



WILLIAM FREND

William Hugh Clifford Frend

1916–2005

WILLIAM HUGH CLIFFORD FREND was born on 11 January 1916, the second son of the Revd E. G. C. Frend, Vicar of Shottermill in Surrey.¹ His mother, Edith née Bacon, was the daughter of a progressive general practitioner, one of the first to have a telephone installed. A sister of his mother was the first woman to become an alderman in Leeds. William Frend 1757–1841,² a great great-uncle, was deprived of his fellowship at Jesus College, Cambridge, because of his Unitarian and generally left-wing views at the time of the French Revolution,³ though he continued to receive the income of the fellowship until he got married. Whether genes running through the Frend family had anything to do with it or not, the theme of dissent was always central to Frend's projects of research. The themes investigated by him usually involved controversy over the nature of the Church and its dealing with diversity, above all the question whether the Church should set itself to be a society of saints, a 'gathered Church' as he called it, or a society of both saints and sinners living in the

¹ In 1932, when he found Shottermill getting too much, he opted for the livings at Tyneham and Steeple in the Isle of Purbeck, where he stayed for the remaining four years of his life.

² The father of this William Frend was a wine merchant and twice mayor of Canterbury.

³ He was author (among much else that was both radical and interesting) of: *An address to inhabitants of Cambridge and of its neighbourhood, exhorting them to turn from false worship of three persons to the worship of the one true God*, 1st edn. (St Ives, 1788); *Scarcity of bread, a plan for reducing the high price of this article in a letter addressed by William Frend to William Devaynen* (London, 1795); *Peace and union recommended to the associated bodies of republicans and anti-republicans* (Cambridge, 1793). See *The trial of William Frend MA, fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge in the vice chancellor's court for publishing a pamphlet entitled peace and union*, by John Beverley, proctor of the vice chancellor's court (Cambridge, 1793). A biography: Frida Knight, *University Rebel: the Life of William Frend 1751–1841* (London, 1971).

world and making compromises with it. He was obviously also very much interested in different attitudes taken by individual Christians and by different groups of Christians towards ‘the powers that be’.

William Frend was the youngest by seven years of a family of four children (two sisters and two brothers). In his biographical notes he wrote: ‘I never heard a rough word between my father and my mother, and while I was a bit of an outsider, the rest of the family, plus cousins, were very united . . . I had a French governess when I was four . . . I was also beginning to be interested in archaeology. This was partly due to the age gap separating me from other members of the family. At times my parents had little idea what to do with me when the rest of the family was at home. The museum (at Haslemere) was the answer.’ The curator was E. W. Swanton, who had transformed a miscellaneous collection of flints and stuffed birds into a museum with stimulating displays illustrating geological time and world history from the Mesolithic to the expansion of Britain in the nineteenth century. It fired Frend’s imagination.

Frend was educated as a boarder at Fernden Preparatory School, Haslemere, a school to which he later felt that he owed an enormous debt, and then went on to Haileybury 1929–34, where he won an exhibition, and later a scholarship. He remembered his form-master J. Hampden Jackson, ‘a genius as a teacher and an inspiring, rather leftward, personality’, who was an expert on Central Europe and Finland, and knew a great deal about economic history. Frend appreciated the freedom senior boys were given at that school. He was allowed to excavate in the garden of the local station master, and he and Christopher Mayhew circulated as a discussion paper for the sixth form, a left-wing, anti-public school journal called *Out of Bounds*. Frend’s school record was not particularly distinguished, but in 1934 he won an open scholarship to Keble College.

Looking back, Frend felt that the scholarship had been the turning point in his life. In addition to his study for Honours Schools, in 1934 and 1935 Frend took part as a volunteer in Mortimer Wheeler’s dig at Maiden Castle. He duly gained a first class in Modern History with examiners’ congratulations in 1937. He decided to go on to take a D.Phil. This was the time of the Spanish Civil War and Frend sided strongly with the republican government. So there need be no surprise that he chose as his subject the Donatists of Roman North Africa, with his sympathies favouring the supposed heretics as against St Augustine their great opponent. Hugh Last and Norman Baynes were his supervisors. Baynes became a friend, and his advice to the budding academic was remem-

bered: 'Be generous but not lavish with footnotes. Always give credit where it is due. End a critical review on a positive note. Our students have first call on our assistance. Research must seek to meet the needs of each new generation of scholars.' Frend's father died in 1937, the year he graduated, and he and his mother were left on slender resources. Frend now depended on grants and scholarships. Haileybury helped with a grant of £200. However, he also managed to win a Craven Fellowship which enabled him to gain wider experience and background knowledge for his research by travelling. It was on the advice of Baynes that he spent the year 1937–8 in Berlin studying under Hans Lietzmann.

