result of the Marin affair but both Borrow and Rule seem to have attributed the problem to Graydon's advertisements. The Committee did caution Graydon on the language he used in them, which may have been rather anti-Catholic. Graydon remained unrepentant arguing that his advertisements were the cause of his success and, as he was not a salaried agent, he felt he could only

compromise himself and not the Society. He was so upset by the Society's criticism that he suggested someone else should be sent in his place. Placatory letters were sent to him but he was reminded of the importance of not departing from the Society's "one simple and well defined object", that of circulating the scriptures.<sup>57</sup> In this role Graydon was clearly extremely successful and by August 1837 had distributed 2,800 copies that year alone mostly by sale. He too had established contacts and depots in several cities and was convinced he would be equally successful in Cádiz. He was therefore extremely upset at being asked not to go there, which is the most likely explanation for his state of mind on the steamer.

In Málaga Graydon visited the Consul and on 24 April advertised his Bibles for sale in the local paper. The editor was a friend and the depot keeper. The result was that in the first hour alone he sold nearly 100 copies. The Bishop tried to stop the sale on the grounds that the Bibles were incomplete in that they lacked the apocrypha. Graydon refused to accept any authority other than that of the civil authorities and the Consul supported him in this. However, the Bishop found a judge willing to order a suspension of the sale and Graydon was forced to stop selling. The Bishop published his views in the paper on 26 April and declared his intention of informing the Queen's government. As it happened, he was himself arrested a few days later as a conspirator against the Queen, but he did send a despatch to Madrid which caused quite a stir there. Graydon was aware that it was "most unfavourable to me both in respect to the government and our ambassador."<sup>58</sup>

In the meantime a jury had met to consider the nature of Graydon's advertisement and agreed unanimously that he should be prosecuted on the grounds that it was subversive to the Constitution. The judge did not arrest or imprison Graydon but accepted his promise not to leave Málaga until the affair was settled. The judge visited him several times at home and Graydon could not speak too highly of the civil authorities. He was anxious to emphasise this as he felt "it is highly probable that this affair in Málaga will be blazoned forth in an untrue light".<sup>59</sup> He was also grateful for the support he received from the Consul.

On 8 May Graydon was acquitted by a jury vote of eleven out of twelve. The jury also ordered that a copy of their finding be sent to the Madrid papers, which it was hoped would counter-act the reaction to the Bishop's despatch. The Consul also promised Graydon that he would explain the true state of the case to the ambassador. Graydon still faced a charge of selling books without a licence but, at the beginning of June, the charge was dropped and Graydon was free to go. He paid the costs of his lawyer with regard to the advertisements himself, seeing this as solely his affair.

The Spanish authorities now acted more decisively. The sale of Bibles without the apocrypha and without notes was still prohibited in Spain and so a Royal Order was passed that all such books should be seized and be packed and sealed for their owners to export from the country. Borrow was furious and blamed Graydon for all the difficulties, writing in the strongest terms to the Bible Society about him. He urged the Society to recall Graydon, claiming that he was insane, indiscreet, the cause of all the difficulties and in personal danger. He even quoted Villiers as saying that Graydon was "the cause of my *harmless* shop being closed at Madrid and also of my imprisonment".<sup>60</sup> This is extremely unlikely. Borrow's shop was raided on 16 April before the events at Málaga occurred. He had in fact already stored most of his books elsewhere because of persecution. He had also opened the shop without consulting Villiers, who later wrote that he had told Borrow that "such a measure will render the interference of the Authorities inevitable, and so it turned out".<sup>61</sup> In addition Borrow was angry with Rule and claimed the authorities attributed Marin's conversion to him, bringing him even more adverse attention, which could well be true.

It is difficult to assess the truth of all this and it was no easy task for Brandram in corresponding with both Borrow and Graydon. It is possible that the events at Málaga gave the authorities in Madrid an excuse to act, but the two events seem to have happened at virtually the same time. Perhaps it is more likely that it was the combined activities of all three men, Borrow, Graydon and Rule which proved too much and provoked the authorities into taking a more decisive stand against Protestantism.

Graydon was clearly surprised by Borrow's reaction and the urgent letters of recall sent to him expressing concerns for his personal safety. He had never felt in any danger at all and said that he would, in similar circumstances, act in the same way again though he thought he would make a minor alteration to the advertisement. He sent a copy of it to the Bible Society so that they could form their own opinion. Borrow also accused him of circulating tracts and Graydon acknowledged that he had sold four tracts at times three from the Tract Society, including one about the differences between Protestants and Catholics, and one "The true history of the Virgin Mary", a translation from the French given to him by the Courtois brothers or their agents. He claimed he had always sold them discreetly and only in response to requests for them and always making it clear that he did so as an individual and not as an agent of the Bible Society. However, it is doubtful whether most people would have understood such a distinction. He does seem to have regretted doing this to some extent and the Bible Society was unlikely to be happy about it.

Graydon was recalled and on his return to England, Brandram and the Superintendent of the Editorial department "had an interview with him, which had proved highly satisfactory".<sup>62</sup>

The following resolution was passed:

Resolved that while this Sub Committee regretted that Mr. Graydon should have issued the advertisements and tracts, which have been made the subject of so much unpleasant remark at Madrid, they yet feel that he has done so much towards promoting the Society's objects in Spain, that they cheerfully recommend to the General Committee to present to Mr. Graydon a gratuity of fifty guineas as a small acknowledgment of his valuable services.<sup>63</sup>

While he was in England Graydon kept in contact with many of his agents in Spain, and was told that in many areas the civil authorities had not put into effect the Royal Order to seize the books. He spent some months in Liverpool and then announced his intention of returning to Marseilles or Geneva. The Committee authorised him to do his best to secure his stocks in Spain through correspondence but, in April 1839, he returned to Spain to visit his depots and make the arrangements himself.

Meanwhile Borrow had continued to try and distribute his books despite the increasing difficulties in doing so. The Bible Society recalled him in early August and some weeks later he travelled to England. He managed to persuade the Society to let him return to Spain, partly because he had left some of their papers and property there. He reached Cádiz again at the very end of December 1838.

By mid 1838 therefore the work of both Borrow and Graydon had largely come to a halt, but what of Rule? He had returned to Gibraltar at the end of April 1838 and Lyon, who had been overseeing the work there, returned to Cádiz. However, they agreed that for the time being they would not try to re-open the school. Instead Lyon continued preaching in the bay and privately in his house. Rule had sent full reports of his journey into Spain to the Committee, asking them yet again for their views on Spain, what to do about Marin and discussing the possibilities for developing work in Madrid. He still heard nothing and in May wrote an anguished letter to the Committee regarding their long silence. Apart from one brief letter he had not heard from them for eighteen months. He also reported on Lyon's disappointment: "he has not yet been encouraged by one word of any sort from the Committee. I know he is often much distressed by this, and as I cannot censure your proceedings to him, I am obliged to be silent. Yet the question in both our minds is, do you approve of our proceedings?" Marin too would have liked to hear from them. "And if I could have any clue as to your views with regard to him it would relieve me from great concern." The responsibility for Marin weighed heavily on Rule, and for all the work and the decisions, and so he was "most desirous to hear from you, and to be relieved from the painful perplexity which attends every effort to form or execute a plan with regard to Spain. May I say, but in the most respectful and affectionate manner, that it is only from my own society that I can obtain no correspondence?"<sup>64</sup> Even this letter did not elicit an immediate reply.

In June 1838, perhaps not surprisingly, Rule admitted to some health problems. He had had an attack of pleurisy in December 1837 which had left him with a weak chest. He had managed to carry on but was clearly also weighed down by the volume of work and the

responsibilities he carried. He had not had a break for over six years and reported that he had now "lost every sensation of health".<sup>65</sup> He felt he needed to come to England but did not know how the work could be covered in his absence. Mrs. Rule's health was also poor and later a medical report was sent recommending "a thorough and complete change of air" for them both.<sup>66</sup> In fact the Committee did agree to a return to England and also sent Rule a letter authorising him to make a monthly allowance to Marin. He immediately sent off money to cover the months of April to July, thus backdating the wage. He was very grateful to the Committee although this decision seems to have been the only subject of the letter and all other questions remained unanswered.

In the end Rule felt unable to leave either station unmanned until a relief was sent, though it is not clear that the Committee was planning to do this. As he could no longer stay in Gibraltar, in mid July, Lyon returned to the Rock and the whole Rule family went to Cádiz. They took Salvador Negrotto with them to help with the work. The doctor had not recommended Cádiz as a suitable change of air because of the heat there, but after a week Rule reported that he felt a little better though still stated "it is a fact that our health is shattered".<sup>67</sup> But he soon got down to work, and by the end of July had appointed a Spanish master, José María Perez, and had seven boys and a few girls in school. Shortly afterwards they moved to a much bigger house with plenty of room for separate boys' and girls' schools as well as a chapel. A Spanish mistress for the girls was also appointed. Brackenbury senior did not approve of what they were doing, which had depressed Lyon but seems to have left Rule unperturbed. However he reported that he showed "decided hostility to our mission ... as a high aristocrat he hates our seeming innovations and as a thorough churchman he abhors our sect". He warned the Committee that he thought Brackenbury represented their mission as "a failure, or at least as a hopeless, improvident and unlawful undertaking" in his correspondence. Rule reported him to be "a very intimate friend of the Romish Bishop and other personages of the same class".<sup>68</sup>

Rule taught for a time in the school but his health finally failed and he was forced to return to England. He left on 1 September and in England it was found that "pulmonary disease

had advanced so far that recovery was doubtful". Mrs. Rule had returned to Gibraltar briefly to check on the girls' school there but she stayed on in Cádiz after her husband left to oversee the work. However, a few weeks later she too returned to England with the children as she was "almost exhausted with fatigue and anxiety".<sup>69</sup> Rule's health did improve with good medical care and, perhaps equally helpful, he was able at last to meet with the Committee and discuss his work and plans for Spain. Although the reason for the long silence is not reported, the Committee must have approved of what Rule was doing in Spain as they would doubtless have been quicker to write had they not. In addition missionary work around the world was expanding at a considerable rate and the Committee was probably facing more work than it could handle. In the years 1830-1840 the number of foreign members of the Methodist Church, excluding the United States and Canada, increased from 41,186 to 78,506, thus almost doubling in just ten years. In the same period the number of preachers abroad increased from 193 to 345, all of whom were corresponding with the Missionary Committee. This also put an enormous strain on financial resources, and no doubt difficult choices had to be made as to priorities.

Rule was advised to avoid a British winter and, as he was feeling much restored in health, he and his family embarked for Cádiz. With them went George Dowty, a young single probationer minister, who had been appointed to work alongside Rule. Little is known about him as this was his first appointment. They reached Cádiz on 27 November and found everything in good order. The Spanish staff, with Negrotto, had kept up the school in their absence and by 10 December Rule reported that they had 67 children in the school and numbers were increasing all the time. He had by then been there for two Sundays and also reported that "the congregations have been very pleasing".<sup>70</sup> He took care not to do too much but was clearly delighted with the way things were going. Much furniture and equipment was still needed and he set about acquiring this as cheaply as he could. Lyon continued his work in Gibraltar, and Negrotto, who was no longer needed in Cádiz, returned to the Rock to work in the schools there.

Several letters from Marin were waiting for Rule. He was now better settled in Madrid, and

had found more suitable lodgings where he could hold meetings. Borrow's last reference to him was in July 1838 when he stated that "the unfortunate M. [Marin] is dying of a galloping consumption, brought on by distress of mind. All the medicine in the world would not accomplish his cure".<sup>71</sup> Borrow was a little prone to exaggeration, and although Rule was aware of his illness he did not report it as life threatening and certainly Marin survived it. Instead he reported Marin to be writing, wanting to establish a congregation in Madrid and together they were considering starting a school there too. His allowance was still being paid, though it was barely sufficient for his needs.

So the Rule family settled back into life in Cádiz but they were soon to be hit by a terrible tragedy, for their youngest child, Melancthon, died in convulsions about two weeks after their return. Mrs. Rule had never been well enough to breast feed and a Spanish wet nurse had been engaged who had gone to England with them. It seems that she was suffering from breast soreness and the Spanish mistress of the school gave her some ointment. This ointment consisted of white lead and oil and it poisoned the little boy who had previously been in excellent health. There is no suggestion of deliberate intent in Rule's letter to the Committee, but in his autobiography he stated his belief that this was an act of murder and that the woman had also been in secret correspondence with the priests about what they were doing. She left the school immediately but could not be brought to justice. As there was no Protestant burial ground in Cádiz, Rule had to smuggle out the body of his son in a packing case, bribing the custom's officials, and taking him back to Gibraltar where he was buried in the cemetery by Sweetman on 19 December. He was just nineteen months old. The Rules had now lost three of their children, but characteristically Rule did not dwell on this throwing himself once more into the work. He did not comment on Mrs. Rule's feelings. She had not even been able to attend the funeral.

While in Gibraltar Rule was able to liaise with Sweetman and Lyon and felt the work was progressing well there. The girls' school was not doing so well because of the lack of a female missionary, but they were training up a young girl, Catalina Parody, in the hope that she would be able to become mistress of the school. He had met with the Governor who

seemed rather cool. While in England Rule had taken the opportunity of memorialising the Secretary of State, Lord Glenelg, yet again asking for the waste ground next to the chapel, on which he wanted to build a school house. Lord Glenelg seems to have offered his support to the plea but the authorities in Gibraltar, possibly also a little irritated by Rule's persistence and attempt to go over their heads, were adamant in their continued refusal. He was offered another site but, as it was at a distance from the rest of the Mission, he did not feel it to be suitable. However, there was good news as well as the Governor's wife had given them a subscription and a government grant was now being offered. The schools were funded by subscriptions and the government now offered a variable grant, the actual amount being calculated in proportion to the amount raised by subscriptions. This proved to be a great help over the years, though even so there was often a shortfall which the Missionary Committee made up. This development brought official recognition of the schools and in 1839, for the first time, they were mentioned in Gibraltar's blue book of statistics and from then on full details of all the Mission schools were given there.

In Cádiz the work seemed to progress well. By the end of January there were nearly one hundred children in the school despite the fact that religious instruction was given and attendance at Sunday services was required. A girl from Gibraltar, possibly Catalina Parody, came to help Mrs. Rule with the girls. Dowty was reported as throwing himself into the work and preaching in the bay. He was learning Spanish but not with great speed. They had two services on Sundays and the evening one was also attended by fellow Englishmen who understood Spanish. Numbers grew and they had to enlarge the room they used as a chapel.

Then, to Rule's delight, a young girl of about thirteen, Enriqueta Martínez, came to him of her own accord asking to become a 'Methodist Protestant'. Her mother, who had been attending the services, had no objection and so Rule formed a small class consisting of Enriqueta, Margarita Barea, a servant in their house, her son Federico González and Mrs. Rule. Enriqueta's mother later joined them along with a few others and the nucleus of the first Spanish Methodist Society was thus formed. By the end of the March quarter

recognition was given to 25 class members and a memorable evening service of Holy Communion was held for them, which the entire congregation stayed to witness. Rule was overjoyed by these events.

Meanwhile, in Madrid, Marin was working on plans to establish a school there on similar lines to Cádiz. He kept in close touch with Rule and was looking out for a suitable property. However, he did not have the experience of running such a school and so Rule suggested that Dowty should go to Madrid to work with him, which he also thought would help him to learn Spanish more quickly. Dowty was willing but expressed some anxiety about the journey itself but, as he would travel with an armed escort, Rule felt there would be little danger. Rule had had some concerns about Dowty "who seemed to be rather out of his element at first", but now felt "he has lately appeared to catch the spirit of his work in a way I feared at first he would not have done."<sup>72</sup> The Committee agreed to the plan and Dowty left Cádiz on 29 March 1839 arriving safely in Madrid on 15 April. By then Rule was rather concerned about Marin feeling that he had suffered much "that his spirit is soon cast down and every little disappointment arouses his fears. It is therefore important that he should not be alone".<sup>73</sup>

On the Sunday before Dowty left Cádiz, 24 March, which was also the day of the Communion Service already mentioned, Rule was visited by a member of the Municipal Assembly of the city. A charge had been laid against him and more information about the school was required. However, the civil authorities seemed quite favourably inclined towards them and Rule was not too perturbed, but it was the season of Lent which seems to have been the most dangerous time for opposition to manifest itself and once again this proved to be the case.

The following Sunday which was Easter Sunday, 31 March, an article appeared in one of the daily newspapers denouncing the school and congregation and attacking the authorities of Cádiz by implying that they were supporting Methodism by not opposing it. The next day their Spanish master was ordered to appear before one of the Alcaldes and then Rule

was summoned too. The Alcalde declared the school to be illegal because it was a Protestant establishment. Rule argued it was not unconstitutional and was therefore legal. They parted without agreement but Rule, fearing that the school would be closed, decided to suspend it himself and he informed the authorities that he intended to establish a grammar school instead. Since his visit to Madrid the previous year a Royal Order had been passed, dated 12 August 1838, giving permission for any individual of 25 years of age and above, who was of good moral standing to open such a school. There were other conditions relating to the building and amenities to be provided. Rule had always thought that the Order had been passed to open up the way for him after his representations in Madrid and now prepared therefore to use the Order to re-open the school. The authorities acknowledged the Order but would not allow Rule to open the school until they had received some proofs of his good character, which he immediately set about providing.

