



# THE WALDENSIAN REVIEW



**No. 140**

**Summer 2022**

Editor: Mrs Erica Scroppo Newbury, 85 St Andrew's Road, Cambridge CB4 1DH.  
Telephone 01223-315753, email [ericascroppo@hotmail.com](mailto:ericascroppo@hotmail.com)

## From the Editor

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Thank you once again for your interest and help with prayers, feedback, purchases and DONATIONS! Please keep up the good work and look at <[www.waldensian.org.uk](http://www.waldensian.org.uk)> and on Facebook *The Waldensian Church Mission* for further news and updates!

I have received a sweet letter from **Margaret Gleave**. Along with her generous contribution she added a memory of when we first met at Wesley Church, Cambridge a long while ago. She was wearing a Huguenot cross and I 'bounced up to her' asking if she was of Huguenot descent ... Ever since, she writes, the 'Waldensians have been a favourite concern of mine' and she hopes to be able to visit the Valleys one day!

A lovely letter from **Mark Collins** unfortunately told me also of the demise of **George Dunn**, aged 101! Sheila and George Dunn were members of our Committee for a long time and incredibly good friends of the Waldensians most of their lives. If you have any memories of them please do let me know!



*Chanforan visit.*

The **Synod**, opening on 21 August in Torre Pellice will be a special one, an '**Assemblea-Sinodo**' because of the presence of representatives of the Baptist Churches. I hope to be there and to gather news and take pictures.

'Our' student at Queen's Foundation, Birmingham, **Kassim Conteh** is now in the process of writing his final dissertation. Please keep him in your prayers! In the Winter issue you'll learn about what he'll be doing next.

He has also managed to organise a trip to Italy with a group of fellow students from Queen's, visiting Rome and the Waldensian Valleys!

At our **AWAYDAY** in Barnet (October 2021) **Richard Grocott**, who was the representative of the Methodist Church of GB and of our Committee at the online Synod 2021, after Kassim Conteh's talk and before reporting on Synod, added a fascinating personal story. I've known him since his Roman days but even I didn't know all the details!

*Cover photo: Kassim Conteh meets Paddington Bear!*

## AWAYDAY 2022 (in person and on zoom)

**Wesley Church Cambridge**  
**Saturday 5 November 10.30 am (for 11) to 1 pm**

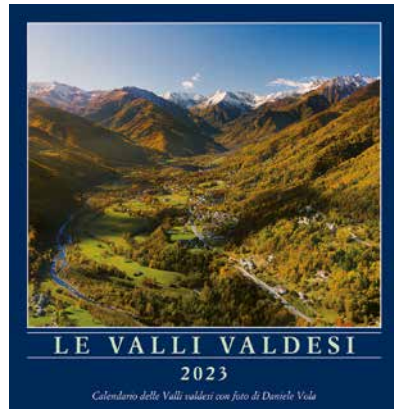
Our Patron **Leslie Griffiths** will tell us the amazing things he has been up to in the last few months, including receiving an Honorary DLitt from the University of Wales presented by the Prince of Wales.

**Albert de Lange** will talk to us from Germany about Henri Arnaud, without whom I doubt we would still have the Waldensian Valleys (as such) and the Waldensian Church.

**Erica Scropo** will talk about *Jacopo Lombardini*, Methodist teacher and preacher who took refuge in the Waldensian Valleys when persecuted by the Fascists in his native Carrara and inspired a generation of students from Collegio valdese and other youngsters, to fight against the Nazis. Lombardini, who escaped with the young partisans on the peaks of Val d'Angrogna but never carried a weapon, apart from his Bible, was the only Methodist preacher to be executed at Mauthausen.

## WALDENSIAN CALENDARS 2023

Stunning colour photos taken by drone; Bible verses also in English; available from beginning of October. Please order online at [www.waldensian.org.uk](http://www.waldensian.org.uk) or send a cheque for £18 (payable to Waldensian Church Mission) to Erica Newbury 85 St Andrew's Road Cambridge CB4 1DH. Order two for £30! (One for you, one for a friend!)





