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A SENSE OF HISTORY

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Having some means to communicate with members of an organization is obviously an essential requirement and there has been a long history of magazine, or organs as they have often been called, emanating from Church Society and its forebears.

The oldest member of Church Society's family tree is the Protestant Association. Whilst such associations go back to the time of Elizabeth I they had had a stop-go existence usually prompted by some specific threat to the Protestantism of England and the English Church. It was such a mood which, after a few false starts, led to the creation of the Association following a meeting at Exeter Hall, London. The Association's journal was the *Protestant Magazine*, first printed in February 1839. The *Magazine* reflects the concerns which brought the Association to life – the growing influence of Roman-catholicism and the moves to bring England back under the sway of the papacy. The first issue addressed such matters as the number of Roman-catholics in parliament and most of the early issues deal with national legislation rather than just churchy matters. The thirty two vice-presidents of the Association were all laymen, the majority being Peers or MPs.

Church Association began to publish shortly after its establishment in 1865. The *Church Association Monthly Intelligencer* was first published in 1867 and the name was changed to *The Church Intelligencer* in 1884. The names reflect a key feature of the magazine to provide "intelligence" information about the threats to Protestantism in the Church and nation. The Protestant Magazine had also contained a section entitled '*Intelligence*'. Thus the first issue of the Intelligencer contains crime statistics for Ireland and a list of Roman-catholic MPs. Despite this the *Intelligencer* demonstrates the difference between CA and PA, it is far more concerned with issues within the Church and particularly the rise of ritualism. Several of the early issues contain drawings of church ornaments, "altars" and the like against which local Associations were protesting. It also contains notice of local meetings and a lecture given by the Revd J.C. Ryle who was to have a long and fruitful involvement with the Association.

In 1884 the new *Church Intelligencer* took over describing itself as 'A Record of Work in Defence of the Protestant Principles of the Established Church' but also containing such things as adverts for Rayners Lime Fruit Juice and Oriental Tooth Paste. Much of the new first issue was taken up with a record of the annual meeting of the Association but 'intelligence' continued to be a key feature. The name continued up to the merger in 1950 though, strangely, for a few years the name was changed to *Watchman*, before changing back.

The Church Gazette was the magazine of the National Church League up until the merger with Church Association in 1950. We do not have in the office the first issues of the magazine but volume 7 was published in 1906. By this time the League had become the Church of England League having begun life as the Ladies League for the Defence and Promotion of the Reformed Faith of the Church of England. In the first report of the Ladies League, Lady Cornelia Wimborne remarks: "The Gazette we have now published will be the means of informing the public both of our work and of the Church questions of the day, at the modest sum of three shillings a years we trust it will obtain large circulation." The Gazette continued to include intelligence, including the goings on in specific churches where ritualistic practices contrary to the law of the Church of England were being permitted.

The other constituent part of the National Church League was the National Protestant Church Union (which had followed on from the Protestant Association and the Protestant Churchman's Alliance.) The Union began in 1893 and its magazine was called the Church Standard but this was revamped and begun afresh at the turn of the century with the first issue being published in January 1901 (not 1900 as we would think now for the turn of the century). Amongst the authors in the first issue are two men who were to become stalwarts of the National Church League. Rev Dr Henry Wace was a prolific writer and later Dean of St. Paul's and it is his bequest which continues to provide for the offices of Church Society – hence the name Dean Wace House. If you reflect on the state of our Cathedrals today it is testimony to how much they have changed that a staunch protestant like Wace was Dean of St. Paul's less than a century ago. The other notable author was W H Griffith Thomas another prolific writer whose classic "Principles of Theology" on the Thirty-Nine Articles we still sell in goodly numbers. Wace wrote on "The Importance of Historical and Theological Study" and Griffith Thomas on "The Fulham Round-Table Conference". This conference was nothing to do with King Arthur but a meeting between what Thomas calls "evangelicals" and "extreme Anglicans" for which read Anglo-Catholics. Volume 1 also notes the appointment of Dr Ryle as Bishop of Exeter, not in this case the great J.C. Ryle then late Bishop of Liverpool but his son who whilst apparently not "a member of the party" was broadly in sympathy with it.