In the meantime Rule continued to consult with Brackenbury who sent details of the affair to the acting Minister in Madrid. Villiers was away in England. He also met with the new Governor of Cádiz who did not show any sympathy for their cause. A Spaniard was questioned by the authorities because his daughter had been seen to enter Rule's house and on 4 April the Bishop addressed the Alcaldes in support of the newspaper article, begging them to put an end to Rule's preaching and the school.

On the next Sunday, 7 April, Rule was sent a note from the Alcalde stating that as he was holding religious meetings in his house, which were not in harmony with Catholic worship, he was breaking the law. He was warned to stop the meetings or measures would be taken against him. He immediately replied stating his surprise at receiving the note as the meetings had been held for such a long time and he did not believe them to be contrary to the present Constitution of Spain, but he agreed to stop them for the present. The congregation assembled as usual that evening but an Alcalde and others were also present. Rule entered the pulpit, read the two notes to the assembled people adding only the following words: "You are Spaniards, I am an Englishman. I am free; and I pray that the time may soon come when you also shall be free".<sup>74</sup> He then pronounced the benediction

and left the pulpit. The people had no choice but to disperse but out in the street they discovered a group of soldiers with fixed bayonets which reduced their murmurings to silence. Sentries were placed outside the house for the next few days.

Rule decided that he would not stop his own family worship and on the following Sunday he invited a few friends to join him. He conducted a service but they did not attempt any singing. The next Sunday, 21 April, a similar group had gathered, some coming early to the house to avoid detection but as soon as they had started the doorbell rang. The door was answered and an Alcalde with some soldiers forced their way upstairs to the door of the chapel. Despite the effect on the assembled group, Rule continued the service, even preaching the sermon. The Alcalde stood at the door, the soldiers inside with drawn swords pointing to the floor, but they made no attempt to stop the proceedings. Afterwards Rule refused to speak to the Alcalde until he had dismissed the soldiers on the grounds that he was a British subject and they had no right to force their way into his home. He already knew the Alcalde who had been sent to see what was happening and they talked together politely while the people dispersed. The following day Rule received a further note to say that it was known he had continued to hold services and if he repeated such a scandal severe measures would be taken against him. Rule of course denied having 'open doors' worship and felt he was entitled to do what he liked in the privacy of his own home.

Then early next morning, 23 April, Rule was informed verbally by Brackenbury that the Spanish Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had sent a note to the British Minister that the Queen wanted Rule to leave Spain immediately and if he did not do so she was determined to treat him as a criminal. The law prohibited the exercise of any religion other than the Catholic and the penalty for breaking it was death. Rule had no choice but to leave. Brackenbury expected him to go within forty eight hours but as a steamer was due the next day Rule decided to go even earlier and used the short time that was left to prepare for departure. So, on 24 April 1839, the whole Rule family with their servants walked through the city to the steamer "greeted on the way with many friendly salutations and loud expressions of respect and sorrow".<sup>75</sup>

Later a Royal Order dated 30 April was sent to Cádiz in which the Queen commanded that Rule be forbidden to open any kind of school or to have any meetings in his house and should he persist in doing so contrary to their laws he should be expelled from the province. Rule had of course by then been ordered out by Brackenbury, but on terms a little different from those stated in the Royal Order. He was therefore rather suspicious of Brackenbury's role in the affair, especially as his information had only been given verbally. He suspected some collusion, knowing that Brackenbury had never been in sympathy with his work in Cádiz.

Rule sent full details of the events to the Missionary Committee, begging them to take up the matter with the British Government, arguing the case for the British seamen in Cádiz and for his right to work there. He based his arguments on the Constitution of 1837, and even though he had to acknowledge that the old laws had not formally been repealed he felt they "are regarded as obsolete by all who are not immediately interested in their revival, and were virtually superseded in the revisal of the Spanish Constitution in the year 1837".<sup>76</sup> However, whatever the new Constitution stated, it seems that the old laws could be successfully used to crush any threat to Catholicism.

However, Rule did not give up and, while he had to accept that he could no longer work in Cádiz, there was no such prohibition on Lyon. So, by the beginning of May Lyon was once again in Cádiz, preaching in the Bay and meeting privately with some of the Spaniards in their own homes. He proceeded very cautiously but his presence was of course known to the authorities. Their Spanish master, who was by now much in sympathy with them, also continued his work teaching small groups of children in a variety of venues, and Lyon gave some religious instruction to them when he could. Together they thus tried to keep the nucleus of the Mission alive, in the hope that it could be revived at a more favourable time.

So, after only a few months in Cádiz, Rule returned to his work in Gibraltar but he did not lose hope and still felt optimistic about their prospects in Spain. The Committee, however, do not seem to have shared his views and it is unlikely that they made any representation to

the British Government on Rule's behalf. They tended towards the view that the obstacles in Spain were now too great and that it was time to retrench rather than advance. These differing views inevitably led to tension in the relationship between Rule and the Committee which worsened as Rule's time in Gibraltar drew to an end.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT THE MINISTRY OF WILLIAM HARRIS RULE (3) BACK TO GIBRALTAR - More Rights for Soldiers, Mission Premises at the South (1839-1842)**

After the setback of Rule's expulsion from Cádiz the Committee no doubt gave considerable thought to the situation in Spain and Gibraltar. Information about the activities of Borrow, Graydon and Rule had been sent to Lord Palmerston, the Foreign Secretary, by both Villiers and Ofália. In October 1838 the Bible Society had received a letter from the Foreign Office stating that Villiers had observed that:

The present moment is peculiarly unpropitious for such an effort as that which the Bible Society seem desirous to make in Spain; because the Clergy have taken alarm at what they consider to be an intention to convert the people from Catholicism, and will not be slow to use their powers with the Government by a display of severity against those whom they term Heretics; that, moreover, it should be the object of the Agents of the Bible Society to avoid exciting the attention of the Public, because they can scarcely take a step without infringing some existing Law of Spain; and thereby placing themselves in the power of the Ecclesiastical or Civil Authorities; and that if by their Acts they do thus infringe the Laws of the Country, it will be impossible for the British Minister at Madrid successfully to defend them with the Spanish Government, or to afford them that protection which as British Subjects, and as Men engaged in a work of difficulty and danger, they may consider themselves entitled to claim.<sup>1</sup>

The Society was advised by Palmerston therefore to stop their agents working, hoping that when the civil war was over they would have a better chance of success.

However, despite this letter, Borrow was authorised to return to Spain to dispose of his remaining stock, although it is not clear if this meant by distribution in Spain or by removal from the country. He arrived in Cádiz on the last day of 1838, not long after Rule had returned though there are no accounts of any further meetings between the two. He travelled on to Seville and later to Madrid where he did manage to dispose of some of his stock. However, as it was forbidden to distribute the scriptures, the work there became too difficult even for him and he returned to Seville and continued trying to distribute books there. He set up house with Mary Clarke and her daughter Henrietta, which he did not tell

the Bible Society, and began gathering together material for a book. At the end of July 1839 the Bible Society ordered his return but Borrow did not receive the letter as he had set off on his travels again. He called at Cádiz where he met Brackenbury. He was very impressed with Borrow, who seemed to have a great ability to impress. He agreed to organise the shipping out of his remaining stock of books which would otherwise have been at risk of confiscation and wrote to the Bible Society expressing his pleasure at meeting Borrow and his sorrow at the disruption of his work. Without mentioning their names, Brackenbury implied that the blame for Borrow's difficulties lay with Graydon and Rule. This was certainly Borrow's opinion which he had at times expressed quite forcefully.

Brackenbury wrote that previously the circulation of the Word of God had not been illegal and was "countenanced by the Government itself".<sup>2</sup> Spain was in the throes of a civil war, with constant changes of government but, whereas at times a more lenient approach was taken, the actual laws forbidding the circulation of Bibles without notes had not been repealed. Brackenbury seems to be overstating the case to support Borrow, and to castigate Rule whom he did not support. He went on to say that Bible Society agents "should neither be Sectarian Ministers of the Gospel, who, by teaching and preaching, strive to make Proselytes, nor private individuals who consider it their duty to combat on Spanish ground the errors of Popery". In a sense he was right, for such people were least likely to be successful in Spain at this time.

Borrow travelled on to Tangier via Gibraltar and returned to Cádiz on 21 September, calling again on Brackenbury who gave him a letter of recall from the Bible Society. Brackenbury had also received a circular from Palmerston forbidding British Consuls in Spain and their assistants "to afford the slightest countenance to religious agents".<sup>3</sup> Borrow returned to Seville to put his affairs in order but seems to have been in no hurry to leave Spain. He was briefly imprisoned again because of difficulties with his passport and did not return to England until April 1840. He married Mary Clarke shortly after landing. His employment with the Bible Society was then terminated and eventually Borrow wrote his highly successful book *The Bible in Spain*. Despite his earlier outbursts against them, in the

preface he paid tribute to Graydon and also to Rule and Lyon, "two last brave disciples of the immortal Wesley" saying that had they not been banished from Spain "not only Cádiz, but the greater part of Andalusia, would by this time have confessed the pure doctrines of the Gospel, and have discarded for ever the last relics of popish superstition".<sup>4</sup> Borrow continued to write and several more books were published but none of them achieved the success of *The Bible in Spain*. He never again found a role that fulfilled his adventurous spirit in the way the work for the Bible Society had done and it seems rather a pity that his talents were never really used again. Mary died in January 1869 and Borrow himself in July 1881.

Graydon too was aware of Palmerston's advice but begged the Committee to bear in mind that the civil authorities had invariably helped him and seemed to approve of his work. He kept in touch with his Spanish contacts and by October 1838 was receiving accounts of his stocks in Spain being seized and so, in spring 1839, he decided to visit Spain himself to see what could be done to secure the books. He arrived in Barcelona in April and was therefore able to deliver personally a special Bible to Bergnes, the printer, which the Bible Society wished to present to him in appreciation of all his hard work. Graydon went on to visit Valencia, Alicante, Cartagena, Murcia and Almería discovering that, in his absence, many Bibles had been sold. He felt more could be done but in Murcia he was detained until orders could be received from Madrid which in fact expelled him from Spain "for circulating small books containing opinions contrary to the religion of the country".<sup>5</sup> He claimed this referred to the Bible but later stated that the order expelling him declared him "to be a disturber of the public peace, by circulating tracts containing doctrines in contradiction to those believed in by all Spaniards."<sup>6</sup>

Graydon did not immediately leave the country but travelled on by steamer to Málaga where he reported on a friendly meeting with William Mark, the Consul there. He arrived in Gibraltar on 28 June meeting up with Rule again, though Rule did not refer to this meeting in any of his correspondence. Graydon reported that "The Cádiz affair has sounded throughout Spain and elicited most bitter articles in the public papers. Mr. Rule has

published therefore 'A Defence of Methodism'!! ..... He is expelled also!!"<sup>7</sup>

Graydon returned to Barcelona calling in at the major cities along the way, as before, contacting his depot keepers and making further arrangements for his books. He then left Spain, arriving in Marseilles on 24 July, to await events. He reported that elections to the Cortes were taking place which he felt might affect their work and in September that Spain was "in a state of jubilee from the altogether wonderful turn the war has taken".<sup>8</sup> The war in fact ended in 1839, but Graydon was not able to work in Spain again.

Graydon moved to Switzerland and, in 1845, he again offered his services to the Bible Society as a distributor. His offer was accepted and Canton reports that in "little more than two years Mr. Graydon sold, at the uniform price of one franc, between 27 and 28 thousand New Testaments in French, German, Italian and English".<sup>9</sup> He established depots throughout the country and later worked in Italy too. At some time he married and his wife was reported to be helping in the distribution in 1847. "In 1851 he was enrolled as a regular agent of the Society, with Switzerland and Northern Italy as the chief field of his operations."<sup>10</sup> He resigned in the autumn of 1860 when it was noted that Mrs. Graydon was unwell. In December 1860 a letter of appreciation was sent to him as the Bible Society "could not allow so long and faithful a relationship to close without some parting token of good wish".<sup>11</sup> Graydon had served the Society for twenty five years, not without some differences of opinion, but he was wished "every personal and family blessing" and sent a gratuity.

In 1861 Graydon was commissioned by the Bible Society to undertake an exploratory visit to Spain. He visited several cities early in 1862 and called at Gibraltar. His letters for the period have not survived but in general it was reported that "Lieutenant Graydon gives a dark picture as it respects the prospects of Scripture circulation being promoted in Spain at the present moment".<sup>12</sup> In 1864 Graydon offered his services for South America but the offer was declined. The last reference to him occurs in March 1866. A private letter had been received from him and it seems he was in some financial difficulty. A gratuity of £50

was sent to him in view of his many years of service in Spain when he had incurred considerable expense without charging the Society. Sadly there is no further information and one can only hope that he did not live out the rest of his life in poverty.

The Carlist War had ended in 1839 and, by this time, Protestant activity had virtually ceased in Spain. The fact that it had mostly taken place during a period of civil war may well be significant in that at such a time it would be difficult for a country to act in a cohesive way. There clearly were more liberal influences at work in Spain at this time but in the end no political party in Spain supported activities that threatened Catholicism. There was a desire to reform the Church as an institution and it never again enjoyed the wealth and privileges it had once had, but the practice of the Catholic faith itself was never a target.

Graydon's contribution has largely been ignored because of the publicity given to Borrow's work and because of Borrow's strongly outspoken criticism of him. However, both of them had achieved a great deal in their time in Spain and between them had circulated a large number of Bibles and Testaments. Graydon was probably more successful in this in terms of sheer numbers and also generally managed to dispose of copies by selling them rather than by giving them away. In addition he printed some whole Bibles for which there was always a great demand in Spain, and Borrow came to regret that he had only printed New Testaments. Because Borrow himself was so negative about Graydon his biographers have tended to portray him in the same way, as an impetuous and reckless amateur. He was clearly not an amateur but certainly his advertisements and distribution of tracts was indiscreet and in the end caused considerable problems. However, Borrow too was rather foolish in opening his shop and advertising it so widely in Madrid, and it is too simplistic to blame Graydon for all Borrow's difficulties. Both had really done very similar work and both deserve credit for that.

Borrow's biographers also tend to be rather dismissive of Rule, but of course his aims were rather different in that he wanted, not only to circulate the scriptures, but also to establish Protestant Missions, which was likely to be far more provocative to the Spanish. Graydon

and Rule seem to have felt much more passionately about their faith than Borrow, and perhaps it was their keen desire to share this faith that caused them both to be a little unrealistic about what actually could be achieved in Spain at this time. However, overall the political situation in Spain was against them all and in the end proved too strong for each of them, and it should not be forgotten that, whatever changes were taking place in Spain, they had all broken the law.

It is not clear whether the Methodist Missionary Society received a similar letter to that sent by the Foreign Office to the Bible Society, but they would undoubtedly have been aware of Palmerston's views. In July 1839, the month in which the Bible Society recalled Borrow, the Missionary Committee informed Rule of its decisions. Sweetman was recalled to England, Rule was to take over as superintendent of both the English and Spanish work and Dowty was ordered to leave Madrid and proceed to Gibraltar to work alongside Rule. Rule immediately wrote back to argue the case for Madrid. He felt that the Committee had based its decision on the rather negative reports from Dowty. Shortly after reaching Madrid, Dowty had reported that he and Marin had to proceed very cautiously indeed as the newspapers were full of the events in Cádiz and they did not want to provoke action against themselves. In the meantime Dowty continued to learn Spanish and on his first Sunday he and Marin had "celebrated divine worship for the first time in Madrid".<sup>13</sup> Two months later he reported that their "downfall (as it is here termed) at Cádiz is the general topic of conversation in Madrid and the public printers are constantly attacking us so that we have done but little as yet in this capital". Parents were reluctant to send them their children and they only had one little boy whom they were both teaching. On Sundays Dowty accompanied the singing on his flute and two or three Spaniards did attend their Sunday services using the "the strictest precautions", but in general he felt "little can be done in this country until Spain, ..... possesses the right of religious liberty".<sup>14</sup> He was perfectly willing to stay in Madrid if this was what the Committee wanted, but progress was bound to be very slow.

Rule insisted that Dowty's most recent letter to him had been more encouraging than his

earlier ones, and although progress was slow, it was being made and would surely continue. He did not think Dowty had the money to return, but he did not send him any arguing that it might be lost if he had already left as Marin was away at present. This was clearly a delaying tactic in the hope that the Committee might reconsider. Rule did not feel Dowty would be useful in Gibraltar either as he could not yet preach in Spanish and was too inexperienced to cope with the English work. Whatever the decision regarding Madrid, Rule asked them not to send Dowty to Gibraltar. Instead he urged them to send a suitable successor to Sweetman as soon as possible.