*Kassim meeting an Italian colleague serving in London, Claudia Lupi Ricco.*



*A history lesson at Scuola Beckwith.*



*At the Federation of the Protestant Churches in Italy*



*At the Methodist headquarters.*



*Paola Schellenbaum, member of Pinerolo Church in Aula Sinodale, reading about Kassim...*

*Some of Kassim's adventures.*

Complimenting Kassim for delivering his first public speech in very good English, he remembered the first time he was asked to preach in Italian! He was the minister of the English Speaking **Methodist Church in Ponte Sant'Angelo** in Rome and called the holiday centre (Foresteria valdese) in Rio Marina on Elba. They said that being a pastore (a minister) he will receive a discount: then they added that if he would also preach, the discount would be much bigger! 'Oh yes you are going to preach!', my wife said, Richard added.

He then told us how he ended up in Italy. He felt the call to the ministry when he was a student at Aston University in Birmingham and he was encouraged by a tutor at Queen's Foundation to serve in the Methodist Church Overseas Division and was sent as a missionary associated teacher to Japan for 2 years. He then went to **Wesley College Bristol** for four years, was ordained at the 1991 Methodist Conference and with his wife Carol decided to offer themselves again for serving overseas ... They thought they would end up in the Far East but they were offered ... **Rome!** He didn't even know there was a Methodist church there and didn't know a word of Italian ... but the idea was very exciting and there they went in the Autumn of 1993 with John, their newborn baby.

He had five wonderful enriching years: the congregation consisted of a very mixed community of 31 nationalities, from West Africans to Philipinos to English expats working for the UN's Food and Organisation etc. He studied Italian and started collaborating with the Italian Methodist Church in via Firenze and the two Waldensian ones at piazza Cavour and via IV Novembre.

When pastor Valdo Benecchi encouraged him to become an Italian minister, he was ready and more than happy. After five intensive years in a place that was also one of the most photogenic in the world, he left for the northeast in charge of two churches that could not have been more different. **Padua**, Waldensian, consisted of Italians, middle class, educated, liberal and well versed in academic theology. There you couldn't get away with just a 10-minute sermon. In **Vicenza**, Methodist, there was a small congregation of Italian steel-workers and an increasingly growing number of traditional, evangelical members from **Ghana**. Certainly it was not easy to put Bible classes together.

There was also a great opportunity for Ecumenical representation in a very traditional Roman Catholic part of Italy; often asked to speak at public



*Carol and Richard Grocott.*

gatherings as the only Protestant minister in the whole area, he was also asked unbelievable questions such as: ‘How can Protestants be Christians if they don’t believe in the Pope?’.

After another very intensive fascinating six years they felt it was time to move on. Richard is now **Superintendent** of Blackheath and Crystal Palace and, after his third appointment in this country since 2004, he feels that the Italian experience still has a great influence in his ministry and his approach to congregations of various and sometimes contrasting cultures.

He keeps close contacts with Italy, attending celebrations such as the recent centenary of Vicenza church, going back to Rome, attending Synod in Torre Pellice and being a member of the Committee of the WCM. They also have a small holiday flat in Trentino.

ESN

## **‘I was a stranger, and you welcomed me’: My surprising sabbatical in Italy**

When I arrived in Rome on New Year’s Day 2020, I was looking forward to the sabbatical of a lifetime. It was, of course—but not in the way that I had planned.

My original intention was to spend two months in Rome studying Italian, and then four months travelling around Italy doing interviews for a book called *Welcoming the Stranger*. Working with friends from Mediterranean Hope, I hoped to highlight the stories of several refugees. I envisioned the book as something that would be useful for Christians (and others) who need help discovering and understanding what the Bible has to say about welcoming the stranger (Deuteronomy 10:19).

It was a good plan, but it had no room for a pandemic. To be more precise, the pandemic had no room for my plan. By late February it was becoming ever more obvious that COVID-19 was going to get in the way of everyone’s plans—often in deadly ways.

Thus began a new and unexpected chapter of my sabbatical. Travelling around Italy was clearly out of the question in light of the strict lockdowns imposed by the Italian government to combat the spread of the virus. While I briefly considered returning to the US in mid-March, I still held on to the hope that I might be able to salvage some of my sabbatical plans when the lockdown lifted. So, at the gracious invitation of Archbishop Ian Ernest and his wife Kamla at the Anglican Centre, I settled into my little apartment in the heart of historic Rome to ride out the storm.

The next two months were both awful and wonderful. In the ‘awful’ category was the constant worry about friends and family in the States, where there was no consistent leadership to contain the virus. In April I received the news that two close friends in New York had died—putting faces on the statistics

that I tracked daily in what I came to call my 'plague journal'. Loneliness and claustrophobia were daily companions, as is obvious from this entry in my journal from late March: 'I had a pigeon sitting on my ledge for a few minutes today. I was sad when it flew away.'