In Berlin Frend lived with a Jewish family while attending the Friedrich Wilhelm, now Humboldt, University as a *Gasthörer*. Lietzmann was at that time the leading representative of the German tradition of ecclesiastical history established by A. von Harnack. In his last book, *From Dogma to History: how an understanding of the Early Church developed* (London, 2003), Frend expressed his gratitude to von Harnack and Lietzmann,

Theirs was a movement from Dogma to History. My work has been decisively influenced by these scholars . . . I have attempted to build on their foundations, to integrate the study of the mission and thought of early Christian Churches into the social and political movements of the day . . . I have taken Adolf von Harnack (1851–1930) as the founder of the new approach to early Church history. He was a scholar who cut through some of the niceties of Lutheran ecclesiastical law to a truth based on a minimum of credal statements, and on acceptance, as he put it, of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man revealed in the New Testament . . . He believed that a scholar should also be a 'doer' in the service of his Church.

The Harnack tradition held a strong but non-dogmatic allegiance to Christianity. It sought religious truth, or more exactly the values and the essential nature of religion, through historical research. The approach was conservative and patriotic, but at the same time also called for a strong social conscience. It was obviously extremely congenial to one side of Frend's personality, a side which complemented the radical and rebellious instincts which he shared with his eighteenth-century great great-uncle.

Lietzmann did Frend another important service: he gave him a letter of introduction to his friend Louis Poinssot, the Director General of Antiquities for Tunisia, who later introduced him to André Berthier.⁴

⁴ Cf. Frend's review of A. Berthier and colleagues, *Les vestiges du Christianisme antique dans la Numidie centrale*, in *Journal of Roman Studies*, 34 (1944), 152–3.

Frend visited many archaeological sites in Tunisia and later in Algeria, and also was given the opportunity to do some archaeological work himself. In this way he gained first-hand experience of the archaeological remains which were to figure so largely in his book on the Donatists, and at the same time he was impressed by the way French archaeologists from Gsell to Berthier applied archaeology to history. Frend came to feel that archaeological evidence was enormously important to counterbalance the overwhelming 'orthodoxy' of the surviving written sources.⁵ In a report to the Foreign Office the British consul in Tunis wrote that Frend was an atheist and a Marxist. This was almost certainly no longer true. The consul, like many others later, failed to see the mischievous twinkle which often used to lighten Frend's argumentative conversation.⁶ Frend also spent part of 1939 at the Sorbonne. By now he had started to publish in learned journals.⁷

Frend was in the Cadet Reserve, but he stood down in September 1939 to complete his thesis. He received his D.Phil. in 1940 on the day Paris fell. In 1940 he had a medical prior to call-up and was classified 'D', because he had still not fully recovered from a duodenal ulcer he had suffered in 1935. Thereupon, Frend was directed by the Ministry of Labour and National Service to the War Office (F.1) as Assistant Principal. Among other duties he wrote a report on water supplies in North Africa for the Inter Service Intelligence Survey. In April 1941 he was seconded to the Cabinet Office, and from then until August 1942 he served as Secretary to two Cabinet Committees dealing with Free French Forces, and with Allied supplies. He was then transferred to Political Intelligence in the Foreign Office, then stationed at Woburn Abbey. His task was to compile intelligence reports for use in propaganda in North Africa, mainly directed against the Vichy authorities. In August 1943 he was transferred to North Africa. In November he was promoted to be Head of 'D' Section (Intelligence) for the Psychological Warfare Branch in North Africa with his centre at Tunis. Frend recalls:

⁵ *Saints and Sinners in the Early Church, differing and conflicting traditions in the first six centuries* (London, 1985), p. 176.

⁶ See below, p. 52.

⁷ His earliest publications were a review of Y. Allais, *Djemilla*, in *Journal of Roman Studies*, 28. 2 (1938), 254–5; 'The *memoriae apostolorum* in Roman North Africa', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 30 (1940), 32–49; and signifying the direction of his interests 'A note on the Berber background in the Life of Saint Augustine', *Journal of Theological Studies*, 43 (1942), 179–81 and 'The revival of Berber art', *Antiquity*, 15 (1942), 342–52.