Dowty was on his own in Madrid as Marin had gone to Valencia on 22 July for a holiday because he was ill. Even Rule admitted to feeling some alarm at what he heard of Marin's health. It seems he had a chest condition but Rule thought his illness had been "induced by long anxiety".<sup>15</sup> As Dowty did not have the money to leave he had to stay in Madrid alone. He wrote to the Committee to express his pleasure at being directed to Gibraltar and seems to have felt rather lonely in Madrid. He felt Marin could continue the work there and that he could use the time in Gibraltar to assist Rule in the schools, to do some English preaching and become more fluent in Spanish in preparation for future work in Spain.

The Committee did not change the decision and Dowty was ordered to Gibraltar. Rule had to accept this and went ahead with the arrangements to receive him there. All the negotiations had taken time though and Dowty did not leave Madrid until the end of September. Marin was still in Valencia but Dowty reported that he thought he was on his way back to Madrid. Dowty arrived in Cádiz in the middle of October but felt unable to proceed to Gibraltar, writing to Rule instead to confess a sin. He wrote:

Having no friendly adviser whose counsel I could follow, being bereft of all the public means of grace and surrounded by those temptations of the world to which youth are especially exposed, I found myself placed in a perilous situation. But until the last month I have been enabled to hold fast my profession by the grace of God and resist the adversary of souls, but alas for me in an evil hour, I listened to the enemy's suggestions, and am undone. My peculiar temptation was an ardent desire to attend the Opera.<sup>16</sup>

He was truly distressed by what he had done, feeling he could no longer count himself a minister and that he had let everyone down. He did not know what to do and was wondering about trying to get a job in Spain. Rule sent the letter to the Committee with a note on the bottom saying that Dowty had had the support of Marin, conveniently forgetting Marin's long absence, and adding that he "had private and social means of grace in abundance" which is highly unlikely. His next letter was a scathing condemnation of Dowty, believing him guilty of far worse than attending the opera and certainly not wanting him in Gibraltar. He treated his letter as one of resignation. He did not believe in the genuineness of his repentance and suggested that Dowty remain in Cádiz until the Committee issued further instructions. He later expressed further concerns about Dowty, some of which he had had from the beginning.

At the end of October Dowty wrote a long letter to the Committee pleading his youth and inexperience and the lack of support from Marin, because of his absence, and from Rule. Dowty was a young, inexperienced man in his first appointment, in a strange and dangerous country with no fluency in the language and had clearly been out of his depth in Madrid, where he had been alone for two months. The letter from the Committee sending him to Gibraltar had felt like an answer to prayer to him but Rule had intervened, and the longer stay and his friendship with other Englishmen had proved his undoing. He placed himself at the mercy of the Committee and begged to be given another chance but if so he asked to be placed "under the direction of one to whom I can look as a Father".<sup>17</sup> Rule was not the man to nurture young, inexperienced probationers and seems to have found it difficult to show compassion to those of lesser ability and with less strength of mind and purpose.

At the end of November instructions were received that Dowty should return to England and he landed at Gravesend towards the middle of December. No doubt he met with the Committee but, as no details of any meeting have survived, it is not known how he was received. He did not serve in Methodism again. In his autobiography Rule added a rather scathing footnote to say that Dowty "afterwards obtained ordination in a diocese of the Church of England. The Bishop asked no questions, but took him at hazard, for better or

for worse".<sup>18</sup> In fact it was in 1841 that Dowty began his training for the Anglican priesthood and he was ordained deacon in 1842 and priest in 1843. He was a curate at Todmorden from 1842 to 1844 and then moved to nearby Walsden as a perpetual curate. He stayed there until 1862 when he went to St. Leonard's Church in Shoreditch where he served as senior curate until finally becoming rector in Stockleigh English in the diocese of Exeter in 1878. No information about him is recorded after 1888 when he must either have died or retired. Dowty did not have the best of opportunities to prove his worth in Methodism under Rule, but hopefully found fulfilment in the Anglican church.

Rule did not question Sweetman's removal and plans went ahead for his departure. There are no detailed reports of his work in Gibraltar as he only wrote fairly brief occasional letters to the Committee. The church and Sunday school were maintained with the usual fluctuations of membership as regiments came and went. Membership had risen to its highest point in 1834 with 169 members, but this was the year of controversy and division, when a small group left, and by the time Sweetman arrived it had fallen to 101. It stayed well below the hundred during his three years of ministry. However, there were no further disputes during that time. Sweetman occupied his time with the usual business of the congregation and Sunday school, preaching, visiting and holding class and prayer meetings. In 1839 he reported involvement with a Temperance Society which had 150 members, not just Methodists, which he felt was much needed as drunkenness was a considerable problem in Gibraltar.

After ten months in post Sweetman complained that he had not yet had a letter from the Committee but he was not as isolated as many of his predecessors as he did have Rule as a colleague. They seem to have got on very well and on several occasions Rule reported discussing issues with Sweetman whom he described as "a man of angelic goodness, and very diligent and much beloved in his own circle, and by no one more than myself".<sup>19</sup> Towards the end of Sweetman's stay he said, "A person of more gracious and lovely spirit than Mr. Sweetman could scarcely be found", but added "another class of excellence seems to be wanted now" and thought that "a man of energy and life" was now needed.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps

he meant someone like himself!

However, Sweetman had healed the breach in the church and one of the last things he did was to restore John Allen and his wife to membership. Their application for reinstatement was discussed at the quarterly leaders' meeting in July 1839. The meeting agreed to their request on condition that they acknowledge their faults and did not try to justify their past behaviour, despite provocation. This does seem to indicate a recognition that there had been faults on both sides, but presumably they agreed to these conditions because they were soon both back in positions of leadership. When Rule heard he was to take over the superintendence of the English work he was concerned about the reaction of those, especially the Allens, who had so strongly opposed him in the past. He invited Allen to meet him and was delighted and astonished at the change in him and from then on they worked extremely well together. Sweetman had worked hard to heal the divisions and leave a united church for his successor.

A son, Edward Merson, was born to the Sweetmans on 10 July 1837 and baptised by Rule in August. The following summer Mrs. Sweetman was not well, and they had thought she would have to go into Spain for a while but the rain and cooler weather came early, reviving her. In January 1839 Sweetman wrote to the Committee to discuss plans for his departure assuming that his appointment was drawing to a close, as it was now known to be a three year appointment. He intended to send his wife on ahead and wait himself for his successor. However, the Committee instructed him not to leave and at this stage seems to have had no plans for his removal. Sweetman accepted this without question but may well have been worried about his wife's health, as she was pregnant and the summer was approaching. Sarah Harriet was born on 5 April 1839. However, the delay in departure cost them dearly for, at the same time as they received the letter from the Committee ordering their return to England, Edward died after a short illness. He was buried the following day 16 July by Rule. They were devastated and Sweetman wrote:

It has pleased Almighty God to take to himself my dear, my lovely little boy,

my first born. He died on the 15th inst. aged 2 years and five days. In intense suffering of soul we desire meekly to submit to the divine will. We feel fewer ties to earth and fresh inducement to long and prepare for heaven; and from deeper conviction than ever of the uncertainty of life, we hope to live more than ever to the glory of God.<sup>21</sup>

They left Gibraltar on 25 July arriving in England at the beginning of August. Soon afterwards they went to Australia, as they had very first intended, and Sweetman served the rest of his ministry there later working as a superintendent minister. Findlay and Holdsworth described him as a saintly man "one of nature's noblemen ..... of grave and dignified mien, affable and courteous manner, deep and unaffected piety - a Preacher of a very superior order".<sup>22</sup>

Although Rule accepted Sweetman's removal without question, he was naturally very concerned about the amount of work he would have to do:

My spirit is willing, but my flesh is weak, and unless my mind be quite at ease, and I can move on without undue pressure, I am sure that I shall break down again. But if I have to superintend the English department, which needs at this juncture the extraordinary effort of an entire man, I fear that that and I shall sink together.<sup>23</sup>

His health kept up fairly well at first but he continued to plead on numerous occasions for a replacement for Sweetman. The essential qualifications for the person sent were that he "must love God with his whole heart, so as to be heedless of his own comfort, and full of love for sinners".<sup>24</sup> This summed up his own attitude, for he did not expect more of colleagues than he was prepared to give himself.

It is not clear whether the Committee had ever intended to replace Sweetman. The original intention may have been that Rule and Dowty could manage the station together. Rule clearly expected a colleague to be appointed, often mentioning this in his letters, and begging for someone to be sent out as soon as possible. In the meantime, the better spirit now prevailing in the church certainly helped, and Rule prioritised the work, reporting that some things had to be left undone because he simply could not do everything. However,

the impression given is that it was the English work that was given less priority for, despite his workload, Rule soon started to expand the Spanish work. Although there was still no sign of a colleague, he was never a man to sit still and was always seeking growth and expansion.

So, as early as 1 July 1839, a new school was opened in the South, and by early August there were 30 children, all boys at that stage. Rule did not seek the Committee's permission, announcing instead, when things were well under way, that he had planned a three month trial and to lay the case before them. What he really had in mind was a separate mission in the South, with its own congregation, chapel and school. The town school was now run by Negrotto and the new South school by Richard Deacon. Little is known about his background as Rule never even mentioned his name to the Committee. Before long a girls' school was also established in the South and this was run by Deacon's wife, Mary Ann. By September there were 70 children in the South schools.

In addition there was a need for education among young men who were already working but who had not had any educational opportunities. So an evening school was begun in October. Allen and Stevenson, another church leader, volunteered to teach in it. Shortly afterwards Negrotto was appointed to run a young persons' Spanish class and thus became a leader of the church himself. The following year a small evening school for women was also begun.

Finally, Rule felt there was a need for an English school for young ladies. He planned this to be fee paying so that it would hopefully pay for itself, and possibly even contribute to the cost of the other schools. He mentioned the idea to the Committee in October but again did not wait for their permission, and went ahead with the arrangements himself. A military friend suggested Miss McCrindell, author of a book *The School-Girl in France*. She was a native of Guernsey and well educated herself, speaking several languages. Rule wrote to her and she agreed to come to Gibraltar to teach. The school was not just a secular one, as the pupils were only accepted on condition that they attended the English service in the

chapel on Sundays, which did not always please the Anglicans. It took some time for the arrangements to be made, but Miss McCrindell finally arrived about the end of February 1840 and the school opened the following month. Rule sent several very favourable reports to the Committee about Miss McCrindell and her school.

1839 was Methodism's Centenary year and so plans went ahead in Gibraltar to celebrate the occasion along with the rest of Methodism. On Friday 25 October, after a prayer meeting in the morning, all the children in the schools and Sunday schools, about 400 in number, were assembled in the chapel. They were then marched to the Governor's house, with Rule at their head, accompanied by their teachers and members of the Society. Religious processions were normally banned as likely to be divisive, but on this occasion the Governor, General Sir Alexander Woodford, had given his permission and he and his wife received the party at the Convent where the school choir sang a verse of the National Anthem specially translated into Spanish for the occasion.

The procession continued through the town, out at the Waterport and on to the neutral ground. A white banner was held aloft bearing the inscription '*Hasta aquí el Señor nos ha socorrido*' ('Hitherto the Lord has helped us'). This was carried by Thomas Davis, their oldest member, who rightly deserved this place of honour. One of the youngest members supported him, and the class leaders carried the British Ensign. At the neutral ground a shed had been loaned for the occasion and here the children had tea. Afterwards they moved outside, were formed up in their schools, and "whilst a multitude of inhabitants made a broad circle around us" they sang hymns and Rule spoke to them in Spanish.<sup>25</sup>

After giving three cheers, they marched back through the town to Gunners Parade, surrounded by numerous spectators, parents and friends, and here the children were dismissed. Although the police were in evidence throughout the day, the priests were not, and the day of celebration was enjoyed by all and unmarked by trouble of any kind. The Centenary celebrations continued over the next three days, with prayer meetings, special sermons on the Sunday and a tea meeting on the Monday. A collection in aid of the

Centenary Fund was held and tracts were distributed in Spanish and English.

The procession, however, provoked a negative response from both the Catholics and the Anglicans, and Rule felt it had a direct bearing on events that soon occurred in the army when two soldiers were subjected to persecution. Religious persecution had lessened over the years, and in July 1839 General Lord Hill, Commander-in-Chief, had issued a General Order stating:

Commanding Officers of Regiments are to be particularly attentive that no soldier, being a Roman Catholic, or of any religious persuasion differing from the Established Church, is to be compelled to attend the Divine worship of the Church of England; but that every soldier is to be at full liberty to attend the Worship of Almighty God according to the forms prescribed by his own religion, when military duty does not interfere.<sup>26</sup>

However, little attention seems to have been given to this in Gibraltar and, on 4 November, Rule was informed that two soldiers were under arrest in their barracks, one of them because he was a Methodist. It was already late and the barracks were shut for the night but, before six o'clock the next morning, Rule was at the gates to gain admission as soon as they were opened. He spoke to the men, one of whom was Corporal Henry Nicholson. He was Irish and was born in Eniskillen on 29 September 1817. He may well have enlisted into the 46th regiment in Eniskillen as it was stationed there in 1836 and later moved to Gibraltar. The only previous mention of Nicholson in Gibraltar is in the chapel minute book when he was thanked in September 1839 "for his valuable services in painting the school room and seats." It seems he had been a Methodist for some years and in February 1839 he had been given the post of clerk to the Garrison Chaplain because he was felt to be well qualified for such a job. He appears to have done it very well. He was known to be a Methodist, but his duties meant that he often had to worship within the Church of England. It seems that Major Garrett, temporarily commanding the 46th Regiment, had called all the non-commissioned officers together and let it be known what he thought of Methodism, threatening anyone who attended a Methodist chapel with his displeasure. He singled out Nicholson, accusing him of hypocrisy by pretending to belong to the Church of England

when he was in fact a Methodist. Later in the day he was released from confinement but deprived of his post.

Rule immediately wrote to the Governor to express his concern at Nicholson's treatment, which he felt was "solely and expressly on account of his being a Methodist".<sup>27</sup> The Governor returned his letter, declining to interfere in a military matter but pointing out that Nicholson himself had a right to bring the complaint before him. As the mail packet was about to leave for England, and it was clear that Rule was not going to find any support in Gibraltar, he decided to appeal directly to Lord Hill himself. He therefore wrote to him, stating Nicholson's case, and claiming his right to religious liberty as stated in the General Order. He enclosed copies of the correspondence between himself and the Governor. He informed the Governor of what he had done and sent him a copy of his letter. The Governor therefore had time to delay the mail boat and send his own report and a statement from Major Garrett, but of course Rule did not get a copy of these documents. This meant, however, that all the facts from both sides were presented to Lord Hill at the same time.

The reply from Horse Guards was dated 4 January 1840 and refers to discrepancies in the two accounts of events. The letter quoted the General Order and added that there should be an abstention "in conformity with its spirit and letter, from every measure that might even in appearance, have a tendency to violate the rights of conscience; so long as the conduct of the soldier was in strict accordance with a preservation of good order and discipline".<sup>28</sup> Since this reply seemed to be a positive outcome for Rule, he asked the Governor to make the General Order known to the Garrison which he had not done before. The Governor did not reply to Rule's letter and so Rule read out the letter from Horse Guards to his congregation to inform them of the outcome of his representations. He was then accused of having "spoken contemptibly of Major Garrett".<sup>29</sup> Several members of the Society were interviewed at the Military Secretary's office and the leaders of the church drew up a statement in which they strongly denied that Rule had ever spoken out against Garrett. By this time the Governor had also sent a letter to all the regimental commanding officers forbidding any soldier from being involved in preaching and exhortation, as this "renders

them inefficient for the Service".<sup>30</sup>

Rule was therefore forced to stop his three military local preachers from preaching which left him with only Michael Caulfield, who had become a local preacher in later life and was now rather elderly. This meant his own work-load was even further increased and he did not know how he could keep up the usual services. He decided therefore to write again to Lord Hill seeking his intervention. He pointed out that soldiers had been preaching for many years in Gibraltar without their duties being adversely affected. He was particularly worried about the prohibition of exhortation, being aware that a wide interpretation of this could limit almost any religious activity. Rule also urged the Committee to take up the matter, and all the leaders wrote begging the Committee to act as "the whole of us being either military men, or holding situations under Government, it is impossible for us to address his Lordship directly".<sup>31</sup> Rule reported that the affair had "produced great excitement among our people, and I fear will keep many soldiers from the Chapel".<sup>32</sup>

A reply was received from Horse Guards, but as it really only re-stated the substance of the previous letter it was of little help. Rule therefore wrote at length to the Governor assuming that the decision now rested with him. He was then asked to call at the Military Secretary's office, which he did. He did not see the Governor in person but was shown a written message from him. In this Rule was requested not to communicate further with him on this matter as he was only acting under orders, for it now transpired that the explicit order not to allow officers or soldiers to preach or exhort had actually been issued by Lord Hill, despite his General Order apparently supporting religious freedom. Clearly there was nothing the Governor could do, nor indeed Rule, who only wished he had been aware of all the facts before he had written to Lord Hill. The Governor's message contained many favourable comments about Methodism and the tenor of the meeting was positive, but local preaching could not be allowed. Rule therefore urged the Committee to take up the matter which seemed the only course now open.