There was, however, a 'wonderful' category in my pandemic experience. At the top of the list was my new lockdown family. Archbishop Ian, Kamla, and I were essentially a 'household', and though we limited our interactions, we still had occasional meals together. These were wonderful times of friendship and fellowship. Worship went ahead as well, although with only three in the congregation, our singing was sometimes more brave than beautiful. Still, we discovered new hymns and discussed familiar Scriptures all through Lent and well into the

Easter season. To be able to share in the Eucharist and to pray together meant absolutely everything during those dark days. To paraphrase the words of an old hymn, 'we shared our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bore, and often for each other flowed the sympathizing tear' ('Blest Be the Tie That Binds' by John Fawcett, v. 3).

It's safe to say this is not the sabbatical I expected. But in view of the human and economic devastation world-wide, it seemed selfish to waste too many tears on that. To paraphrase Humphrey Bogart in the final scene of the movie *Casablanca*: 'I'm no good at being noble, but it doesn't take much to see that the problems of one little person don't amount to a hill of beans in this crazy world.'

Key to this realization was learning to ask, 'What does God want me to learn and do during this experience?'. So, rather than rail against my own dashed expectations, I tried to lean into some new learnings. One of these was a Bible study series that I shared on my blog. Called 'Roman Roads', the series sought to address the grim realities of the pandemic from a theological/biblical perspective. Because Italy's experience of the pandemic was at that time about two weeks ahead of the USA's, I found that I could anticipate some of the issues that my readers would soon be facing. It gave the Bible studies



*Carol Bechtel at Ca' d'la Pais,  
Val d'Angrogna*

a prophetic quality for which I can take no credit. It was—in my Calvinist opinion—an act of pure providence.

Looking back on it, I can see the hand of Providence in so many aspects of my time in Italy. In addition to the hospitality I received at the Anglican Centre, I received enormous support from Waldensian friends and colleagues. Fiona Kendell at Mediterranean Hope was indispensable as ‘translator in chief’, helping me cope with the intricacies of Italian forms and pandemic travel. The weekly Waldensian worship service via Zoom became a highlight of my week. I especially enjoyed the expressions of happy surprise in the chat: ‘Are you still here!?’

In mid-May the travel restrictions lifted just enough for me to make my way to the little village of Verne near Torre Pellice. I have to admit, I did enjoy exchanging the street noise of Rome to the cowbells of Angrogna.

On 4 July 2021, I was able to return safely to my home in Holland, Michigan. But I will never forget all the kindness, generosity, and hospitality I experienced during my surprising sabbatical. I learned first-hand how much it means to say, ‘I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

Carol M. Bechtel

*Executive Director of the American Waldensian Society, as well as Professor of Old Testament at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan*

*I also found the online address by Carol to the Waldensian Synod 2021 very appropriate. Starting from 1906 when the American Waldensian Aid Society was founded she underlined that its members were all from the Waldensian Valleys and their aim was to help people and Churches from there. When, as it happens, little by little the original Waldensians started moving around in the States and joining mainstream churches, other people learned about the Waldensian Church and its history. Later on the perception changed: during WWII the Americans liked the Waldensians because so many had been antifascist; after the war they liked the effort towards reconciliation and later the stances for social justice. Now there is a lot of admiration for what this small Church is doing, leading the way in accepting migrants and helping refugees to escape danger and persecution in legal ways. Many, Carol and her husband included, joined and are joining the American Waldensian Society, as it is now called, despite not having any blood connection with the Waldensians of the Valleys, because of the affinity they feel with it.*

ESN

## **The Beckwith connection in Chester**

One of the things which I have found to occupy time in retirement has been to renew my acquaintance with Chester Cathedral. Over 60 years ago I went to the King’s School, then moved from its cramped quarters in the Cathedral where it had been since its foundation in 1542 and relocated in splendid new





premises opened by the Queen Mother just before I arrived in 1960. Strangely enough, a decade later I was able to see her opening new buildings, this time the Rank Building at Wesley House on Jesus Lane, Cambridge, as I looked out from my digs at no. 36. Like the cherry tree that they lost in the rebuilding, she was dressed in shocking pink!!