The problems were obvious. By and large the Tunisians had favoured Rommel . . . Even after the surrender contact with influential Tunisians was a necessity. This meant Habib Bourguiba and his Neo-Destour . . . For five months all went well . . . but the French were suspicious . . . I found my position difficult . . . I was moved over to the German section of PWB. I always believe that my efforts helped secure good relations, which have continued to the present, with a progressive Arab state.

In April 1944 Frend was transferred to Italy. He served at Allied Forces Headquarters as Intelligence Officer in the German Section, successively at Caserta, Rome and Florence. After the capture of Rome, Frend took part in some extremely interesting and informative conversations with the staff of the German embassy, which led to von Weizsäcker, the German ambassador to the Vatican, cooperating with the allies, and to the embassy staff staying in Rome instead of being sent back to Germany.⁸ Subsequently Frend served in the 5th Army PWB Combat Unit, with the US 92nd Division. His task was to broadcast front-line propaganda at the German 148th division opposite. This division had been recruited in Silesia and consequently included many Poles. Frend's propaganda persuaded significant numbers of these men to come over, and to join General Anders' army. As Intelligence Officer, among other duties, Frend had to interrogate German prisoners of war, including generals. Some of them suggested that Britain should now take over Germany and run it like its Empire.⁹

When Frend left Intelligence in 1946 he was uncertain about his future career. He applied for a place in the Foreign Office. A perceptive interviewer asked him whether he would not prefer to become a don. Frend's answer that this was certainly an idea evidently did not go down well, for he did not get in. He was, however, given a temporary job on the board responsible for editing German Foreign Ministry Documents 1947–51.¹⁰ While engaged on this work in Berlin he spent spare time converting his D.Phil. thesis into the book which became *The Donatist Church*. When he was no longer needed for the editing of German documents the career of a don beckoned, though he may have hankered after a career in politics, for as late as 1966–7 he was chairman of the Cambridge City Liberal

⁸ The British authorities were careful to prevent these conversations from turning into negotiations, which the Germans evidently hoped that they would. See Frend's account in *History Today*, 54.12 (2004), 62–3.

⁹ After the war Frend held a territorial commission in the Queen's Royal Regiment from 1947 to 1967. He was awarded the TD in 1959, and a clasp in 1967.

¹⁰ *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, Ser. C and D (London, HMSO, 1950–), special responsibility for vols. iii and iv in Series D.

Party, and Liberal candidate for the Market Ward. Whether he had such hankerings or not, in 1951 Frend applied for and obtained a research fellowship at Nottingham University.¹¹ There he did research on Manichaeism in North Africa, and revived a moribund archaeological society for staff and students.

On 2 June 1951 William Frend married Mary Grace, daughter of E. A. Crook FRCS. Mary was a very stable and sensible partner. She was perhaps more traditionally religious than her husband. She kept the home-fires burning, and her husband in order with good humour. They had a son (Simon) and a daughter (Sally). In 1952 Frend published *The Donatist Church*, probably his most influential book.¹² He had been engaged with this theme—on and off—since 1937. The book is remarkable for the lucid explanation of the surviving Donatist texts, and presents sympathetic portraits of the Donatist leaders, especially Donatus, Parmenian and Tyconius. It was a pioneering work in the way it relates the development of a religious movement to its political, social and economic contexts, as well as in the full use Frend made of the rich archaeological evidence from the Africa of the High Plains that had been revealed by the work of French archaeologists from Gsell to Berthier. Frend was now able to put into practice his conviction of the fundamental importance of archaeological research for understanding the spread and material culture of early Christianity, a conviction which informed not only all his subsequent writings, but also the teaching he gave to his students. *The Donatist Church* remains a model of how a subject of this kind should be treated.

Why, Frend asked, did a contested episcopal election to the see of Carthage create so profound and lasting a division in the African Church? Frend studied the geographical prevalence of the schism, and tried to relate the strength of its appeal to the ethnic, social, economic and cultural background of its followers, including what he thought were the linguistic divisions of the region. He decided that the principal division was between the peasants on the inland plains of Numidia, who were Donatists, and the inhabitants of the cities and towns nearer the coast, who were Catholics. He concluded that Donatism reflected the aspir-

¹¹ Memoir: 'Richard, Patrick, Crossland Hanson 1916–1988', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 76 (1990), 411–22, on p. 416.