By this time Corporal Nicholson had found his position in the army so difficult, because of

continued persecution, that he had bought himself out and Rule gave him a position as a teacher in the schools. He felt that the offer of his help was "peculiarly seasonable" when he had so many calls on his time.<sup>33</sup> The local preachers had to remain silent for some considerable time but there was a positive outcome to the whole affair, as the Governor agreed that Methodist soldiers could now be marched to their own services on Sundays. Then, the following year, he agreed to publish information about Methodist worship in Garrison Orders.

As the repercussions from these events died down, a new threat appeared on the horizon, for once again Lent was approaching bringing with it the likelihood of renewed attacks in Cádiz. Lyon had continued to work there and Rule wrote often of him in glowing terms asking the Committee to recognise his work and recommending him as a candidate for the ministry. He reported that "Brother Lyon is well adapted for the English, as well as for the Spanish work ..... his English sermons have always been very acceptable".<sup>34</sup> They were both pleased therefore in September 1839 to hear that Lyon had been accepted on trial as an assistant missionary and his name duly appeared in the *Minutes of Conference*. Shortly after hearing the news Lyon himself wrote to the Committee to report on the progress of his work in Cádiz.<sup>35</sup> He preached twice every Sunday to a small congregation of Spaniards, only inviting those who were truly interested and proceeding with great caution. He met with a small class of four people. Perez was still teaching nearly fifty children from house to house and once a week Lyon met with about fifteen of them to talk to them about the gospel. Three of them also came to his house for deeper study. He continued to distribute Bibles and tracts whenever possible and preached every Sunday in the bay weather permitting. He found the need for caution necessary but frustrating.

By this time Rule had heard that Palmerston had instructed the acting Minister in Madrid that if any Englishman was prosecuted for interference with the religion of Spain, he was to be left to his fate and could not be offered any protection, which was the substance of the earlier letter to the Bible Society. Rule was most unhappy about this, believing that Palmerston would not have issued such an order had he fully understood the Constitution of

Spain. He wrote to the British Minister and also planned to write to Palmerston. However, it seems that he sent this letter to England for printing and when the Committee discovered this they put a stop to it and reprimanded Rule. Rule continued to insist that things were settling down in Spain, that the civil war was coming to an end and their way was opening up, but he did acknowledge that Palmerston's orders put Lyon in a vulnerable position.

In December 1839 Rule reported that he had been confined to the house for four weeks with a badly ulcerated leg. Lyon had had to come to Gibraltar to help him. This had given them an opportunity to discuss the work in Cádiz which they felt could now be expanded. The work continued and Lyon kept in close touch with Rule who reported to the Committee in March 1840 that all was going well and that Lyon had recently had "a famous congregation" which had included the Vice Consul from Port St. Mary.<sup>36</sup>

However, on 6 April 1840, Lyon arrived in Gibraltar having been ordered out of Cádiz. It seems that a temporary Alcalde had watched Lyon's house and, when he knew several people were assembled in it, he had demanded entry and later reported the matter to a higher authority, stating that Lyon had been about to preach to the people. Lyon had therefore been charged with breaking the law and the Royal Order which prohibited Rule from holding meetings in his house was also used to justify this action. Lyon had liaised with the Consul and informed Rule of developments. He had ordered him to stay in Cádiz unless he was expelled by force or given a written order of expulsion. The Governor of Cádiz did give him such a document, which he received from the Consul, and so he felt he had no choice but to leave. Rule wrote to the Committee to inform them of these events and to ask for their instructions. He also enclosed a copy of a letter he had written to Lord Palmerston and he hoped they would not disapprove of his action in doing so. In this he stated the history of events in Cádiz, argued for protection against obsolete laws which were inconsistent with the Constitution of Spain, and stated the case of the British seamen now left without the preaching they had enjoyed for over three years.

Later in April Rule visited Cádiz himself reporting that ten adults and five youths were

meeting in class, openly declaring themselves to be Methodists. On Sunday 26 April, fifteen to eighteen people gathered together for prayer but, just as Rule was speaking to them, an Alcalde arrived. Rule met him on the stairs to give the group time to conceal the books and themselves if necessary. One person, who was in public employment, wisely went on to the roof. The rest remained and their names were taken. Rule placed Margarita Barea, his former servant who was of "a most courageous, fervent and devoted spirit" in charge with Josefa Martínez, described as "heroic", as her assistant.<sup>37</sup> He arranged to send them a weekly pastoral letter "to contain the substance of a sermon" to be read out on Sundays when they met together, and Rule continued to do this until he left Gibraltar. The group planned to change venues to avoid detection and hoped to continue the work of tract distribution.

On his way to the steamer Rule preached to about fifty people on board a ship in the bay. It later transpired that the authorities were planning to arrest him, but were detained at a bullfight on the Sunday afternoon and so, when they arrived on the Monday morning, they discovered that he had already left. However, an inventory was taken of all the property in the house and Rule feared for a time that this would be seized.

In May Margarita Barea was ordered to appear at the police office where she was fined for providing Rule with lodgings and for having permitted him to hold meetings in her house. She was willing to go to prison as she did not have the money to pay the fine and she refused to recant saying that even "if they would give me millions of money, I could not give up such a lovely religion as that which is engraven on my heart."<sup>38</sup> Friends lent her the money so she avoided prison and Rule later re-imbursed this, as well as the amount of the three or four fines which were imposed on others. A letter of support and encouragement was sent from all the leaders in Gibraltar, led by Allen, to their "Brothers and Sisters in Christ" in Cádiz, urging them to persevere in prayer and Bible study.<sup>39</sup>

By this time it was clear that the Committee was not happy with some of Rule's actions for a letter dated May 1840 to Rule has survived. Displeasure had apparently been expressed

before about his earlier attempt to write to Palmerston and about his letters to Lord Hill. The Committee was therefore most unhappy that he had written to Palmerston on this occasion and instructed him clearly that in the future he must do everything through official channels, by going through the Committee itself, and he was firmly told that the Committee "will not submit that any Missionary should in despite of rule and remonstrance proceed in this way".<sup>40</sup> Rule was unrepentant, claiming that the Committee had not previously given him such explicit instructions and that he had not therefore disobeyed orders. As the other outgoing correspondence has not survived an objective assessment is not possible. However, in his reply Rule stated that he would regard "the injunction in the last letter as binding", but he did not go on to obey the rest of the instructions in the letter.<sup>41</sup> Rule was ordered to sell the furniture in Cádiz and give up the work there. Earlier in the year he had been informed that another missionary was to be sent but now he was told that he and Lyon were to be the two missionaries for Gibraltar. They were both ordered to keep to the station and not to visit Spain at all. Rule was also informed that the Missionary Society funds were in such a poor state that expansion anywhere was now impossible.

Instead of obeying the instructions about Cádiz Rule continued to argue the case for a missionary to be there. He sent on a petition in the names of 489 seamen and residents of Cádiz asking for a continuation of the ministry that had been given to them. Rule felt the number would have been even greater if they had had more time to collect signatures. He sent the Committee a copy of the reply he received from the Foreign Office, on behalf of Palmerston, which made it clear that it was unlikely that there would be any objection to work among the seamen in Cádiz. The problem was, of course, that neither Rule nor Lyon had confined themselves to this work and would not now be in a position to do so when they had so many Spanish contacts and converts. Rule asked the Committee to reconsider its decision and perhaps send a new missionary. He did not therefore inform the people in Cádiz that the station was to be given up and reported them to be "full of courage, hope and confidence, and in an admirable spirit".<sup>42</sup>

The months went by without further instructions though Rule continued to put the case for

Cádiz, arguing that Spain was undergoing further changes with more hope of religious liberty, and that the people in Cádiz were confident that the Committee would not desert them. Eventually in the autumn Rule was reminded that the Missionary Committee was very short of funds. In fact they had a debt of £30,000, so there was no hope whatever of any expansion of the work. Rule was asked to write an appeal on behalf of the Mission in Gibraltar and Spain which he did at some length, but it is not clear if this was ever used. He even pursued the possibility of employing a native agent in Cádiz, but without success, and towards the end of the year he was finally ordered to close the mission. Rule expressed his anguish at being ordered to do this by saying that he had been placed "in the most distressing situation in which a missionary can be placed. I am persuaded that this suppression of an infant church, and abandonment of a perishing people is not sanctioned by God. The Committee acts under its own impression that my zeal has gone beyond knowledge - that my precipitancy ought to be checked - that this door is shut against us".<sup>43</sup> He did not agree, and so did not immediately obey, using one more last delaying tactic by stating: "if by four weeks from this time I should hear the Committee are determined to cast off those whom God has given them in Spain, and who are now under my pastoral charge, and think themselves to be in communion with our church, I will endeavour to do what is required of me". But if this was the case he asked to be allowed to return to England.

The Committee did not change its mind about Cádiz, but agreed to Rule's request to return to England which he suggested should be effected at the next Conference. He also suggested that his successor would need to come before he left, to familiarise himself with the work and to learn Spanish. Rule went to Cádiz in January 1841 to sort out affairs there. He reported that the school and oratory furniture would have only fetched a nominal sum, so he had arranged for its storage instead! He met twelve people in class, and they continued to meet every Sunday at noon to pray and read his weekly letter. They also met for reading and prayer every Thursday. He asked for permission to make a quarterly visit to give out the class tickets. Margarita Barea wrote to the Committee, and a separate letter signed by fifteen Spaniards was sent stating their gratitude for the truths they had been taught, their desire to persevere in faith and a plea for further help.

By this time the work in Madrid had also come to an end. When Dowty left Madrid it was clear that the Committee had doubts about the viability of operations there. Rule, being aware of this, explored the possibility of having Marin working alongside him in Gibraltar. However, the Governor would not grant permission for him to live on the Rock on the grounds that he had received orders from England to "sanction nothing that might seem unfriendly to the Papists".<sup>44</sup> So, by October 1839, Marin had returned to Madrid in the hope of being able to build up a school there, trying to rebuild the contacts he had made before. However, by the end of November, Rule reported that he was no longer as satisfied with Marin as he had been. He urged him to more decisive action but began to feel that Marin was not qualified to set up an establishment on his own. Rule was still reluctant to give up Madrid as there had been no persecution there, but finally decided that it would be best for Marin to go to Cádiz, even though he was a little anxious that this might provoke opposition from the priests there. However, when Marin did not reply to his letter suggesting this plan, he concluded that he had ceased to correspond with him and from February 1840 he stopped sending his allowance. Rule had previously warned him that he could not be supported by the Missionary Society if he did not act.

Towards the end of February 1840 Marin wrote directly to the Committee. He reported that life had become difficult for him in Madrid but he had been unable to obtain a passport for Cádiz, being known as a heretic. The authorities would only issue one for his home town of Valencia and he had therefore gone there. He also reported that "in consequence of the old laws being revived, every Spaniard must be a Catholic".<sup>45</sup> He had therefore been imprisoned on the order of the archbishop in a convent in Valencia where he had been forced into writing a profession of faith which was likely to be published. He claimed, however, that he still held the real truth in his heart. He did have the support of a few friends, one of whom wrote to Rule and stressed that the profession of faith had been "extorted from him by violence, that no regard whatever is to be paid to it".<sup>46</sup> Rule was not sure why Marin had left Madrid and a letter he had written to Rule seems to have gone astray as did Rule's letter containing the January allowance. Rule did not now feel it appropriate to send Marin money as he felt he would have no use for it in prison but assured

his friend that if he could be "extricated from that situation and will honestly disown the involuntary act he has committed" he would pay him his salary.<sup>47</sup> He told the Committee that he felt he could not acknowledge "an agent who does not seem to have resisted the solicitations and threatenings of the priesthood, who according to the constitution of the country, could not have deprived him of his liberty, if he had appealed against them as he did with perfect success on a former occasion".<sup>48</sup> He did add that it grieved him to have to act in this way towards one whom he regarded with brotherly affection. However, once again Rule based his arguments on the Constitution of Spain rather than its laws, and seems to forget that Marin was in a very different position from himself being a Spaniard. He had suffered severe anxiety for years which had affected his physical health. He had also been much perturbed by the events in Cádiz affecting an Englishman, who was in a much more secure position than he was as a Spaniard. He had no protection whatsoever against the legal processes of Spain should his fellow countrymen choose to enforce them.

Marin's friend wrote again to Rule and requested some financial help which Rule felt he could not send. Then in April, after being released from prison, Marin wrote to Rule himself. This was a coherent and reasonable letter in which he stated his distress at the belief that he had only wished to receive money. He reminded Rule of all he had given up and lost and was sorry that he had not lived up to expectations but felt that circumstances were against him. He did not believe that there was civil or religious liberty in Spain, although he hoped that one day there would be. He had "embraced a cause which, according to my conscience is just and true. It is my own choice".<sup>49</sup> He did not ask for money but Rule sent him some anyway. He was clearly impressed with this letter and asked the Committee if they would get permission for Marin to live in Gibraltar. There was now a precedent for this as an agent of the Christian Knowledge Society had been granted permission. However, the Committee instructed Rule to close the connection with Marin authorising him to send a parting gift if he wished. It is not clear what exactly happened to Marin. There was further contact from him in 1844 when he wrote to the Committee from Madrid sending the prospectus of a Spanish academy of ecclesiastical sciences which he thought would be of interest to the Missionary Society. He also asked if employment could

be found for him. The Committee was unable to offer him a job but did send him £5. In 1855, George Alton, who was then the missionary in Gibraltar, met Marin and commented: "I believe he continues faithful to the convictions which have subjected him to so many long years of persecution", but he does not say what Marin was doing in Madrid and what finally happened to him is not known.<sup>50</sup>

Jenkins, in his biography of Borrow, commented:

The Marin episode is amazing. The object of distributing the Scriptures was to enlighten men's minds and bring about conversion, and a priest was a distinct capture, more valuable by far than a peasant, and likely to influence others; yet when they had got him no one appears to have known exactly what to do, and all were anxious to get rid of him again.<sup>51</sup>

He was not aware of the continuing connection between Marin and Rule but even so there is some truth in what he said. It was one thing to convert people but an entirely different thing to know what to do with them. The zeal and enthusiasm, perhaps particularly of Rule, seems to have hindered an understanding of the reality of the situation. Spain was not ready to accept Protestant converts, there was no freedom of religion, and as events were to show this was a state of affairs that was to continue for a very long time.

When the Carlist War ended in 1839 the more moderate liberals (*moderados*) returned to power. However, their government was short-lived, as another revolution took place in 1840, under the leadership of General Baldomero Espartero. He became regent after the queen regent abdicated and the more radical liberals (*progresistas*) thus came back to power. Reform of the Spanish Church continued and, in September 1841, a law was passed ordering the sale of some of the Church's property. Collection of the tithe was abolished and the Church's wealth was further eroded. The State then undertook to pay clerical salaries thus establishing a greater control of the Church. Priests were expected to be loyal to the government and had to have a loyalty certificate (*atestado*) from the local governors. However, none of these measures was aimed at attacking the actual practice of Catholicism, and there is some evidence that a religious revival took place after 1840. Callahan reported

that defence of the faith became a rallying cry and that *El Catolico*, in February 1841, published a proposal for the formation of a Catholic Association "to defend the Catholic religion which is designated as the religion of the Spains in the fundamental code of the nation".<sup>52</sup> Although this did not happen then it is an indication of the way in which the Church was beginning to respond to the attacks made upon it.

So, for the time being, the work in Spain had come to an end and Rule and Lyon had to confine their activities to the work in Gibraltar. In July 1840 another son, Ulric Zuinglius, was born to the Rules and hopefully helped to ease their sorrow at their previous losses. Rule sorted out a number of issues relating specifically to the English side of the work. He refused to pay the tax levied on the chapel because other places of worship were exempt. He continued to fight for soldiers' rights. In September 1841 young sergeant Weatherburne died and the military chaplain made the arrangements for his funeral. Rule intervened and the Governor supported him so that he was enabled to carry out the funeral himself. He recorded the incident in the chapel minute book as proof that Methodist ministers could not "be excluded from the performance of any part of their duty". When a marriage law was passed in England allowing Methodists to officiate at weddings, Rule claimed and won the right to do so in Gibraltar. The first marriage he conducted took place on 16 April 1840 when Henry Richard Nicholson, aged 23, married Mary Pottash, aged 17. At some time a Presbyterian Church was begun in Gibraltar under its first minister, William Strauchan. The official guide to the present day St. Andrew's Church of Scotland gives his date of ministry as starting in January 1840. He was clearly in Gibraltar before then as he was a member of the Bible Society's Corresponding Committee as early as July 1838, and he remained actively committed to its work while he lived on the Rock. Rule allowed him the use of the Methodist chapel on Sunday afternoons as the presbyterians did not then have a chapel of their own.

So the English work continued but it sustained a great loss in the autumn of 1841 when Thomas Davis died, at the age of 73. He was buried by Rule on 19 October. His death was not noted in the minute book or reported to the Committee. He had not attended a leaders'

meeting since April 1839 although he had taken part in the Centenary celebrations, but after that the only mention of his name was as a trustee of the property, so he may have been ill for some time. It seems that he had been a drummer boy in the Great Siege and that he had worked in the sail loft in Gibraltar but his contribution to Methodism had been immense. So his death should be marked for, apart from the difficulties experienced during the ministry of Owen Rees, he had given much to the cause in Gibraltar, as class leader, trustee and local preacher sometimes taking sole leadership responsibility in the absence of any minister. The church might well have had to close at times without him and his faith, loyalty and commitment provided a strong foundation and example on which future generations could and did build.