After the merger of the League and Association to form Church Society in 1950 the publication was called *Church Gazette and Intelligencer*, the latter part being in smaller type and a subtitle '*Organ of the Church Society*'.

The Gazette continued up until the mid 60s after which there was a period of turmoil in the publications. First came *Essentials* '*The Organ of Church Society replacing Church Gazette*' which was fairly small and edited by John Goss. The first edition contained articles on Anglican-Methodist Relations and the Society's training college for women, St. Michael's House, Oxford. This was followed in 1971 by *Forum* which was published by The Anglican Trust and gives all the appearance of being printed on a gestetner machine. A page in the first issue gives Diary Dates including such things as the "South of Thames Netball Tournament" and "Solent Sailing" which were actually events for Pathfinders and CYFA, at that stage part of the Church Society family.

Forum appears to have lasted about 5 years before being replaced by *Vine*, edited by R. Sutcliffe and called '*A quarterly digest for all concerned with Renewing and Reforming the Church of England*'. Printed, as the Gazette had always been, by the Church Book Room Press the title is a prelude to Vine Books which later became the Society's publishing wing to replace CBRP. Authors in the first issue include Colin Buchanan and Oliver Wright-Holmes. *Vine* appears to have had a very short reign and was followed by *Church Society News* for which we have very incomplete evidence.

Cross†Way began in June 1980 under the editorship of Lance Bidewell. Those who are up on their maths will realise therefore that the magazine has not always been published quarterly, indeed there appears to have been no issue between the Summer of 1981 and Spring of 1982. The first issue contained a large number of short pieces by an array of authors including John Stott, Randle Manwaring, Barry Morrison, Christina Baxter, Tom Wright, Don Irving, Derek Green, Graham Kings, Alec Motyer, Hazel Bidewell and William Chapman. This initial flurry lasted for a year or so but controversy over an article by James Dunn in *Churchman* caused some turmoil in the Society and a reassertion of its reformed roots which is reflected in a smaller and less eclectic *Cross†Way*. Lance continued as editor up until 1985 and David Samuel took over in the Spring of 1986 from which point this task has fallen to the Director/General Secretary. Thus David Streater became the editor in Autumn 1991 (Donald Allister edited one issue in the 'interregnum') and I, David III took on the rôle in the Winter of 1998.

I deliberately increased the size when I took over, rather than any revolutionary changes we have gently developed the magazine over the last seven years and Issue 99 saw the first full-colour cover. Occasionally people have suggested that we need to have a more contemporary feel but my strategy has always been to keep *Cross†Way* content rich. Whilst we do have fewer words per page (more white-space and larger type face) we have deliberately focussed on longer informative articles together with some shorter news type information

The name of the magazine often causes some confusion. Many people refer to it as ‘Cross and Way’ thereby assuming that the † in the middle is a +. In fact it is a cross rather than a plus so the name is simply “Cross Way”. The story as it was relayed to me is that having opted for Crossway as the name it was discovered that another, secular, company already had a magazine of that name and so the † was slipped into the middle.

What of the future? I see no evidence that electronic publishing is going to replace books or magazines in the near future. However, electronic publishing is of growing importance. Whilst it is impossible to know how much visitors to our websites actually read we do reach far more through the web than we do through electronic publishing. ChurchSociety.org reflects our focus on education and issues and is a growing resource with over 700 web pages of information, articles and documents (some pages are very long). Our second website evangelicals.org follows on the “intelligence” approach – giving news to subscribers which they can be sent by e-mail, receive more or less immediately through RSS, or discover on occasional visits to the site. The speed, flexibility and depth of the internet give us immense benefits over written publications. Whilst many people do not have access to this we know from statistics and correspondence that many people stumble across us who would never read our written publications. We put considerable effort into maintaining and developing the two sites and we are now investigating the feasibility of a third site specifically for theological content on reformed Anglicanism.

APPEAL

We do not have complete sets of past publications of the Society and its forebears including Churchman. We are therefore always grateful of donations if members are clearing out their bookshelves or attics. One member recently gave us all his past copies of Churchman which included several issues from the 20s, 30s and 40s which we were missing.