¹² Professor D. F. Wright comments on the title: 'The fact that he called *The Donatist Church*, what traditionally had been devalued as a "schism", points to another distinctive contribution, sympathetic attention to dissident, even under-dog movements, and the highlighting of the diversity, not to say divisiveness, of what is too often neatly referred to as "the Church".'

ations of the African under-privileged, that is of the relatively un-Romanised and, as he thought, self-consciously and linguistically Berber population, while Catholicism represented the Romanised bourgeoisie of the cities and the great landowners.

This clearly is a class-war model, and it is not surprising that many readers, like the consul at Tunis earlier, decided that Friend was a Marxist. The ethnic and social aspects of Friend's explanation of Donatism have been criticised with strong arguments.¹³ In the words of Peter Brown: 'The issue at stake is not the protest of a particular group, but the autonomy of a provincial tradition of Christianity. . . . It was Constantine who provoked the struggle by allying the Empire with the universal Catholic Church.'¹⁴ The idea that Donatism was basically a protest against an imposed urban and Latin civilisation cannot account for the fact that the Donatist leaders wrote in classical rhetorical Latin, and that it was led from thoroughly Roman centres like Carthage, Cirta and Timgad.¹⁵ Friend never retracted his ethnic, social and political interpretation of Donatism,¹⁶ but it is the case that in his later references to the subject Berbers and antagonism to Latin urban civilisation figure less prominently, and resistance to the imposition of the orthodoxy of the transmarine churches is given much greater emphasis.¹⁷

Friend's sociological model inevitably reflects the contemporary intellectual atmosphere. The view of an exploitative, and therefore hostile, relationship between classical city and the country is of course ultimately derived from Marx, but it was widely accepted among Friend's contemporaries. The theme of exploitation of the peasants by the landowners of the Graeco-Roman city ('idle mouths') is also prominent in A. H. M. Jones's *Later Roman Empire*,¹⁸ as also in the writings of M. I. Finley,¹⁹

¹³ See (among others) Peter Brown, 'Religious dissent in the later Roman empire: the case of North Africa', *History*, 46 (1961), 83–101 = *Religion and Society in the Age of St Augustine* (London, 1972), pp. 237–59; R. A. Markus, 'Christianity and dissent in Roman North Africa: changing perspectives in recent work', in D. Baker (ed.), *Studies in Church History*, 9: *Schism, Heresy and Religious Protest* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 21–36 = *From Augustine to Gregory the Great*, Variorum Reprints (London, 1983), no. VIII.

¹⁴ Brown, 'Religious Dissent', 97 = *Religion and Society*, p. 255.

¹⁵ Markus, 'Christianity and dissent', 30; Peter Brown, 'Christianity and local culture in Late Roman North Africa', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 58 (1968), 85–95 = *Religion and Society*, pp. 279–300.

¹⁶ *The Rise of Christianity* (London, 1984), pp. 654–5.

¹⁷ *Saints and Sinners in the Ancient Church* (London, 1985), pp. 95–117.

¹⁸ *The Later Roman Empire, a Social and Administrative Survey* (Oxford, 1964), esp. vol. 2, pp. 767–823.

¹⁹ e.g. *The Ancient Economy* (London, 1973), pp. 86–93, 138–141.

who developed and simplified Max Weber's model of the 'consumer city'.²⁰ But when Frend was writing *The Donatist Church*, the most eloquent presentation of the conflict model of the relations between city-dwellers and peasants was that of Michael Rostovtzeff, in his famous *Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, where this model provides an explanation for the disaster of the third-century crisis.²¹ Whatever the extent of the direct influence of Rostovtzeff, Frend's treatment of ecclesiastical history from a social and economic point of view is much closer to the manner of Rostovtzeff than to that of any of Frend's own contemporaries. Far from being a Marxist, Rostovtzeff was of course a refugee from the Marxist revolution. Frend was not a Marxist either, but his point of view differed from that of Rostovtzeff in that his sympathies were with what he thought were the rural protesters against an imposed Roman culture. One might add that Frend's account of Berber 'nationalism' was surely influenced by his experience of Neo-Destour in Tunisia, and of the various other independence movements which were at that time hastening the end of the European empires.