Meanwhile, the question of Lyon's status had not been resolved, as he was still designated as assistant missionary. In June 1840 Rule passed on to the Committee a request from Lyon that he be allowed to go to England soon to be examined and ordained. He had a brother who was a missionary who was temporarily in England and another brother who was ill and so he was anxious to see his family. There is no account of any answer to this request and Rule does not mention Lyon again at all until April 1841, when he commented on the situation in Gibraltar before Conference and the decisions that would be made there regarding the station. He reported Lyon's services as invaluable as regards the daily work with the schools expanding, but added:

As an English preacher he is equal to many, but not at all calculated to keep a congregation. As a Spanish preacher I can scarcely at all employ him, beyond addressing the schools. He can engage the esteem of persons in conversations and visits, but he cannot preach acceptably a Spanish sermon. I necessarily state this as if you should remove me under the impression that he can attend to the foreign congregation, the Committee will be disappointed, and the work fail.<sup>53</sup>

This was the first time that Rule had made any critical comments about Lyon who at various times had been left in sole charge in Cádiz and of the Spanish work in Gibraltar. Indeed he had often sent glowing reports of his abilities and progress to the Committee. He and Rule

had worked together for nearly six years, and it is hard to believe that in all that time Rule's judgement of him had been wrong. By this time, Rule seemed less keen to leave Gibraltar and it is possible that these comments were made to justify the need for him to stay. He certainly stressed the need for the superintendent to be able to speak Spanish. In his next letter he said that he had urged Lyon to request that he be allowed to go to England for examination and ordination and that he hoped the Committee's approval of him would justify his own good report. He spoke positively of Lyon's advances in study, his good character and the fact that he was "now more than ever devoted to his work".<sup>54</sup> He was, however, anxious about the timing of the visit and had suggested the request be made now to give the Committee time to find a suitable person to come out, for he felt Lyon could not be away until another worker had come. His health was not very good and Lyon was "a hard-working man with a healthy constitution, and our principal school, and many other matters, are stayed by his diligence".

It is not clear in this letter what Rule was thinking about his own appointment for, although he refers to his removal, he also wondered if he might be honoured with a life time appointment in that region as Spain was open to them! He also referred to the possibility that another worker might be sent to work with him and learn Spanish presumably before taking over, adding that such an appointment would greatly refresh him, and enable Lyon to visit England. Yet he ought to have known that it was unlikely that a third worker would be appointed for Rule, along with all missionaries, had been informed of the £30,000 debt and urged to make the strictest economies. The Committee had stressed that no expansion could take place anywhere until the debt had been cleared and were taking steps in England to raise the money to do this. Perhaps Rule's deteriorating health affected his judgement. He seemed unable to accept that Spain was closed to them and, as events would show, seemed unable also to accept the need for economy.

Lyon did write to give his reasons for wanting to return to England.<sup>55</sup> He had not done so before because he had not wanted to cause any inconvenience and was happy to leave the decision to the Committee. As he had not been brought up a Methodist, he thought a visit

would be helpful to enable him to learn more about Methodism and, as he was likely to continue working in Mission schools, he thought it would also provide an opportunity to learn more about educational methods in England. He particularly wanted to meet the Committee as he was working under their direction and authority. He also believed that it was an advantage for a missionary to be married, so that the wife could take an active part in the work alongside her husband, and he hoped to look for a wife. Finally he reported that since he had left home both his parents and a brother and sister had died. His remaining sister was not well. His missionary brother was about to leave for India and he thought this might be the last opportunity to meet him in this life.

In July 1841 Rule reported that Lyon was anxious to know the Committee's decision. He too wanted to know what decisions had been made about appointments. He was far from well and was not sure he should spend another summer in Gibraltar. He felt that, if his successor did not come until he left, a lot of his work would be undone. Then in September, before anything further had been heard, Rule informed the Committee that Lyon had left Gibraltar. He reported that "since his return from Cádiz, a nearer acquaintance and closer observation had led me to hope less confidently for his usefulness as a Minister of the Gospel",<sup>56</sup> and so he had told Lyon that he could no longer recommend him as a candidate for the ministry. He had not changed his opinion about "his diligence in teaching etc. and the strict propriety of his moral character". He denied that they had had any sort of argument and when Lyon had requested Rule's written permission to return to England at his own expense he had given it to him. Rule did not want to prefer any charges against him, stated that he had not dismissed him but he remained silent as to the details merely saying that "he is not qualified for the office of Pastor". He was prepared to give more information if requested. He now felt his work load was impossible, but did not express any regret at Lyon's departure.

The leaders then wrote to the Committee saying that they did not want Lyon back "in consequence of his very incautious and unprudent conversations with many members of the Society .... giving existence to a partizanship to the prejudice of Mr. Rule's character rather

than to spread the Gospel".<sup>57</sup> They went on to state "We do not wish unnecessarily to prejudice Mr. Lyon's case, and therefore use the mildest language possible" but they nevertheless felt his return would be injurious. Presumably they had had enough of divisions.

The Committee do not seem to have asked Rule for more information but they did receive two unsolicited letters on Lyon's behalf which shed some light on what had happened. One was from Guilbert, a former leader of the church and a trustee who was clearly distressed by what he believed was Lyon's betrayal by Rule. He felt that the members of the Society would all support Lyon if they were asked for their opinion.<sup>58</sup> The other was from Captain Robert Steward who had been a Methodist for over twenty years and had been sailing between London, Gibraltar and Cádiz for the previous eight years and, as he therefore knew both parties involved, he felt he was well qualified to speak. It was on his ship that the Rules and Dowty had travelled to Cádiz from England when he had observed Rule's "overbearing spirit" for himself. Lyon had often preached on his ship at Cádiz and he had watched over him "with all the tenderness and anxiety of a parent".<sup>59</sup> He stated his high opinion of Lyon and that he felt Rule had been jealous of him. He also believed that Rule had tried to hold him back since he had left Cádiz:

It so frustrated the plans of the Great little man that he never since could look on Mr Lyon with complacency although it did not nor would it have failed in Mr. Lyon's hands, it is generally believed had Mr. Rule never come to Cádiz we might have had a Mission here to this day. Mr. Rule thought of ruling these Spaniards, but they are not to be ruled but led.

Rule certainly was displeased with Lyon for leaving Cádiz, for sometime later he wrote:

I had instructed him to act as seamen's missionary, and to refuse obedience to any *irregular* order from a Spanish authority alone, beyond suspending meetings with Spaniards, if that became necessary, but to claim his rightful freedom to minister to his fellow countrymen in the Bay. Had he followed this plain course he could not have been easily expelled, but he did not even mention his vocation as missionary to seamen.<sup>60</sup>

Rule was clearly not a man to be crossed and Lyon may well have been indiscreet in his comments about him, but it seems a real tragedy that, after all this time, Lyon was lost to the work. He had laboured long and hard, wherever he was sent, without complaining. He had never had a holiday, had suffered grievous losses amongst his family in England and had always earned Rule's praises until he was ordered out of Cádiz.

It seems that the Committee did plan to send Lyon back to Gibraltar which Rule could not understand as he had not been asked for a report on him. He therefore wrote using stronger language about his "moral unfitness" for the work of a minister.<sup>61</sup> A few weeks later the leaders also wrote to say that they did not want him back. So Lyon did not return. His name does not again appear in the *Minutes of Conference*, so he could not have been ordained. There is no further information about what happened to this man who had worked so hard for Methodism both in Gibraltar and Cádiz. One can only hope he was able to see his brother and that he found other satisfying work.

Lyon's going did, of course, enormously increase Rule's workload. The Spanish services had to be suspended as Rule could not carry out the usual four English services and two Spanish services on a Sunday. The weekly Spanish service was also suspended. There were only two local preachers as the military were still banned from preaching. It is not clear when this ban was finally lifted as there was no further correspondence on this subject but it unlikely that it was during Rule's time in Gibraltar.

In the summer of 1841 there had been another loss, because Miss McCrindell became ill and it soon became obvious that she would have to return to England. She planned to return at her own expense, as she had not been there for three years, and she also refunded her passage money out which was thus available for her successor's passage. Rule had always reported very favourably on her work and her school had attracted some more respectable people to their English congregation. The school paid for itself, because it was fee paying, and so Rule was very anxious to find a suitable successor, especially as the Civil Chaplain had recently set up a similar school in opposition to theirs. Miss McCrindell was willing to

continue as long as possible and efforts were made to find a suitable successor to teach "a sound English education, including Geography, Astronomy, History and Ornamental Needle Work" and preferably a language as well.<sup>62</sup> A suitable young lady, from St. Ives in Cornwall, was found but the Committee did not appoint her as they could not pay for her passage. Rule was furious because he had told them of the refunded passage money, but when Miss McCrindell left the school was closed.

However, by this time, relationships between Rule and the Committee had become even more strained. At the beginning of 1841 when he sent the accounts for the previous year Rule wrote:

I had anticipated the pleasure of drawing up a report accompanying the accounts which would have represented the Gibraltar station as in a prosperous, and most interesting condition, but on turning over the letters received since my return from Cádiz, I find that I stand so far out of the estimation of the Committee as a prudent or judicious missionary, that I cannot be expected to suggest any favourable report of my labours. Still, I will spend and be spent in the cause which is so dear to me, and enjoy an approval which fills me with confidence in the daily discharge of my various duties.<sup>63</sup>

But he still continued to act without seeking the approval of the Committee first.

In June 1841 Rule announced that he had "set up another branch of our Mission in Spain" and hoped that the Committee would not censure him for doing so, although he must have known that it would as he was directly disobeying his orders to stay on the station. This involved Henry Nicholson, now out of the army and working in the schools. Rule described him as a "warm Irish lad, a fervent Christian and most willing and docile servant" who "had worked in the hot atmosphere of day and night schools, much beyond his strength, so that he was laid up sick."<sup>64</sup> By reorganising the schools he could dispense with Nicholson's services there without incurring additional cost and he had therefore sent him to Algeciras, with his wife and young son, Richard Francis, who had been born in February 1841. The plan for Algeciras had been formed with the main Alcalde, the chief civil authority there, so

that

Mr. Nicholson should receive from him sanction, (license is not required) to establish himself there as 'Professor of the English Language'. That he should teach at low prices so as to obtain a larger number of pupils. That he should watch every opportunity to enlarge the circle of his operations, but should at first chiefly labour to form connexions. And that I should take the sole superintendence of his proceedings, with the concurrence of the civil authority, by whose advice from time to time we might be so guided as to avoid any infraction of existing laws respecting public instruction, and be protected from the opposition of the parish priest, who declared at the same time that he would do his utmost to frustrate our plans, and this in obedience to the repeated commands of the Bishop of Cádiz to be on the watch against me and my emissaries.

Nicholson received the same allowance as he had in Gibraltar with the addition of \$4 a month for house rent. He had taken his own furniture but was already making \$8 or \$9 a month which soon rose to \$15. He was making good progress with learning Spanish and Rule felt this "cheap agency, likely to pay itself, might be adopted more extensively in Spain, and would serve as a seminary for missionaries".<sup>65</sup> Rule had clearly not given up his hopes for Spain and was paying a weekly visit to Nicholson which was in direct disobedience to his orders from the Committee to stay in Gibraltar. They may have sanctioned a quarterly visit to Cádiz and in July 1841 Rule went there, having missed the previous quarter. He had given class tickets to thirteen people and preached there as usual. He was convinced the door to Cádiz was wide open and later reported that he had found people willing to offer financial support to a missionary school-master in Cádiz if the Committee would appoint someone.

Nicholson continued to work in Algeciras and for the next two quarters, on 5 July and 24 October 1841, the membership statistics in the chapel minute book record two members there, presumably Nicholson and his wife. But the parish priest soon began to oppose him quoting the Royal Order against Rule which he claimed should be put into effect as Nicholson was under Rule's influence. Despite the support he did have in some quarters, Nicholson was arrested in the street one mid-day and imprisoned. After a night in prison he

was marched at bayonet point to the border and thus escorted back to Gibraltar. Presumably his wife and son followed, after what must have been an anxious night for them. Rule does not seem to have informed the Committee of these developments, unless his letter has gone astray, but he remarked in November 1841 that he had received "another unmerited censure" although it is not clear what it was for.<sup>66</sup> However, it is very unlikely that the Committee would have approved of the attempted work in Algeciras and he may well not have wanted to add fuel to the fire, by describing its failure.

By then Rule was in further trouble for having purchased a property at the South, which he had bought in January 1841, for the sum of \$650, to be held for Conference by a body of trustees. He claimed the Committee had provisionally sanctioned the plan and, as the money needed to purchase the land and to build on it would all be raised in Gibraltar, it would cost the Missionary Society nothing and would eventually bring in a profit. In addition to this expense, Rule had ordered the printing of his Spanish Gospels with commentary, knowing that he did not have the means to pay for it. He asked the Committee for a loan, offering his library as collateral. They refused and in the end the printing costs of \$2,000 were added to the cost of the new venture at the South and loans were sought to cover the whole amount. Rule did commit himself to pay the \$2,000 back and was not therefore expecting the Society to pay, but nevertheless it added to their financial burden, when they still had a debt on the main chapel. Steward in his letter about Lyon reported that every time he visited Gibraltar all he heard about was "the pride and extravagance of Mr. Rule. And really they have a just cause of complaint, he is so burdening them with debt and so determined in his ways that all the Trustees can say to him cannot drive him from his purpose".<sup>67</sup>

The purchase of the property at the South actually caused several problems. The Governor refused to sanction the names of the trustees suggested by Rule and so he bought the property in his own name. This meant that these official Methodist premises were legally owned by Rule. Methodism would certainly not have approved of that. The purchase committed the Society to an enormous debt which they tried to cover through lots of loans,

both large and small, and there are many receipts in the church archives today relating to these. The cost was so great that in August Rule did, after all, have to ask the Committee for help. He stressed he was only asking for a loan and not a grant. The property was really quite extensive. It consisted of a large building containing two rooms measuring fifty feet by twenty five feet to be used as school room and chapel. There were three dwelling houses to provide rent and another building had been converted into a house for a "gentleman's family" which had already been let for \$16 a month.<sup>68</sup> The total cost of purchase and building had come to \$7,650 plus the \$2,000 for his commentary, about £2,000. He had managed to raise \$4,350 leaving \$3,300 to find. He wrote again about two weeks later to say that an instalment of \$800 was due and if he could not pay it he would be fined \$500, the work would have to stop and the credit of the Mission would be ruined.

Although the Committee's reply has not survived, it is clear from Rule's letters that his proceedings had not met with approval. He was acting in a very independent way and seemed to have forgotten that he was under the authority and discipline of the Missionary Society, who would have been in real difficulties if all their missionaries had acted in this way. They had instructed Rule to economise and did not have the money to help him now. In his reply he referred to the "mingling of kindness towards myself and evident misunderstandings of my proceedings and of the character and exigencies of this Mission strengthens my convictions that both yourselves and the Committee are misled by other representations than those of my letters".<sup>69</sup> He went on to say, "With your views of my proceedings (inexact as I feel them to be) you ought to provide another missionary, and I, for my part, ought not to consent to occupy a station which has suffered severely by a withdrawal of your sympathies from my best and really most useful efforts". He ended the letter by saying, "In resigning my connexion with the Missionary Committee I retain a heightened feeling of love to the work itself, and unutterable compassion for the scattered, fainting flock in Spain".

Rule does not seem to feel that he had done anything wrong at all and at this stage one cannot help wondering about his state of mind. He was clearly physically unwell and he had

pushed himself extremely hard during his years in Gibraltar. His wife had been ill and two of their children had died. Perhaps he was simply burnt out. There is sometimes a note of desperation in his letters particularly when writing about Spain. He felt he was a lone voice and indeed he was. He could not accept the Committee's ruling to cease activities in Spain, and this may well have affected his dealings with Lyon. He seemed unable also to accept the Committee's request for economy and, whereas a property in the South was a desirable means of extending their work there, it was an enormous expense and involved them in overseeing properties which were of no direct use to the Mission other than in providing an income. Rule did not inform the Committee that the original grant of the property had been made on the condition that a dairy would be provided on the site and it seems that this condition still applied.