But back to Chester Cathedral. I decided to volunteer as an honorary chaplain, part of the welcoming team to greet the hundreds of visitors who normally flock to this wondrous abbey church, over 900 years old, which became a Cathedral in the Reformation. My school then nearby was a by-product of Henry VIII's despoiling of the monasteries: a school formed for 24 poor boys. 400-plus years later I entered the school on a free place in a then direct grant school (now independent) and was grateful for this minor reparation for the terrible destruction of much of the medieval fabric of English Christianity.

Being a chaplain at the Cathedral involves what one person at college once called, in those pre-safeguarding days, 'loitering with intent'. That is hanging around looking as if you might want to chat to someone if they felt the need to ask a question or make a comment on anything from 'How old is this church?' to 'Can you bless our rings, Father?'. It's something my ecumenical and aesthetic experience in Rome has qualified me well for. Having been a chaplain in prisons and higher education, it is now good to be able to relate to a wider cross-section of the British (and international) society! I remember Anthony Zurcher, the BBC correspondent in the USA, coming in at the time of our last General Election. I had a fascinating discussion on the relative state of British and American politics.

But these are diversions. One day, when not so busy and on my peregrination of the Cathedral, instead of looking up and reading all the memorials on the walls, I looked down beneath a stack of chairs in the South aisle and my eyes lit upon a word. BECKWITH. What if? My curiosity was aroused. Could this be a relative of THE BECKWITH I'd heard so much about?

The gravestone merely records this: that **Georgiana Beckwith** died June 10th 1832 aged 19 years and then **Major General William Henry Beckwith** on 17th March 1844, aged 78 years.

Through the internet (remember that most researchers have had to use online tools in the lockdown period), I was able to confirm my assumption, given the obvious military connections, that William Henry was indeed related to John Charles Beckwith. Charles was his nephew and executor of his will. From that will, a transcript of which can be found by a Google search, and from notes by a local history group researching the gravestones of his three daughters buried in a country churchyard near Great Malvern (Guarlford in Herefordshire), I discovered the following family information which links them to the Chester area.

There were five daughters and a son (John Ferdinand, born in 1824, the year after the last daughter Sophie) born to the marriage of William Henry Beckwith and Sophia his wife. Before the father's death the family moved around, reflecting no doubt his career as a military man. Charlotte, the eldest, was born in Ireland in 1808 when her father was already 42. Elizabeth, the second, was born in Scotland around 1810. Jessie Henrietta was born in Tullamore, Ireland, in 1812. Georgiana (who features on his gravestone), who predeceased him, was possibly a victim of the cholera epidemic of 1832, and must have been born in 1813, but I do not know where. Two further children (Sophie born in Scotland in 1823 and John Ferdinand in 1824) may indicate a second possible marriage? Sophia Maria Johanna (née Ewing), his surviving wife, was born around 1784 (18 years his junior), possibly born in Scotland?

The paterfamilias forming the family connections was **Major General John Beckwith** (1712–1787), born in Yorkshire. He fought in the Battle of Minden in 1759, the annus mirabilis of the Seven Years War, defeating the French. All five of the sons born to him and Janet (née Wisheart) of Edinburgh served in the armed forces.

**John**, the eldest (b. 1751), served in various regiments, ending up as a Lt. Colonel in Nova Scotia in the provincial militia. He married the sister of the local judge and politician Sir Brenton Halliburton. It was their son **John Charles** (b. 1782). born in Halifax, Nova Scotia, who also joined the armed forces in 1794. Was William Henry the uncle perhaps the one who gave the then 12-year-old Charles Beckwith the Bible to take with him when he sailed from Halifax to Britain to join the Army? Was this the beginning of the evangelical encounter which sustained him on his long military career which ended in 1820, having by then lost his leg so heroically in the Battle of Waterloo?

The other brothers too had distinguished military careers. **Sir George** (b. 1752) was a general in the American War of Independence and the Peninsular War and ended up being Governor of Bermuda, St Vincent and Barbados. He is interred in Marylebone (d. 1823)—if it is the old churchyard of the Parish Church, then he may lie close to Charles Wesley!! His younger brother **Ferdinand Amelia Fairfax** (b. 1764) was a Brigadier General and also interred in Marylebone (d. 1805). Next was **Sir Thomas Sidney**, who served in the British Army in India, Ceylon and in Europe and the Americas, as Assistant Quartermaster General in Canada and moving latterly as Commander-in-Chief in Bombay in 1829. He died two years later there of the fever.