In the same year as he published *The Donatist Church*, Frend was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. In the following two years (1952–3) Caius College awarded Frend an S. A. Cook Bye Fellowship, which enabled him to widen his archaeological knowledge by travel in Asia Minor.²² In 1953 he was appointed Cambridge University Assistant Lecturer in Divinity.²³ In 1956 he was elected Fellow of Caius College, and he was Director of Studies in Archaeology and Ancient History from 1961–9. He served as University Pro-proctor for the years 1961–2 and 1967–8. Meanwhile Frend maintained his practical interest in archaeology by conducting a rescue excavation on the Arbury Road estate in 1953–4.²⁴ From 1956 to 1960 he was director of the excavations of a fifth-century church at Knossos under the auspices of the British School at

²⁰ Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, translated and edited by G. Roth and C. Wittich (New York, 1968), vol. 3, pp. 1215–17. The first edition of the posthumous German original, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, was edited by Marianne Weber and published at Tübingen in 1922. For Frend on Max Weber, see 'Die Bedeutung von Max Webers Aufsatz für die Untersuchung der frühen christlichen Sektenbewegung', in W. Schluchter (ed.), *Max Webers Sicht des antiken Christentums* (Frankfurt a. Main, 1985), pp. 466–88.

²¹ *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford, 1926), pp. 442–8.

²² 'A third-century inscription relating to *Angareia* in Phrygia', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 46 (1956), 46–56.

²³ His lectures became *The Early Church* (London, 1965), which is still much read, and annotated, by students.

²⁴ 'A Romano-British Settlement at Arbury Rd, Cambridge', *Proceedings Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, 48 (1955), 10–43; 'Further finds at Arbury Rd.', *ibid.*, 49 (1956), 25–9.

Athens,²⁵ and during his sabbatical year 1963–4 he was Associate Director of the Egypt Exploration Society's excavation at Q'asr Ibrim, Nubia. Frend again took part in the excavation of that site in 1972 and 1974.²⁶

It was Hugh Last who proposed that Frend should make the persecution of the Christians his next project, following up Last's own article on the legal aspects of the Persecutions (*Journal of Roman Studies*, 37 (1937), 80–92). Frend discussed the matter over tea with Norman Baynes, who was just recovering from a broken hip. It was their last meeting. Frend left Baynes with a sense of gratitude, and his mind made up.²⁷ So he started the research which was to lead to *Martyrdom and Persecution*. Frend's handling of the subject is closer to the manner of Baynes than to the legal and constitutional approach of Last, but essentially different from either. The book is in a sense an expansion of *The Donatist Church*. Instead of looking for an explanation of the Donatist schism in Africa, he now looked for roots of that controversy in the earlier history of Christianity, and its links with Judaism. The book offers a vast panorama. The concept of martyrdom as a primary means of salvation is traced back to the Jewish literature of the Maccabean revolt. Frend suggests a parallel between the experience of the Jewish rigorists in Palestine and that of the rural protesters of North Africa, and of other Christian sectarians, above all the Phrygian Montanists. He argues that a strong Jewish presence in North Africa was a precondition for the rapid expansion of Christianity. Another Semitic religion appealed to the Berbers whose own religion had been Phoenician.

Alongside the Christian—and Jewish—traditions of protest and separation, Frend traces alternative Christian—and Jewish—traditions which saw no unbridgeable gap between themselves and the dominant Graeco-Roman society: he contrasts the separatist Maccabees, the Qumran Sect, Tatian, Tertullian, Cyprian and the Donatists with the more world-open Philo, Justin, Clement of Alexandria and Origen. He goes on to suggest that the eventual historical division between Eastern and Western Christianity had its roots in these two opposite

²⁵ 'A Byzantine Church at Knossos', *Papers of the British School at Rome*, 56 (1961), 186–238.

²⁶ 'Q'asr Ibrim 1963–64 Expedition', in *Acts of VII Congress of Christian Archaeology*, held at Trier 1965 (Rome, 1965), pp. 531–8; 'The podium at Q'asr Ibrim', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 60 (1974), 30–60; 'Recently discovered materials for writing the history of Christian Nubia', *Studies in Church History*, 11 (1975), 19–30; *The Archaeology of Early Christianity* (London, 1996), pp. 306–13.

²⁷ See *From Dogma to History*, p. 166.

traditions. The puritan and rigorous traditions of Africa contributed to the negative attitude to 'the World' which has generally characterised the Church in the West, while the Eastern Church has remained closer to the traditions of Clement and Origen.²⁸

In a thorough, and in part critical, review Fergus Millar points out the vast amount of factual material worked into Frensd's book. He draws attention to the range of subjects covered: Rome's attitude to foreigners and foreign cults, the early development of the Church and its conflicts with orthodox Judaism as well as with Graeco-Roman society, the history of the persecutions, the triumph of the Church under Constantine.