Rule did manage to raise further loans in Gibraltar but there was worse to come for Solomon Benlisha, the previous owner, complained first to Rule and then to the Committee about the way the property had been sold. After all this time it is hard to be sure of the exact facts of the case but the land was first granted to Benlisha on 6 October 1829 for 31 years for the purpose of establishing a dairy. The ground was divided into two with a road running through it, the lower part being garden ground and containing a well of sweet water. As a result of the cost of building, and establishing the dairy, Benlisha had mortgaged the property to a Mr. Grain. In February 1840 a Methodist family was taken in by Benlisha as the husband was ill and had been advised to live at the South. He later died but, during his illness, Rule visited him and, having seen the land, asked if he could buy some of it. It seems at first that he and Benlisha reached an agreement but then did not proceed because of difficulties over the price and the complications caused by the mortgage. So Rule dropped out but, when he accidentally met Grain in the street, he suggested that if Rule bought the whole property at a price fixed by an independent valuer he would foreclose the mortgage. He had already taken Benlisha to court for failure to repay the mortgage and the property had apparently been transferred to Grain unless Benlisha paid up by a due date. As he had not paid Grain was legally entitled to do what he did, but one can see why Benlisha was aggrieved, as he had not wanted to lose the whole of what he

regarded as his property. However, although the property was sold at public auction, it seems Rule and Grain had come to a private agreement that if it went for more than the valuation fee of \$650 Grain would refund the money, and if for less Rule would make up the difference. Rule insisted that no secret was made of this agreement and that it was drawn up by Grain's lawyer, because he was regarded as the real purchaser. It did mean though that no one else had a hope of purchasing the property and Benlisha claimed his friends bid as far as \$1,220 but under this arrangement had no hope of securing it, and it was knocked down to Rule for \$1,240 although he only actually paid the \$650.

The whole sorry affair was one the Committee could have done without. Benlisha was at fault as he had never attempted to pay anything towards the mortgage. Rule may not have acted illegally but his agreement with Grain does sound rather unethical. The Governor did sanction the sale and Rule offered to let Benlisha stay in his property as a tenant at a very low monthly rent which he declined. Benlisha actually called at the Mission House in London to discuss his complaint with the Committee but was apparently told that, as they had no part or interest in the property, there was nothing they could do. Rule was surprised by this as he did not regard himself as the owner but said he would accept it as a "treasure trove", adding that he and his family would benefit from the income derived from the property in years to come!<sup>70</sup>

In March 1842 Rule reported that "a beautiful congregation is now established at the South".<sup>71</sup> The school there was still functioning but the girls' teacher, Mary Ann Deacon, wife of Richard Deacon the boys' teacher, had died at the age of 28. Just over two months later their baby son of five months also died. Deacon did continue to teach but moved to the town school, and Henry and Mary Nicholson took over the schools at the South.

Nothing further had been heard of a successor for Rule and he became more and more concerned about how he could cope through another summer. In May he reported that his son Barrow had a disease of his knee joint and that the doctors thought the leg would have to be amputated. He sent a medical certificate in which the doctor stated that a change of

climate was necessary for the safety of the limb and to obtain a professional opinion in London. Finally, in June, Rule reported that he planned to return on 14 July. "I have no strength left and dare not venture any longer".<sup>72</sup> He regretted taking this step but felt that the Committee had had abundant time to provide for the station and was clearly worried that he could not survive much longer in Gibraltar.

Rule did leave in July as planned and thus his ten year ministry in Gibraltar came to an end. He had achieved a great deal during this time, very ably supported by his wife. For the first time the missionary's wife was not just a support but had a distinctive role of her own in the girls' schools. Certainly these years showed just how important a person the missionary's wife was. As a result of their work, Methodism now occupied a very different place in the life of Gibraltar than it had before. Maybe only a person with Rule's determination, energy and zeal could have achieved this but, had these qualities been tempered with a little more humility and understanding, fewer people might have been hurt. The cost to himself, and to his family, was enormous and he may well have left Gibraltar a broken man. He was certainly physically unwell and does not seem to have been thinking very rationally. He remained unable to face the truth about prospects in Spain, maintaining until the end that the country was open to evangelisation. He was also unable to accept that any of his actions had been wrong, even when he was disobeying the Committee's orders. The Committee was not without fault. Instructions and correspondence had been so infrequent at times that Rule had been forced to act without waiting to hear from London, but latterly he did not even seem to make an attempt to gain permission before acting. He probably did not intend to leave Gibraltar permanently, but the Committee would not agree to his return and he never served abroad again. It seems sad that he was lost to missionary work because he had a missionary heart but the relationship between him and the Committee had been very badly damaged. He did visit Gibraltar again in later life and retained a keen interest in missionary work, particularly in Spain, all his life.

Once back in England Rule served in a variety of appointments, the first of which at Manningtree only lasted a year. One suspects it was not a happy time for he said, "I was

not well prepared for the prescribed movements of a Circuit at home, and the manifold exigencies of official discipline".<sup>73</sup> He continued to write and for six years became one of the Connexional Editors. Other children were born to the Rules including a daughter. Ulric Zuinglius became a minister in the Church of England and served for many years in Newfoundland. Another son became a Roman Catholic. Barrow seems to have fully regained his health but a younger brother, Philip Melancthon, had a rather weak constitution. From May 1857 until August 1865 Rule was stationed at Aldershot where "his crowning work was done for the British Army" in securing religious liberty for soldiers. "For this Dr. Rule fought bravely and long; encountering strong opposition, and displaying the rare and peculiar grace that distinguished him in the correspondence it involved".<sup>74</sup>

After Aldershot, Rule served for three years in Plymouth and became a supernumerary in 1868 after 43 years in the active ministry. He and his wife with two of their children then moved to Croydon and in 1872 Rule retired fully. After a distressing illness of some weeks Mary Ann Rule died on 26 February 1873 surrounded by family and friends. Rule married again the following year. He continued to write and a number of books were published. In 1880 he finally finished his translation of the whole of the New Testament in Spanish and was enabled to print it by a grant from the Missionary Society. He completed his autobiography in 1886. He died on 25 September 1890 at Addiscombe, Croydon, aged nearly 88 years. He was described in his obituary as a "man of prayer", "esteemed as a preacher" and whose "perseverance and industry were extraordinary. His character was of exceptional force. To those who watched his public work he seemed the embodiment of militant aggressiveness; but those who knew him best discerned the depth of his piety, and the gentleness of his greatness".<sup>75</sup>

## **CHAPTER NINE THE END OF HOPES FOR SPAIN - A New Emphasis Instead (1842 onwards)**

When Rule left Gibraltar the first attempts to establish Methodist missionary work in Spain came to a definite end. Although he had been forced out of San Roque, Cádiz and Algeciras and the work in Madrid had never got off the ground, Rule remained convinced that Spain was still an open door. Perhaps he was blinded by his own hopes and enthusiasm and by the fact that many Spaniards did talk to him freely and seemed interested in his message, but he continued to base his arguments on the Constitution of Spain and to ignore the fact that the Spanish authorities were not ready to allow any form of Protestant worship and teaching and the British government did not support any Protestant activity in Spain either. There was also a decided touch of arrogance about Rule, who seemed quite happy to disregard Spanish law which he thought was obsolete and out dated. He was proved wrong in the coming years for the longed for opportunities in Spain did not materialise. The following brief overview of future developments rounds off the story and shows that despite further attempts no lasting Methodist work in Spain was ever established from Gibraltar.

Rule's successor, the Rev. Thomas Hull, was left to maintain the work alone for the next five years. As Rule was still the legal owner of the property at the South he remained in correspondence with Allen and Nicholson who acted as his agent. Nicholson continued to teach in the schools and also oversaw the Spanish work. There was no possibility of expansion as Hull was expected to work to a limited budget because of the severe financial problems of the Missionary Society. However, Rule's continued interference in affairs caused considerable problems for Hull, although the Missionary Committee supported him strongly and, within the constraints placed upon him, he did a good job in maintaining the ground. There was contact with Cádiz, where a small nucleus of people continued to meet together. Rule, however, did not give up his concern for them and tried himself to find a suitable missionary to go there. In 1844 in one of the few surviving letters to him by the Committee he was reprimanded for this and told in no uncertain terms that if he proceeded

with his plan he would be officially disciplined. He was reminded of his past "unauthorised proceedings at Gibraltar" and asked: "Have you forgotten that if the Committee had not interfered for you, your position would have been a very painful one?"<sup>1</sup> The Committee had in fact agreed to guarantee the loans on the South property which never did pay for itself and was finally sold in 1851. However, it seems that Rule did not entirely give up his plans for in September 1846, while on a visit to Cádiz with his wife who was in poor health, Hull met a Baptist minister, the Rev. Mr. Brooks, who planned to work with the English residents there. Hull reported that Rule had had a hand in the appointment and Brooks had been led to believe that there were two to three hundred English residents in Cádiz, apart from the seamen. However, on contacting the Consul, he discovered that there were just two English Protestant families in Cádiz and no more than a hundred English people in the whole area, some of whom were Catholics. Hull shared his disappointment at this state of affairs and must have kept in touch with him for he reported in March 1847 that Brooks had returned to England "bitterly disappointed with the exaggerated statements of the extent of the English population and the cheapness of living etc. in that station".<sup>2</sup>

There were no other attempts in Spain at this time but at the end of 1846 the Bible Society asked Hull what he thought about opportunities for work there. He wrote back at length in January 1847 to suggest that there were openings in Spain ideally for an English person who spoke Spanish. He did not think such a person should go as a formal agent to be judged on what scriptures he sold or distributed but that he should have a wider, fact finding, mission to acquire knowledge of people and places in preparation for a more systematic effort in the future. "Such a man permitted for two years to move about Spain, might do an immensity of good".<sup>3</sup> He reported that their military friends often took pocket New Testaments and tracts with them on excursions to Cádiz, Seville, Granada and Málaga and found them to be "invariably received with many thanks", and that people were willing to talk freely about religion. It was still illegal to import the scriptures into Spain although customs officers could apparently easily be bribed because of their low pay, but Hull wondered about further attempts to print books in Spain.

The Bible Society followed up on this idea and appointed the Rev. Dr. James Thompson for a period of two years. The overall results were disappointing:

In the first of the two years he travelled extensively, and endeavoured to get the Scriptures printed in the different towns in Spain, but uniformly failed. Arrangements were several times all but completed, when some evil influence interposed, and deterred the printer from proceeding. The importation of copies has been found all but an impossibility.<sup>4</sup>

By 1847 the financial problems within the Missionary Society were largely resolved and once again two missionaries were appointed to Gibraltar. The Rev. George Alton was placed in charge of the Spanish work and remained in Gibraltar for many years. He arrived at the end of 1847 with his new young wife Amelia. He soon learnt Spanish and, together with Nicholson, tried to build up the Spanish department on the Rock through tract and Bible distribution, home visits, conversations, preaching and services of worship. However, despite a lot of hard work, the Missionary Society's Report for 1851 described the Spanish congregation as "unsettled in its character", but the report went on to say: "Our chief ground of hope on this Mission is, evidently, in the rising population who are being educated in our day-schools".<sup>5</sup> This was the reason that the Missionary Society continued to support the schools for they hoped through them to be laying "the foundation of an extensive Spanish work ... by the religious training of so large a number of Spanish children".<sup>6</sup>

In fact this was never really successful. Hundreds of children passed through the schools but, with a few notable exceptions such as Negrotto, the vast majority of the children grew up to become Catholics. Alton himself thought that infant schools should have been established so that the children could have been taught from a much younger age but even so it seems the pull of Catholicism was too strong, especially when a definite choice had to be made. The following incident illustrates this.

In 1839 Dr. Henry Hughes had been given the title of Bishop of Heliopolis and was appointed to Gibraltar. He was most concerned to find Roman Catholic children being

educated by Protestants and he embarked upon a campaign to entice the children away. He concentrated his efforts on the schools at the South and met with some success by visiting the children's parents in their homes and in opening his own school. He threatened to deny Catholic children who attended the Protestant schools any of the rites of the Catholic Church, though it seems no one really believed that he would carry out this threat. However, in 1844, a boy called Antonio Victor died. He had attended the South boys' school from the beginning and Dr. Hughes did deny him the rites of Catholic burial, to the horror of his family and the others associated with the Protestant school. This, more than anything, contributed to the decline of the South schools which eventually closed in 1851.

It seems that while Catholic parents could have the best of both worlds, a good free education in the Protestant schools and access to the rites of the Catholic Church, they were content. But, when a choice was forced upon them the vast majority chose their own faith and did not want to submit to the rites of another Church, which were offered in this instance. Perhaps surprisingly the Town schools remained unaffected. The priests had less influence there and there was no good alternative school. So the schools never really did fulfill their proselytising aims although they continued for many years. Eventually the Christian brothers returned and set up good schools of their own. Numbers in the Methodist schools declined and the last school was finally closed in 1896. Work also continued with the Spanish speaking congregation which survived for many years but again never growing in numbers or commitment to the extent hoped for. Always too there was the hope of developing work in Spain and events there were watched closely.

In 1843 there had been yet another change of government in Spain and by 1844 the moderados were back in power. They sought to improve relations with the Spanish Church. The certificates of loyalty were abolished and eventually when Narváez came to power the sale of Church property was halted. A new Constitution was drawn up in 1845 stating that "the religion of the Spanish nation is the Apostolic Roman Catholic religion. The State binds itself to maintain the cult and its ministers".<sup>7</sup> Negotiations were opened with Rome to repair the relationship between Spain and the papacy. Agreement was finally

reached in 1851. Article 1 of the 1851 Concordat stated that Catholicism "to the exclusion of any other cult continues being the only religion of the Spanish nation".<sup>8</sup> Article 2 declared that teaching at all educational levels must conform to the "purity of the faith's doctrine". The Spanish Church began to re-organise and to recover from some of the blows it had sustained.

However, in the summer of 1854, a revolution took place restoring Espartero to power. There was not apparently a great deal of violence, with the worst disorders occurring in Madrid. The progresistas returned to power and the Church once again came under attack. The Catholic faith itself was defended but it was also announced that "neither Spaniard nor foreigners can be persecuted for their opinions or beliefs as long as these are not manifested by public actions contrary to religion".<sup>9</sup> There was even some sympathy for full religious toleration but attempts to establish this were defeated. The Church was strongly opposed to it.

The effects of the revolution were felt in Gibraltar and in August 1854 Alton reported to the Bible Society: "The recent political movements in Spain have afforded an opportunity such as seldom occurs for the introduction of Scriptures into that unhappy country."<sup>10</sup> The guards and revenue officers at the border were removed for several days and during this time "the communication with Gibraltar was entirely free." Alton therefore "at once made arrangements for sending into the interior every copy of the Scriptures I could collect ..... making a total of copies of the Scriptures either whole or in part despatched 1,744". In addition over 3,000 tracts and other religious publications were sent. They were soon able to appoint a colporteur, Martin Escalante, to go into Spain to distribute the books. By this time the Corresponding Committee in Gibraltar had become the Gibraltar Auxiliary and at emergency meetings Escalante was commissioned to do several tours into Spain to sell Bibles. In September Alton reported that "the frontiers are again closely watched but communication is free inland. This is favourable to us and we should like to continue our operations until our store at present in Spain is exhausted."<sup>11</sup>

The Bible Society immediately responded by asking Alton to spend three months in Spain to see how the new circumstances there could be used to the best advantage. Alton felt sure that religious liberty was on its way and that it ought to be possible to print and circulate books in Spain but he had to refuse the Bible Society's request. He was unable to leave his post in Gibraltar for three months as, by then, he was in sole charge of all the Methodist work there. However, the Auxiliary Committee clearly felt he was the right man for the job and so suggested that the Bible Society should liaise with the Missionary Society to see what could be done. Arrangements were made and Alton sent off with Escalante on a tour of several Spanish cities. He ended up in Madrid where he made contact with Luis Usoz y Río who had been of such help to Borrow and together they explored the possibilities of printing Bibles there. Circumstances seemed favourable and in the end Alton undertook the work himself. The Missionary Society agreed to his temporary secondment to the Bible Society to carry out this work and a young man was sent to Gibraltar to oversee the work there. He was succeeded by another young man. Neither proved very satisfactory and Alton had the difficult task of trying to keep an eye on affairs in Gibraltar while working in Madrid.

Arrangements for the printing went ahead and Alton and Usoz also worked together on improving the Spanish translation of the Bible. By November 1855, 5,000 New Testaments had been printed and work had begun on 5,000 copies of the whole Bible. It was then agreed that Alton's family could join him in Madrid but, on returning to Gibraltar in December 1855, he discovered one of his children had died. He therefore returned alone. The work went ahead, though not without some objections and difficulties from the Spanish authorities. Some work of distribution continued through the colporteur Escalante and another man, Pablo Sanchez. In May 1856 Alton finally moved his family to Madrid and the printing was completed. Discussions with the authorities took place regarding the circulation of the books, but before this could be effected there were further political upheavals in Spain as another revolution occurred.

In August 1856 Alton reported:

After the coup d'état my position and prospects were entirely changed, and it was obvious that during the continuance of the violent and arbitrary military rule which it introduced it would be impossible for me to advance my work, and great caution was necessary lest by inconsiderate activity our difficulties should be increased.<sup>12</sup>

Alton was able to make arrangements for the safe keeping of the books before he and his family fled from Madrid. The journey back to Gibraltar was "long and harrowing".<sup>13</sup> One of their children was recovering from typhoid and on the Spanish steamer Mrs. Alton went into premature labour giving birth to twins with no doctor or nurse in attendance. At Málaga Alton baptised young Sydney Owen who died two and a half months later. His twin Margarita Luisa survived. Altogether seven of the Alton's children are buried in Gibraltar.

The door to Spain had once again closed. The Bibles, produced at such cost to the Altons, remained safe in Madrid in the hands of Alegría the printer, but they could not be put into circulation. In fact they remained in Madrid until early 1868 when permission was finally given for their removal from the country. They were taken to Bayonne and eventually distributed in various places.