*Kassim with Tim and Angela Macquiban at Chester Cathedral.*

And so we come to **William Henry Beckwith** (b. 1776) who we only know to have been born ‘in foreign parts’. We would have to delve deeper into his father’s military service to see where the family might have been stationed that year. We know that he served in campaigns in the Caribbean and in the European theatres of war (including Ireland—remember Vinegar Hill?). By the time of writing his first will in 1838, presumably now retired from military service, he was living in Cheshire, with a town house in the Abbey Square in the shadow of Chester Cathedral, but also living in Great Neston 10 miles away in the Wirral in 1841, very close to Parkgate, still the place of disembarkation for Ireland. He left in his will the Abbey Square house with all its goods and furniture to his wife Sophie and £200 of stock. To his dear nephew Lt. Charles Beckwith £100 stock and to his other two executors £50 each. Charles and the family solicitor were to hold monies on trust for his wife (£12,000) and for his children (£9000 to be divided five ways). There was a separate bequest for his eldest daughter Charlotte, who was married to an Anglican clergyman.

What caught my eye was the final clauses about his son John Ferdinand, who was ‘recommended to the watchful care of Charles Beckwith and Philip Graves [the solicitor] and the attention of his cousins Charles and Henry Ferdinand of whom I hear well to look after him and left to the mercy and protection of our great and kind Lord and Master Jesus Christ, for then he will never want a friend’. By the time of the codicil of 1841, Charles was now a Colonel.

Much remains to be researched when I can get to London and Cambridge and find the time to do further research. But I hope that the work done on Charles's uncle William Henry reveals the military networks of which he was so deeply a part and the deep Christian faith which may have led him to send the Bible to the young Charles and to entrust his own son to his tender care after his decease. And just look what a mighty work God had in store for that great man to help the Waldensians!!

*Tim Macquiban*

### **In memory of Albert Bertin (6 December 1925–27 March 2020)**



The Swiss Church in London has lost its longest standing member Albert Bertin. With much sadness we had to say goodbye to this wonderful man who will be remembered for his wit, kindness and historic knowledge. Due to the current circumstances and Albert's age the committal service was brought to his friends and family via live stream from Hendon crematorium.

Albert leaves behind his wife and life companion Serenella and many friends and family who cared for him until the very end. Serenella and Albert, whose parents migrated to the UK from northern Italy, met at the Swiss Church in London. They had been married for over sixty years.

Albert's cultural identity as a French-speaking Italian and Waldensian was hugely important to him, and he stayed faithful to his roots until the very end. Albert first joined the Swiss Church with his mother and sister Elena who was also a member of the church until her death in 2018. They had been introduced to the congregation by a Swiss family friend.

In the past months there was one particular memory that Albert was keen to share with his visitors. When his mother and her two children first came to the Swiss Church, she pointed out to the then Reverend Hoffman that they weren't Swiss citizens. Reverend Hoffman said: '*Dans mon église il n'y a pas besoin de passeport.*' – 'In my church there is no need for a passport.' This story made Albert chuckle, and the wit in his eyes will always be remembered.

Switzerland became his adopted country just as much as England.

Albert was a source of knowledge, especially of the history of his native Italy as he once successfully proved in the famous English TV programme *Mastermind*; he spoke five languages and he also knew the history of the Swiss Church in London inside out, having served as the first non-Swiss member of the Consistoire, the Parish Council, which filled him with pride.

Albert lived with his parents and sister in Kentish Town when the Blitz during WWII started. Because of his young age Albert was evacuated to the countryside. He later became a teacher at a technical college in Westminster. Albert's health deteriorated rapidly over recent years. He last came to attend the Swiss Church on his 90th birthday, a memorable date as it fell on the day when Swiss people celebrate Saint Nicholas.

Albert was admitted to hospital shortly after Christmas last year and was then moved to a care home where he passed away.

A memorial service to celebrate and commemorate Albert's life will take place at the Swiss Church in due course. Our thoughts and prayers are with Serenella and with Albert's family in Italy and Switzerland, as well as with their carer Pamela who has shown them so much love and care on a daily basis over the past years, and with his close friends and neighbours who stayed at his side until the end.

*Jésus dit: 'C'est moi qui suis la résurrection et la vie. Celui qui croit en moi vivra, même s'il meurt.'*

Rest in peace, Albert.