No lesser man would have attempted it. Nor would a more cautious man. Frensd rushes in vigorously where generations of scholars have trod with care . . . he has traced with profound historical sense and sympathy the way in which the different intellectual and social traditions and the various theologies current in the early Church found their various expressions in the responses early Christians made to the hostility of their environment, the pressure of the state and the ultimate threat of death. In doing that he has shown, in a way not to be achieved by any number of scholarly histories of the early Church, or learned treatments of early dogmatics, how the development of Christianity, and the application of its beliefs in real life, is a central element in the history of that period. Frensd like Rostovtzeff will provide an easy target for lesser men. The book does indeed contain an immense number of mistakes, not all just the products of haste. . . . These defects do not alter my view that this is the most important book on the first three or four centuries of the Empire to be published for many years.²⁹

In 1965 Frensd was visiting scholar at Grahamstown University in South Africa. In 1969 he left Cambridge on being appointed Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Glasgow. From 1972–5 he was Dean of the Faculty of Divinity. His politics had moved to the right. In the years 1977–9 he was Chairman of the Conservative Party in the Buchanan–Drymen area, and Vice-Convenor of the local Community Council. Characteristically, his service as Conservative chairman overlapped with a spell as Chairman of AUT Scotland during the years 1976–8.

Meanwhile Frensd had begun work on another project. Having been elected Birkbeck Lecturer in Ecclesiastical History for the academic year 1967–8, he used this opportunity to give a course of lectures on the his-

²⁸ See Peter Brown, 'Approaches to the religious crisis of the third century', *English Historical Review*, 83 (1968), 542–58 = *Religion and Society*, pp. 74–93, esp. pp. 84–93.

²⁹ Fergus Millar's review: *Journal of Roman Studies*, 56 (1966), 231–6.

tory of the Monophysite Movement (431–641), which was to form the basis of his third major work, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*. The book was published at Cambridge in 1972, seven years after the appearance of *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church*. It received an unfavourable review from L. R. Wickham. ‘The book is over-supplied with events and narratives. The wood disappears in a multitude of trees. Analysis and explanation give way to chronicle. Interest is unlikely to be kindled by the narrative, not constructed from primary sources, but rendered down from secondary sources.’³⁰ Wickham points out numerous inaccuracies. Frend was greatly hurt by this criticism.³¹ The criticism is not without some justification, but nevertheless completely misses the point of the book,³² which in fact tells a dramatic story of how a religious controversy split the Church in the East, and in the end undermined the structure of the Empire itself, even though none, or at least only very few, of the participants had intended this outcome.

The medium is narrative but a narrative which covers a wide range of topics, developments, in theology of course, but also in ecclesiastical and secular politics, and those both at local and imperial level. Most of the elements which figured prominently in Frend’s previous work reappear: the emperor, the relations of Church and state, the problem of accommodating dissent within the Church, conflicting regional loyalties, the dichotomy of town and country, with the latter given new and forceful champions in the monks, and, last but not least, the interaction of religious coercion and of group loyalties. The abundance of facts may sometimes seem confusing to a reader trying to get through the book too quickly. But this book was certainly more difficult to write than either *The Donatist Church* or *Martyrdom and Persecution*. The sources are not only in Latin and Greek but also in Syriac and Coptic, and the archaeology of a region stretching from Egypt to Armenia is very much more complex and much less known than that of North Africa. Neither the literary sources nor the archaeology had at that time received anything like as much scholarly attention as those for North Africa. To make a comprehensive synthesis of the evidence bearing on the story of the Monophysites cannot have been an easy task, and as far as I know, no other author writing in English had even attempted it.

³⁰ *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS 24 (1973), 591–9.

³¹ ‘“The Monophysites”: a rejoinder on a recent issue’, *Modern Churchman*, NS 16 (1974), 100–6.

³² See Dom Frederick Hockey, for a much more perceptive review in *Revue d’Histoire Ecclésiastique*, 68 (1973), 851–4.

Frend's treatment of the interaction of religious and secular factors has in fact become more subtle. He no longer treats the religious controversy as simply an expression of underlying ethnic and social conflicts.³³ Instead he shows a much more complex interaction of a multitude of factors, undermining old, and creating new allegiances and identities, in both religious and secular spheres. Monophysitism was not an expression of Syrian or Coptic ethnicity, but the rise of Monophysitism in Egypt, Syria and Armenia led to the creation of literatures in local languages, and thus also to the growth of new regional identities, and in Nubia and Ethiopia to the consolidation of new kingdoms.