The Gibraltar Auxiliary Bible Society continued to meet and in July 1857 Escalante was reported to have made successful attempts "to introduce the Scriptures into Cádiz, Seville, Málaga, Granada, Valencia and other places as well as to dispose of them at fairs at Algeciras".<sup>14</sup> Alton went on to express his belief that "political convulsions will soon afford an opportunity of acting more vigorously" in Spain, but this in fact did not turn out to be the case.

There were several changes of government in Spain but overall the Church's position was strengthened and it used its influence to urge action against Protestants. As Callahan reported:

Between 1860 and 1863 provincial governors in Andalusia, the center of Spanish Protestantism in the 19th century as it had been in the 16th, subjected dissenters to a persecution recalling the rigors of the Inquisition.

One of the victims, Manuel Matamoros, became a hero of Protestant Europe when he was sentenced to eight years of hard labour for having opened a church in Granada.<sup>15</sup>

Manuel Matamoros was actually converted to the Protestant faith in Gibraltar under the preaching of Francisco de Paula Ruet. Ruet had been an opera singer and was converted in Italy while singing there. When he returned to Spain he began preaching and, as a result, was imprisoned several times. Eventually he was exiled from Spain and in 1857 he went to Gibraltar and began preaching there at the Presbyterian church. This work was very much supported by the Methodists too and one of them, Alfredo Giolma, eventually took over the preaching from Ruet. After his conversion in Gibraltar, Matamoros returned to Spain and gathered a congregation together in Málaga. He went on to Granada where he contacted José Alhama who had founded a church there. Matamoros then travelled to Barcelona where he was arrested in October 1860 and imprisoned, as was Alhama in Granada along with other Protestants, totalling twenty one in all. Both Matamoros and Alhama were given heavy prison sentences but in the end, after about two and a half years in prison, their sentences were commuted to exile, largely because of pressure from the outside world. So in 1863 both of them went to Gibraltar, joining several other Spanish exiles there. Ruet was no longer on the Rock but Spanish services were taking place in the Methodist church with Giolma preaching. Alhama stayed in Gibraltar for five years but Matamoros left for France and then Switzerland and in fact never returned to Spain.

Another of the victims, at this time, was Escalante who, in May 1859, was arrested in Vejer and charged with circulating New Testaments printed in London, without notes, with a view to subverting the religion of the country. It was in fact his second offence as he had previously been arrested in San Roque but on that occasion had soon been set free. This time he was not so fortunate and was eventually sentenced to nine years hard labour. However, in early 1860, he was allowed out of prison on bail pending an appeal which was successful. He was finally able to return to Gibraltar in June 1860. The case created a great deal of publicity and the British authorities warned against any such activities in future as they were against the laws of Spain. The longer term result for poor Escalante was that he

lost his job. He continued circulating the scriptures in the town and bay of Gibraltar but was not able to do enough to justify his salary. This was therefore reduced but then proved insufficient for his needs. He was given some help to try and set up in some other sphere of employment but it was finally reported that he had returned to popery.

Once again operations in Spain had come to a complete halt. As before the Spanish authorities, when faced with a Protestant threat, had taken decisive action to eradicate the heresy. Alton in fact had returned to England in 1858, as his wife was far from well and they were both worn out with the work and grief at the loss of so many children. As already described, Graydon revisited Spain in 1862, calling at Gibraltar, but was unable to offer any hope of improved prospects in Spain. Later in that year Alton returned to the area, visiting Lisbon, Madrid and Cádiz spending some considerable time in the latter place, where Rule was still remembered and where work might have been developed but for the intolerance of the Spanish authorities. Eventually it was clear that nothing could be achieved in Spain and Alton once again returned to take up the superintendence of all the Methodist work in Gibraltar.

In 1865 Margarita Barea died in Cádiz. In the weeks preceding her death her home was ransacked by the police and both she and her husband were arrested as a result of information given against them. However, the authorities refused to take the matter further and proceedings were soon abandoned. Margarita died in peace, maintaining her faith to the end. Alton visited Cádiz to offer support to the small group still existing there.

In 1868 yet another revolution took place in Spain. Queen Isabella was forced to leave for France and the moderado government fell. The Church suffered too because of its association with the now discredited government. In response to the anticlerical feeling, a group of eminent Catholics formed a Catholic Association to "propagate and defend the doctrines, institutions and social influence of the Church, particularly its liberty, and the Catholic unity of Spain".<sup>16</sup> The pope approved of the Association and it soon spread to twenty eight cities throughout the country. The Cortes met in February 1869 and

eventually discussed the question of religious liberty. The Association campaigned vigorously against this but they lost the argument and religious toleration was introduced. Other reforms were carried out, such as the creation of civil registers for births, marriages and deaths and the introduction of civil marriage in 1870, which further undermined the Church's power.

With the introduction of religious toleration, once again the door into Spain seemed to be opening and the Missionary Society's Report for 1869 stated:

Spain has been more or less a field of labour wistfully contemplated for nearly three-fourths of a century by our missionaries stationed in *Gibraltar*. By occasional visits and by an unremitting circulation of the Scriptures and other books, attempts have been made for years past to introduce light into this dark country ..... The recent openings in Spain have not been neglected. We are feeling our way cautiously. A pioneer well acquainted with Spain and its language is at present engaged in the work.<sup>17</sup>

It was not an easy situation. There had been many false starts in the past and the Missionary Society was working under considerable financial constraints. In addition the political situation in Spain was constantly changing. A Carlist revolt broke out in 1872. King Amadeo of Savoy who had become king in Isabella's stead in 1870 proved unpopular and abdicated in early 1873. The first Republic of Spain was then announced but in its first year actually had four Presidents. It was a turbulent and unsettled time. Before long the republic collapsed and a military rising occurred in 1874 with the result that Alfonso, Isabella's son, came to the throne. A new Constitution was then drawn up which confirmed the Catholic faith and limited religious toleration to a considerable degree. However, a Methodist foothold was established in Barcelona as early as 1870 which gradually grew and survived despite difficulties and opposition. Methodist work also developed in the Balearics. Alhama went to Madrid and founded a church and Ruet also went there. The Spanish work in Gibraltar itself was much affected by the loss of the Spanish exiles and eventually largely petered out. No effective work in Spain was done from Gibraltar until 1894 when José Rodríguez began preaching in La Línea, just across the border. He

established a congregation and Sunday school there and survived for about three years, but life was still not easy for Protestants whatever the law might allow. Persecution and ostracism continued for many many years and full religious toleration only came after the fall of Franco's regime.

By the end of the 19th century it seemed clear that a lasting Methodist work in Spain would never be established from Gibraltar. For some years the work there had concentrated on the soldiers and sailors in the garrison. Recreational facilities were developed for them in the old school building once the school closed and the work increased at the end of 1898 with the opening of the Welcome Soldiers' and Seamen's Home. So, in 1903, oversight of the work in Gibraltar passed from the Missionary Society to the Army and Navy Board in the Methodist Home Missions Department. From then on the work was largely carried out for the benefit of the forces stationed on the Rock. They had always been a very significant part of the work in Gibraltar but now the focus was almost entirely on them.

Gibraltar was to be an important military and naval base for many years and in due course the Royal Air Force arrived too when a runway and airport were built on the neutral ground. The armed forces were the focus of the work until recently when the Methodist Church in Gibraltar again faced a fundamental change. The services have nearly all left the Rock which now has its own regiment and no longer do forces personnel form the majority of the congregation. So, in 1995, the Methodist Conference set up a Commission to consider the future of Methodism in Gibraltar. Its findings were taken to the 1997 Conference and Gibraltar became a Methodist circuit in its own right as part of the London South West District. Special services were held in September of that year to mark the end of oversight from the Forces Board and the induction of a new minister. Another chapter in the long history of the Methodist Church on the Rock of Gibraltar has thus begun.

## CONCLUSION

It is clear that by 1842, Methodism in Gibraltar had come a long way. The small groups of soldiers meeting together for worship and fellowship had developed into a proper congregation which had its own stone built chapel, its own ministers and it had gained a large measure of independence from the Church of England. Under Rule's ministry, particularly in the field of education, it had become a force in the community. It had moved from being a small society to an established church. However, as in England, this change had not been easy and persecution and difficulties had occurred.

Some of the difficulties had arisen as a result of Methodism's own development. As the role of the preachers changed to that of ministers, they were set apart and could no longer be regarded as brothers. This caused tension in Gibraltar, particularly during the ministry of Owen Rees and William Rule. Some of these difficulties were not just to do with the development of Methodism, but the personalities of these two men who clearly expected to be obeyed, and who were not very good at listening to, or acknowledging, other points of view.

In the case of Rees one cannot help questioning the wisdom of appointing a somewhat dour Welshman, who was not even accustomed to preach in English, to a foreign station. He clearly saw his role in an authoritarian way and the leaders, who were used to a greater sharing of the authority, understandably rebelled against this especially as they had on occasions had sole charge of the church. They tried to find out what Rees's background was, knowing that his predecessor Thomas Davis had formerly been a book-binder. Rees refused to answer their questions and had possibly, in view of his age and years in the ministry, not actually ever had other employment. The result was a split in the church, which also came at a time when there were more educated men in the Society as a whole than had previously been the case. They, however, seem to have been much more supportive and sympathetic to the bewildered leaders than Rees ever was.

Rees's successor was able to smooth over the difficulties, and the work continued harmoniously until the arrival of Rule, who began his ministry by making it clear that he did not agree with the custom of calling one another 'brother' and 'sister' as he was in charge. The old leaders this time were reluctant to challenge him after their previous experiences, and it was the newer ones who complained about him to England. Rule was clearly one of the new breed of minister, well educated, dynamic and clear about his role as minister in charge. As he possessed a forceful character, he was able to win the day more easily but it did cause him some distress. He also introduced greater formality into worship, as had developed in England, which also upset some of the older members.

It may be that this issue also lay behind some of the difficulties with John Quirell who had been accustomed to work with the ministers, particularly Barber. Stinson's attitude to him was in marked contrast to that of his predecessors and he clearly wanted to be able to do the work himself, despite the time needed to learn Spanish. By the time Rule arrived the damage had been done and Quirell clearly wanted to be in charge of the work himself.

Some tension continued with Rule's successor but generally speaking the battle was won and, as the original leaders died or returned to England, the old order passed. As in England those of a more humble background tended to be replaced by better educated men, and from then on there were no more battles over leadership. This does seem, however, to have led to a reduction in the number of local people joining the church as the English speaking congregation became more and more military.

Tension in the relationship with the Established Church and its supporters was not so easily overcome, for the existence of Methodism in Gibraltar still depended to some degree on the benevolence of the Governor and the military authorities, who were generally Anglicans. This was particularly evident in connection with soldiers' rights and over the renewal of the lease on the Methodist premises. Appeals could be made to the home government but communication was slow and Britain was far away. So the local authorities could, and did at times, wield a great deal of power and in the 1850's, when the Governor was a

particularly staunch Anglican, the very existence of Methodism was threatened for a time with attempts to take over the burial ground, to prevent the renewal of the lease on the mission premises and to hinder soldiers from becoming Methodists. However, despite considerable local opposition, Methodism was by then well enough established both at home and in Gibraltar to fight its cause although it demanded a great deal of care and diplomatic skill from the minister of the day, George Alton.

Much of these difficulties stemmed from Anglican hostility towards Methodism, and although Methodism's existence in Gibraltar was never threatened again petty persecution did continue for some considerable time. However, during Alton's second term in Gibraltar he became Secretary of the Board of Sanitary Commissioners which was working to provide clean water and proper sanitation. His work was of such benefit to the community that the Governor personally intervened by writing to the Missionary Society to ask for Alton to be allowed to stay on to complete a particular piece of work. This was allowed and Methodism thus assumed a more important place in the life of the community as a whole.

Relationships with the Catholic Church were also strained although it did not have the power to threaten Methodism in the manner of the Established Church, which generally had the support of Gibraltar's leaders. It was not until Barber began preaching to the Spanish speaking population that Methodism impinged on the Roman Catholic world at all. Since this was a relatively small development there seems to have been little negative reaction to it. The establishment of Protestant schools educating Catholic children was a different matter altogether and was bound to be opposed. In addition, Rule's behaviour at times does seem to have been deliberately, and rather unnecessarily, provocative, reflecting the strong anti-Catholic views which were prevalent throughout Methodism.

Denominational rivalry provoked considerable educational development in Gibraltar which was of great benefit to the community as a whole. It did, however, fuel the hostility between the denominations but, although the Catholic population was by far the most

numerous, it was the least powerful. However, by providing sufficiently good education of its own it did eventually force the Methodist schools to close and for many years after this education in Gibraltar was largely Catholic. In fact, as already stated, the children were never really converted to Protestantism in any great number and the Protestant preaching never converted large numbers of adults either and eventually a greater degree of toleration between the communities developed.

The work amongst the soldiers in Gibraltar was never really regarded as true missionary work and was only supported in the hope that the converted soldiers would take the message with them wherever they went in the world. The work amongst the Spanish speaking population of the Rock and that in Spain itself was regarded as true missionary work and the Missionary Society supported its development, though it was hindered by many of the problems Taggart has identified. Communication between Gibraltar and the Missionary Society was often slow, but was particularly unsatisfactory during Rule's ministry. This may well partly account for his later behaviour when he ignored his instructions, after having gone for long periods of time without receiving any. Poor communication also made it difficult to formulate a proper policy and plan with regard to Spain so that sometimes plans seemed to be considered in a rather haphazard way. In addition the progress of the work was often dictated by resources. The appointment of one or two missionaries to Gibraltar seems to have been governed far more by resources than by the needs of the work itself. It was a great pity that after the prodigious efforts of Rule his successor Thomas Hull was left to maintain the ground on his own and without a knowledge of Spanish. There were difficulties too in making suitable appointments. There was often a shortage of manpower and sometimes this must have affected the suitability of the person sent. Rule may not have been the person to nurture young assistants but the work may well have needed more experienced colleagues who might have fared better. The isolation of many of the missionaries was considerable and continued to be a problem well into the 20th century, when Gibraltar was described as one of the loneliest stations in the connexion. The lack of colleagues, fellowship, advice and guidance near at hand all

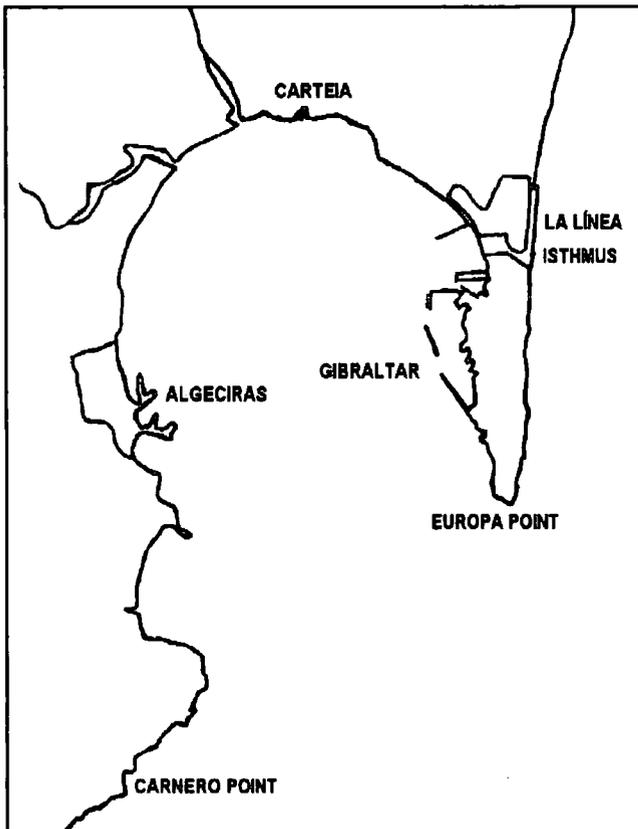
contributed to the difficulties, but with regard to Spain itself the over-riding difficulty was a lack of recognition of the true situation in Spain.

Spain's history of the Reconquest, the expulsion of Jews and Moors, the use of the Inquisition to eradicate heresy and the unification of Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella as a strong Catholic country was a very powerful heritage. Despite anticlericalism and calls for the reform of the Church, there was no intention among Spanish liberals of undermining the Catholic faith itself. Spanish law forbade the practice of any other religion and so engrained was this that it had virtually become impossible for a Spaniard to be anything other than a Catholic.

Rule's own hostility to Catholicism and his provocative actions in Gibraltar as well as in Spain were well known to Spanish Catholics, for communication within the Catholic Church and between Gibraltar and Spain seems to have been very good indeed. The fact that three men, Borrow, Graydon and Rule were working in Spain at the same time did not help, and possibly the conversion of Marin and those in Cádiz only provoked more opposition to Protestantism. The lack of support from the British government also contributed to the failure of the enterprise as the Missionary Society, in its desire to be loyal to the government, did not want to authorise work contrary to advice from Lord Palmerston. The odds were overwhelmingly stacked against Rule and even today it is hard to be a Protestant in Spain.