*Reverend Carla Maurer*

## **John Polkinghorne (16 October 1930–9 March 2021)**

He was one of the most famous scientists-turned-clergymen in the world, someone who stepped down from the height of a Cambridge Professorship to become a humble parish vicar. At Trinity College, where he enrolled in 1949, he was lectured by Paul Dirac, specialising in Quantum Mechanics under the supervision of Abdus Salam. He was elected fellow of Trinity College in 1955, soon after completing his PhD. After various posts, in 1968 he was back in Cambridge as Professor of Mathematical Physics. His work focused on the field of elementary particles, where he contributed to the discovery of the quark and researched into Feynman integrals and the foundation of S-matrix theory. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1974 and among a great number of scientific papers in 1979 he wrote *The Particle Play*, a book for a popular readership that started a long series of publications for a wider public.

What had happened is well known: in 1979, after a busy, long meeting of the Department, John told his shocked colleagues that he would resign from the University to read Theology and train to become an Anglican priest. He

also remarked that people do their very best work in Mathematics under the age of 45 and he felt that he was ready for a new chapter. Christianity had always been integral part of his life: he had met his wife Ruth, a fellow Maths student, at the Christian Union and she totally backed his new choice.



He studied at Wescott House, was ordained in 1982; after various posts in 1986 he became Dean of Chapel of Trinity Hall and from 1989 to 1996 was President of Queens' College. Knighted in 1997 by HM the Queen, in 2002 he was awarded the prestigious Templeton Prize by the Prince of Edinburgh in a private ceremony at Buckingham Palace. He was one of the founders of the Society of Ordained Scientists, the founding President of the International Society for Science and Religion, a regular contributor to the Faraday Institute and much, much more!

All this can be read everywhere; what is unique, though, is my memory of the time he was a guest speaker of our **Awayday in October 2008** at the French Church in Soho. Richard and I gave him and Daniele Pevarello, who was then studying for his PhD, a lift by car to London, also because we were carrying a load of books, calendars, magazines etc. Richard, quite rightly, was in a bit of a state about driving into central London, even if we had one of the first *navigators*. Being anxious made him turn too early and risk taking the wrong way. Luckily we soon had Professor Polkinghorne from the back telling us exactly what 400 or 800 metres meant and when to turn! We safely reached Soho Square and managed to disembark people and goods. Unfortunately, on our way to find a parking place, though, the navigator didn't spot a barrier, its stentorian voice ordered to go left and our car hit a bollard! After a splendid talk to a spellbound public John was offered a lift back to Cambridge in the afternoon or a trip sooner with Richard on the recovery truck with the car on top. He chose the truck!

He became a good friend; I often saw him at theatre, concerts or at the Faraday Institute. Living in the same neighbourhood we met from time to time at our house or his; he was a keen reader of the Waldensian Review and a great admirer of the Waldensian calendar! RIP dear John!

ESN

## Book review

*I have decided to recommend John Dickie's latest book because Freemasonry played a deep part in the Unification of Italy and the spreading of the Gospel preached by the Waldensian Church. The author, a Professor at UCL, came to Torre Pellice to one of the first editions of Torre Pellice book fair Una Torre di Libri and was impressed by the place and the audience.*

John Dickie: *The Craft. How the Freemasons Made the Modern World*. Hodder, 2020. £ 10.99

Researched by a Professor but written by the proficient story-teller he is, this weighty book is worth reading since, despite being full of hard facts, it is also very entertaining. Dickie is a world authority on Mafia and Camorra and he admits that at times he has simplified the problem, claiming that Mafia is Freemasonry for criminals: especially when a Mafia boss was arrested in London in August 2013 and he was extensively interviewed and asked for comments. One evening he received an email from the Head of Communications of the United Grand Lodge of England inviting him to Freemasons' Hall for a chat. Having realised that there was no convincing and comprehensive publication on the subject, he started working on it, and this is the result. Neither a celebration nor a denigration, the book describes its faults as well as its positive points and results that certainly exceed the bad ones and illustrates the shocking false truths about Freemasonry that have sprung up everywhere in the world! For a secret organisation it seems to have been easily infiltrated and hijacked in the most extraordinary way! It is shocking to read about the Illuminati, but also its distorted lodges, especially in Italy, from the post-Risorgimento ones to Licio Gelli's infamous P2.

On the other side, in rather obscure times it has vastly contributed in promoting its ideals of freedom, equality and tolerance, shaping the societies we now live in and spreading in every continent! From royalty to US Presidents, writers, musicians, artists, academics, scientists, the list of its members would fill another book. Rosa Park's father and grandfather belonged to a black lodge; Nehru and Kipling were members of the same one ... to mention just two examples.