After *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*, Frend remained productive. He published far more articles than can be mentioned in this memoir.³⁴ Some repeat earlier work, but most of them are both original and interesting. The titles of two volumes of collected papers in the Variorum series sum up Frend's special interests: *Religion, Popular and Unpopular in the Early Christian Centuries* (London, 1975); *Town and Countryside in the Early Christian Centuries* (London, 1980). In 1984 he published *The Rise of Christianity*, pp. xv+1022 (London). This is essentially a comprehensive but readable textbook, intended both for students and a wider readership. Frend had always believed that the results of scholarship should be passed on to the widest possible audience. The book once more displays Frend's enormous knowledge. It also shows how Frend saw the significance of his own work in relation to ecclesiastical history as a whole.

Frend was now internationally recognised as one of the leading historians of the Early Church. In 1974 he received an honorary DD from Edinburgh University. In 1979 he was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. The year 1976 was spent by him as Visiting Professor at the University of South Africa, Pretoria. From 1976 to 1978 Frend was a member of the University of Michigan's team on the 'Save Carthage' Project. He was also on the managing committee of the project, owing his place to the Tunisian authorities. His main task with the Michigan team was to collate evidence for the growth of Christian churches in Carthage, and especially to record any that had been discovered since Vaultrin's

³³ See for instance p. xiii: 'At the outset, however, except in Egypt, it would be hazardous to see monophysitism as an expression of regionalism on the part of non-Hellenistic provincials . . . It is not true . . . that at an early period in their history the Monophysites and Nestorians attracted to themselves the Semitic population of the eastern provinces of the Roman Empire who found adherence to a schismatic church an opportunity for expressing hatred of foreign rule.'

³⁴ A bibliography submitted to the British Academy in December 2002 lists around 313 items.

work in the 1930s.³⁵ In the course of his investigations, Frend learnt about a baptistery standing on its own at Bir Messaouda, Carthage. He studied the site and published his observations.³⁶ In 1997 (or 1998) he heard that Richard Miles was taking an interest in the site of the baptistery. They discussed it over tea at a Classical seminar. Others had told Miles that Bir Messaouda was unpromising, but Frend encouraged him to continue. Miles did, and Frend became a staunch patron for Miles's project, speaking up for it at every opportunity. Frend was proved right. Miles made important discoveries from the Vandal and Byzantine periods, including the largest church so far discovered at Carthage.³⁷ It transpired that the remains had narrowly escaped destruction to make room for a car park.

Further honours followed. From 1980 to 1983 Frend was President of the *Comité international d'histoire ecclésiastique comparée*, and thereafter *Président d'honneur*. In 1981 he became Vice-President of the Association Internationale d'Études Patristiques. In the academic year 1981–2 he was Visiting F. and M. Tuohy Professor in Interreligious Studies at John Carrol University, Cleveland. His lectures were published as *Saints and Sinners in the Early Church* (London, 1985). In 1983 Frend was elected a Fellow of the British Academy, after having been nominated by the historians. He spent 1984 as a Senior Fellow at Dumbarton Oaks. In the same year he became Emeritus Professor of Glasgow University. In 1991 friends and colleagues presented him with a festschrift, *Early Christianity*, which had been edited by Ian Hazlett.

He had long been active in the service of the Church of England. As a boy Frend had been impressed by his father's dedication to the work of his parish. He later recalled that he had experienced a phase of atheism, to the horror of his mother, but that he had got over this by the time of his father's death. When he became established at Cambridge he evidently decided that he must give some practical expression to his commitment to Anglicanism. His account of this decision is rather light-hearted. He claims that he joined the divinity faculty at Cambridge because he did not want to be just a 'research bod' in the history faculty. Once in the divinity faculty he felt that he had to do something practical, so he had himself licensed as a Lay Reader in the diocese of Ely in 1956, and served as

³⁵ 'The early Christian Church in Carthage', in *Excavations at Carthage 1976, conducted by the University of Michigan*, vol. 3, ed. J. H. Humphrey (Ann Arbor, 1978), pp. 21–41.

³⁶ 'A two period baptistery at Carthage', *Bulletin CEDAC*, 6 (Carthage, 1985), 42–3; amplified by N. Duval, *Revue d'Études Augustiniennes*, 34, 1 (1988), 86–92.