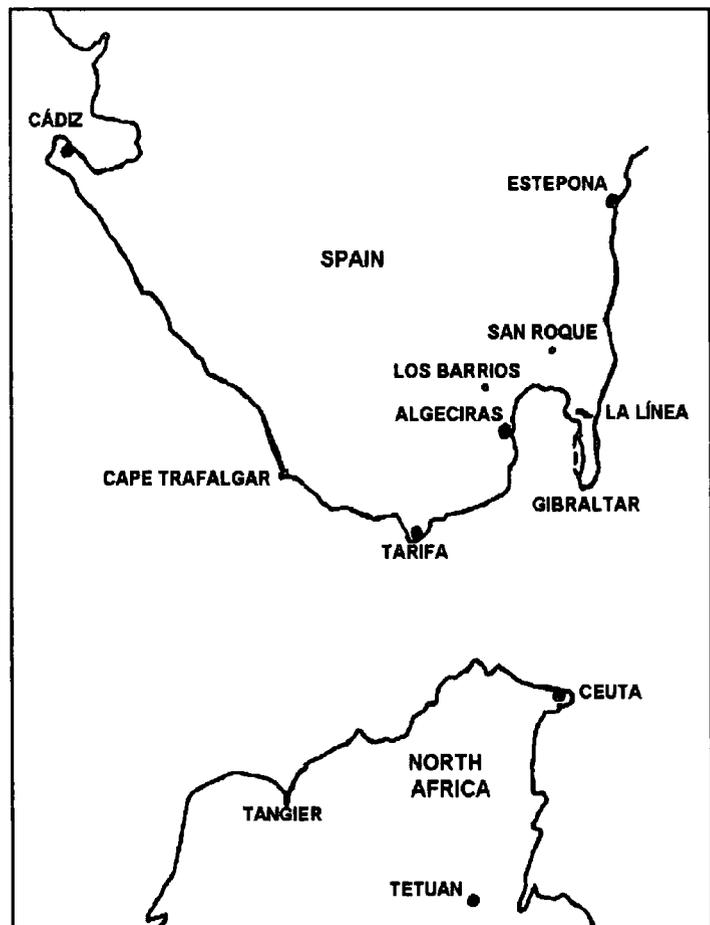
Nevertheless, the fact that Methodism made the attempt before anyone else says much about its development as a Church. It had the will, the personnel and some of the resources and had the initial work been successful it would have carried on. Methodism in Gibraltar may not have achieved all it had hoped for, but it had come a long way indeed from the early meetings amongst the soldiers.

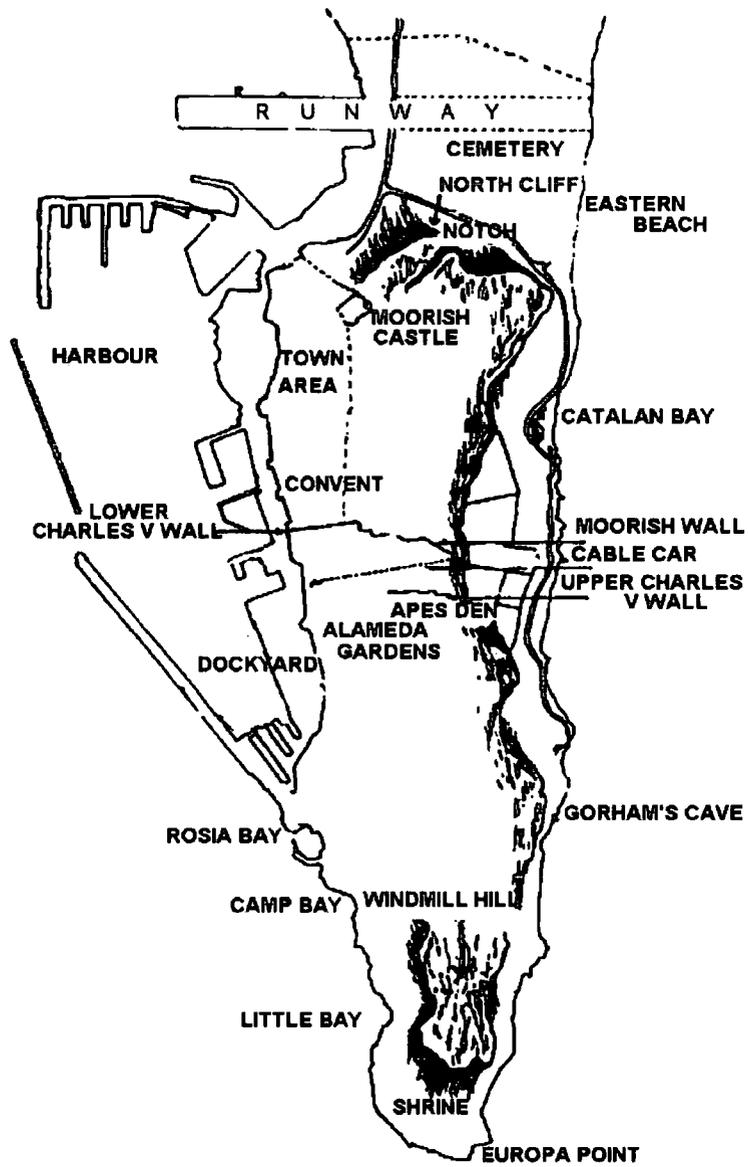
**APPENDIX A MAPS**



**BAY OF GIBRALTAR**

**AREA AROUND  
GIBRALTAR**



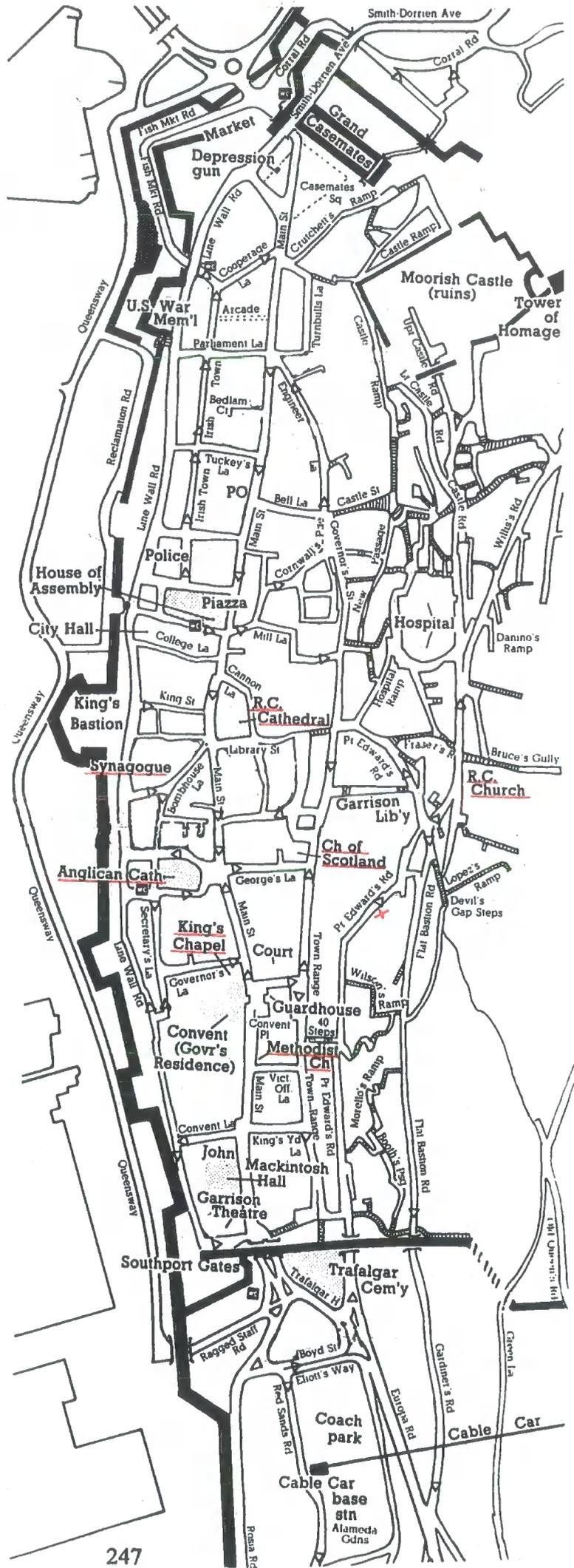


**GIBRALTAR**

showing some of the landmarks including the Shrine of our Lady of Europa and the Notch

PLAN OF GIBRALTAR TOWN showing the location of the main places of worship

✕ marks the site of the original Methodist premises until 1956



## APPENDIX B METHODIST TERMINOLOGY

**Society** As an ordained Anglican priest Wesley founded religious societies which he intended to be part of the Established Church. Members were therefore expected to attend parish services and to take the sacrament there. Rules of membership of these Methodist Societies were strict but membership was open to all who wanted to be saved from their sins and to pursue a life of greater holiness. The word Society has continued in Methodist usage to this day, even though Methodism has become established as a separate denomination.

**Class meetings** Wesley believed in the importance of Christian fellowship and members of the Societies were eventually formed into groups or classes. The word class comes from the Latin *classis* meaning division and did not therefore imply a teaching element. In fact originally the division into classes of about 12 people was instituted to organise the collection of a penny a week subscription and a **class leader** was appointed to do this. In going from house to house to collect the money a pastoral role developed which led on to a weekly fellowship meeting in which "'advice or reproof was given as need required, quarrels made up, misunderstandings removed', and all in the atmosphere of praise and worship".<sup>1</sup>

**Members** Members of the Methodist religious societies had to make a commitment to them. Discipline was strong and expulsion common for a range of misdemeanours. Members were expected to meet regularly in class and records were kept of their attendance with reasons for absence given. If a member was absent without reason for three consecutive weeks he was judged to have 'ceased to meet' and was therefore expelled.

**Tickets of membership** In 1841 Wesley introduced membership tickets which were renewed each quarter after an examination to confirm that the individual was sincere and worthy of membership. Those expressing a desire to become members had to serve a probationary period 'on trial' at first for three months, later reduced to two months, before being accepted as a member and receiving a ticket of membership. These tickets were also

used as a means of enforcing discipline as some meetings of the Society and love-feasts were restricted to members only who had to produce a current quarterly ticket to gain admission. It was the usual practice, on receipt of the membership ticket, to pay the sum of one shilling as a thank offering. This money was used for the business of the Society, expenses, payments, building works etc. and relief of the poor was also seen to be important.

**Hearers** Those who were not yet committed to membership but who attended Society preaching meetings were called hearers. As the statistics regarding the size of Societies were concerned with members only, they were sometimes rather misleading. The regular congregations might consist of a relatively small number of members in comparison with the number of hearers. Certainly this was true in Gibraltar when in some years membership was below a hundred but the congregations generally numbered several hundred.

**Chapels** Meeting places were clearly needed for Society meetings and at first all kinds of venues were used but eventually separate buildings were erected solely for this purpose. However, no meetings were to be held in them at the time of ordinary parish services. They were called preaching houses and sometimes chapels as this was the word used for a place of worship of the Established Church which was not a parish church.

**Travelling Preachers** Eventually a system of travelling preachers was developed as clearly Wesley and his immediate colleagues could not do all the preaching themselves, although Wesley continued an extensive preaching programme around the country. Wesley himself believed in variety and is reported to have said "I know, were I myself to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach both myself and most of my congregation asleep!"<sup>2</sup> However, his travelling preachers did not travel over the whole country as he did for eventually the country was divided into **districts** and smaller **circuits**. The travelling preachers were expected to preach around their circuits in a carefully planned way. However, as many of these circuits were very large, travelling preachers could still cover several hundred miles each week. They were generally full-time preachers although,

sometimes in the early days especially, some did have other forms of employment because of financial necessity, until a more effective system of payment was organised. Appointments were at first for one year only. This was later extended to two and then to three years. Length of service was described as **years travelled** and the process of making appointments as **stationing**. So places of appointment were often referred to as **stations**. College training for preachers did not come until the 19th century, but in Wesley's life-time each candidate served a probationary period, was set a course of study and subjected to an oral examination at the annual Conference before being accepted. Once appointed, they were expected to spend several hours each day in study.

**Local Preachers** Wesley had always been reluctant to use lay people as preachers but was persuaded to do so by his mother and eventually a system of local preachers was also developed which continues to this day. These were local people who had other forms of employment and did not move on to different appointments around the country but preached in their own locality. However, even this could sometimes mean journeys of twenty miles or so. Many local preachers did go on to become travelling preachers.

**Exhorters** In addition there developed a group of people known as exhorters who were not local preachers. They had a more limited role but were used as leaders who encouraged the members in the absence of any preacher. Exhorters might well move on to become local preachers and eventually even travelling preachers.

**Chairman** Eventually after the formation of circuits and districts, Chairmen were appointed from amongst the travelling preachers to oversee the work of each district.

**Connexion** Wesley saw the need for the Methodist movement of religious societies to be a cohesive one and accordingly developed an administrative system to accomplish this. Once again he resorted to the Latin and developed the word connexion from the Latin *connexio* to describe the Methodist network. Societies, members, preachers etc. all formed a part of the Methodist Connexion. They were sometimes described as being in connexion with

Wesley. Travelling preachers who had served a probationary period and were deemed suitable were described as being brought into full connexion and thereby also submitted themselves to Methodist authority and discipline.

**Conference** The acceptance into full connexion and the appointments of the travelling preachers were made at the annual Conferences which Wesley established in 1744. The word itself is explanatory for Wesley invited people to confer with him, from amongst the travelling preachers, and at these annual discussions the business was conducted in the form of question and answer. Wesley's answer however was final and the ultimate responsibility for all decisions lay with him. This was therefore originally "far from being the supreme doctrinal, legislative, administrative and disciplinary court which it eventually became".<sup>3</sup> For, after Wesley's death, the Conferences continued and yearly Presidents were appointed to oversee the work of the Connexion - a system which continues to this day. The work of the Conference was always recorded and later published in **The Minutes of Conference** which thus provide a very useful record.

**Leaders** Each Society had its own leaders who consisted of the class leaders, along with stewards and others who met regularly with the travelling preachers to discuss Society business. In addition the class leaders met together with a travelling preacher to discuss spiritual matters affecting them so that fellowship was provided for at all levels.

**Stewards** Wesley appointed stewards to manage the temporal affairs of the Societies and the larger ones sometimes had two. They received the class money, sent relief to the poor and kept the accounts. They also ensured that the rules of the Society were kept. Regular weekly collections were not taken at first. Just before Wesley's death pew rents were introduced and increasingly used though Wesley himself had discouraged the practice seeing it as divisive.

**Trustees** Trustees became necessary as soon as there was ownership of property and, as in Gibraltar, trustees were not always local people. They were responsible for the upkeep of

the buildings and for keeping the building safe within Methodist hands. In Gibraltar this seemed to have involved some financial responsibility too and it may be that the role of steward and trustee overlapped a little.

**Quarterly Meeting** The quarterly meetings were devised as a means of uniting the Methodist Societies within a circuit and involved the preachers and officials of the Societies in the circuit. The basic purpose was "to enquire into the spiritual and temporal state of each Society".<sup>4</sup> In Gibraltar, despite the fact that there was only one Society, quarterly meetings were still held and seem to have been a useful means of assessing the state of the Society. Membership statistics were noted as this was the time to issue the quarterly membership ticket and receive the quarterly ticket money. A thorough scrutiny of members was carried out and Rule, for example, sometimes gave the statistics under the following headings - members, members on trial, justified, sanctified, backslidden, removed or dead. Details of class money, subscription money and missionary money were sometimes given in the minute book as well.

**Love-feasts** These were special services originally held monthly but later less often in which a simple meal was eaten together, hymns were sung and money collected for the poor. However, the most important aspect was the sharing of personal Christian testimony as, for example, the occasion when Captain Tripp first spoke at such a meeting in Gibraltar.

**Watch-night services** These services of vigil may have been started as an alternative for the converted Kingswood miners who had been in the habit of drinking their evenings away. They were originally held monthly presumably as a way of seeing in a new day, week or month. In many instances these became less frequent and sometimes only celebrated on New Year's Eve as a means of preparation for a new year.

**Covenant service** Although not specifically mentioned in Gibraltar these annual services of commitment would have taken place. They were instituted by Wesley and continue as a

feature of Methodism today, usually taking place on the first Sunday of the new year but sometimes on the first Sunday in September at the beginning of the Methodist year. As the name implies these services are concerned with joining in a covenant with God to serve him.

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5. Minutes of the Methodist Conferences from 1744.

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### **Land Property Services, Gibraltar**

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### **Government Archives, Gibraltar**

Crown lands registers, registers of deeds and leases, letter books, Gibraltar's blue books of statistics and miscellaneous files.

### **Church Archives, Gibraltar**

Registers of births, marriages and deaths, minute book of the leaders' and stewards' meetings 1829-1895, numerous records and miscellaneous documents such as those relating to leases, official correspondence, minute books etc.

(Since sorting all the material out and cataloguing it for the purposes of this research, most of the material, apart from the registers and minute book, has been placed on permanent loan at the Government Archives in Gibraltar. In addition all the documents relating solely to the work with the Bible Society have now also been catalogued and deposited in Cambridge.)