Meanwhile, its enemies were and still are formidable: the Roman Catholic Church, Mussolini, Franco, Hitler and even Gramsci, the founder of the Italian Communist Party. At present all the free countries have freemasonry, while dictatorships and repressive societies do not. The only exception among the Communists was Cuba, since their hero José Martí was a brother.

Three-quarters through the book, Dickie tells the touching story of his grandfather surviving the First World War and the depressing aftermaths also, thanks to the friendship and fraternity of his lodge. Which obviously was lacking in places like Italy where the disbanded and deceived soldiers turned towards subversive violent Fascism.

ES

**WALDENSIAN CHURCH MISSIONS, VAUDOIS PASTORS FUND  
& CANON ARMSTRONG BEQUEST - SUMMARY ACCOUNTS  
YEAR ENDED 31/12/2021**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2020</b>		<b>2021</b>
Individual Donations	2095.26		2004.33
Tax Refund	372.50		
Legacies			1000.00
		2467.76	3004.33
Vaudois Clergy Trust			1590.49
Publications	814.09		1650.91
Dividend & Interest	3629.40		3621.43
		<u>4443.49</u>	<u>6862.83</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6911.25</b>	<b>9867.16</b>
 <b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
<b>Payments to Italy</b>			
Student	3160.00		9850.00
		3160.00	9850.00
Review	471.99		412.00
Deputation			
Sec/Post/Stationery	2348.28		2494.22
Publications			630.12
Sundries	163.04		5.00
		<u>2983.31</u>	<u>3541.34</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6143.31</b>	<b>13391.34</b>
 <b>NET INC / EXPEND</b>		 <b>767.94</b>	 <b>-3524.18</b>
Opening Bank Balance	27644.78		28412.82
Income	6911.25		9867.16
Expenditure	<u>-6143.31</u>		<u>-13391.34</u>
Closing Bank Balance	28412.82		24888.64



## Government gives to Waldenses

Too good to be true? No! For every donation which you make to the Waldensian Church Missions, the Government will add a further 25%, providing you are a tax-payer.

Since 5 April 2000 the new Gift Aid scheme has replaced Deeds of Covenant and the process is much simpler. This applies to all donations of any size or frequency. Thus a gift of only £1 made once will be increased by 25% as will a monthly donation of £100.

All that is required is for the donor to complete a simple declaration in the form given below and to forward this to the Treasurer whose address is on the inside of the back page. Once this form has been completed it covers all future donations by the same person. Unlike Deeds of Covenant, you are not committed to regular giving for a number of years.

Some of you have already completed such a form, but for those who have not, I would urge you to consider seriously this opportunity for the Waldensian Church Missions to benefit from the Government's generosity, but more importantly, to enable our giving to our friends in Italy to be increased.



### WALDENSIAN CHURCH MISSIONS

Registered Charity No. 277255

#### GIFT AID DECLARATION

To: **Waldensian Church Missions, 5 Woodgate Close, Woodgate, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 3TA**

I (title) . . . . . (name) . . . . .

(address) . . . . .

Postcode . . . . . Tel. no. . . . .

would like all donations I make to Waldensian Church Missions from the date of this declaration to be treated as Gift Aid donations. I understand I must be paying income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount being reclaimed by the Missions. I understand that I can cancel this Gift Aid declaration at any time.

Signature of donor . . . . . Date . . . . .

## The Waldensian Church

It is the native Protestant Church of Italy whose origins pre-date the Reformation. It arose from an evangelical movement founded in the 12th century by Waldo, a rich merchant from Lyon, who was to inspire St Francis: he gave all away to the poor and started preaching the Gospel in the vernacular, which caused conflict with the Papacy. Travelling in pairs the Waldensian itinerant preachers, having learnt the Scriptures by heart, set off to found underground communities from Sicily to Russia. The ensuing persecution by the Inquisition drove them into their mountain fastness in the Alpine Valleys of northwest Italy, where they remain in what are still called the Waldensian Valleys. At their Synod in 1532 they voted to join the Genevan Reformation, a decision that brought even more persecution upon this exposed outpost of Protestantism. Their sufferings were recorded in Milton's famous sonnet "On The Late Massacre in Piedmont". Their survival down to the present has been a remarkable testament of faith.

The Waldensian community was emancipated in 1848, but did not reach full freedom until 1984. Since the Italian unification in 1860 they have established churches throughout Italy and, following emigration, in the USA, Argentina and Uruguay. In 1979 the Italian Methodist Church combined with them and they hold a common annual Synod, which is the controlling authority of the Church and takes place in Torre Pellice. The Churches of Rio de la Plata have their own Synod, Board and Moderator.

The 60 parishes have founded 120 outreach activities ranging from schools, hospitals, children's and old people's homes, radio stations, and ecumenical community centres, often catering for the needs of the most deprived and mafia-ridden parts of Italy, especially the disadvantaged South and the new immigrant communities.

The Waldensian Church has a theological college in Rome, a publishing house, Claudiana, and a weekly paper, *Riforma*.

## The English Committee of the Waldensian Church Missions

This was founded in 1825 as a support group for the Waldensian Church in Italy. Since 1979 its finances, together with those of the Vaudois Pastors Fund, have been administered by Trustees under the terms of the Scheme drawn up by the Charity Commission and dated 18 January that year.

The Committee seek to arouse interest and financial support in England and Wales for the Waldensian Church. Twice yearly we publish a *Waldensian Review* and occasionally other literature. We also arrange meetings for Waldensian pastors visiting this country and support students of Theology who want to spend the compulsory 'year abroad' studying in this country.

There are similar Waldensian support groups in Scotland, Ireland, USA and in various European countries.

**The English Committee in aid of the Waldensian Church Missions**  
Established 1825

*Patron:* The Lord The Rev. Leslie Griffiths  
26 Stroud Road, Croydon, London SE25 5DR  
email lesliejohngriffiths@gmail.com

*Chairman:* Ian Nimmo-Smith  
17 Mariners Way, Cambridge CB4 1BN

*Executive Secretary:* Erica Scropo Newbury  
85 St Andrew's Road, Cambridge CB4 1DH  
Telephone 01223-315753, email ericascropo@hotmail.com

*Hon. Treasurer:* Mr Mark Stephens  
5 Woodgate Close, Woodgate, Chichester PO20 3TA  
Telephone 01243-545877, email marklynne5@btinternet.com

**The Scottish Waldensian Missions Aid Society**

*Chair:* The Rev. Mary Cranfield  
The Manse, Daviot, Inverurie AB51 1AJ, Scotland

*Secretary and Treasurer:* Mr D.A. Lamb, SSC  
36 Liberton Drive, Edinburgh EH16 6NN, Scotland  
Telephone 0131-664-3059

*The Waldensian Review* is sent twice a year to those who are interested in the Waldensian church in Italy, its history and present-day work and witness.

tick

- Change of address:  
 I wish to donate £ . . . for the magazine:  
 Please send me more / fewer copies of the *The Waldensian Review*:  
 Please send *The Waldensian Review* to (new supporter):

Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms

Other:

No. of copies:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE TREASURER AT THE ADDRESS ABOVE**

## Publications

### **The Waldensian Story: A Study in Faith, Intolerance and Survival**

by Prescott Stephens — £25 *inc. postage and packing*

### **The Waldensians' 'Glorious Recovery' of their Alpine Valleys**

The legendary 'Recovery' with a brief summary of the previous 500 years

by Richard Newbury — £3 *plus postage and packing*

### **Think of a Farmhouse in the Mountains**

From refuge for antifascist partisans destroyed by the Germans to 'The House for Peace' holiday camp and retreat. In Italian and English

*£12.50 inc. postage and packing*

### **What the British found when they discovered the French Vaudois in the Nineteenth Century**

by W.S.F. Pickering — £3 *plus postage and packing*

*All these books are available from*

Miss Nicky Raddon, 19 Sampson Avenue, Barnet EN5 2RN

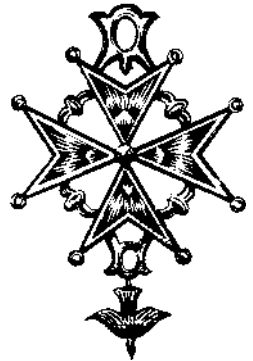
Email: [njraddon@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:njraddon@hotmail.co.uk) (preferred)

or telephone 0208 3648182

**Please email for exact cost of postage**

**Souvenirs and information can be obtained  
from:**

The Huguenot Society, University College, Gow-  
er Street, London WC1E 6BT



*The Huguenot Cross, symbol of Protestantism all over Europe*