³⁷ R. Miles, 'British excavations at Bir Messaouda, Carthage 2000–2004: the Byzantine basilica', *BABesch (Bulletin Antieke Beschaving)*, 81 (2006), 199–226.

Editor of the *Modern Churchman* from 1963–82. The Revd Simon Tebbutt wrote the following comment on his editorship:

Frend's long association with the Modern Churchman's Union (Frend had joined as long ago as 1935) had to do with its being open to revise its understanding of scripture and theology as modern learning discovered new truths that are being revealed by science and archaeology. He was a typical Broad Churchman and was not much inclined to turn his understanding into either Liturgy or Worship. . . . [As editor he felt it to be] his duty to inform serious theologians and historians of current thinking among academics in the Church.

He criticised David Jenkins, Bishop of Durham, for his dismissal of the Christmas event as 'so much mythology'.

Frend was ordained deacon in the Scottish Episcopal Church at Perth in 1982, and priest in 1983,³⁸ serving as a non-stipendiary priest in the parish of Aberfoyle. The ministry provided an outlet for his still abundant energy in his retirement. Douglas Feaver, Bishop of Peterborough, who had once been on an archaeological dig with Frend in North Africa, offered him the rectorship of Barnwell together with Thurning and Luddington, in the diocese of Peterborough. When he told his Scottish bishop about the offer the latter was shocked that someone with so little experience should have such an appointment: 'You should not touch it with a barge pole, William'. That was a challenge and naturally Frend was determined to prove the bishop (and others) wrong. According to Simon Tebbutt, Frend found liturgy difficult but took his pastoral duties very seriously. The confidence which he had displayed in the lecture theatre seemed to desert him as a parish priest. He was hopeless with vestments, and from the word go dispensed with them in whatever parish he was in. Tebbutt was told: 'William is loved by all in the village—he and Mary have captured our hearts'. William wore his learning lightly—his job now was pastor and friend. He took particular pains to get the full life story of those he buried. Eventually he came to love preaching. Mary classified her husband's sermons as either 'a one sermon' or 'a two sermon' according to whether it contained the material that was right for a single sermon, or enough for two. Frend used his huge knowledge of life in the ancient world to make his sermons on biblical texts 'incredibly interesting'. Parishioners lacking the historical background tended to find the Bible difficult. Frend brought it alive. He was a member of the Peterborough diocesan synod from 1988 to 1990. He served at Barnwell

³⁸ Mary was not in favour. According to Frend's tape, she thought that her husband, who in this context describes himself 'as a not very religious person', was not up to it.

from 1984–90. After 1990 he helped as honorary assistant priest in the Fulbourn group of parishes in the Ely diocese.

Frend was now again able to visit Cambridge regularly, to frequent the library, take part in seminars, and to argue with colleagues who disagreed with his scholarly theories. From 1992 to 1996 he served as supply lecturer in the Divinity Faculty. In 1995 he was elected a Member by the New York Academy of Sciences, and an Overseas Member by the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Publications continued to appear.³⁹ In 1996 Frend published *The Archaeology of Early Christianity, a History*. The book contains a mass of fascinating information about forgotten archaeologists and their excavations. The development of Christian archaeology is related to its historical background, so that the reader is made aware how the ebb and tide of archaeological activity has been related to missionary zeal, nationalism, wars, and above all the rise and fall of the European empires. In 1997 Caius College, which had already given him membership of its SCR in 1991, awarded him another Bye Fellowship. Frend still exercised his practical enthusiasm for archaeology,⁴⁰ and was still publishing. In 2001 he published 'Great Historians of the Early Church: Adolf von Harnack'.⁴¹ Another Variorum volume of collected studies, *Orthodoxy, Paganism and Dissent in the Early Christian Centuries*, appeared in 2002.

In the same year Mary died and left Frend bereft and lonely. In his last years he was not very mobile. But he kept busy. He took two church services a month. His amazing memory was intact and he could and did write. *From Dogma to History: how an understanding of the Early Church developed* (London, 2003), is dedicated to Mary. The book is an account of great scholars of earlier generations to whom Frend felt indebted.

In personality Frend was very, almost quintessentially, English; at the same time he was profoundly influenced by both German and French scholarship. He saw early Christian archaeology as an international force for bringing together scholars from all over the world. Not very much interested in theology or even religious philosophy, yet paradoxically, and unlike many positivist historians, as for instance A. H. M. Jones, the great

³⁹ 'Edward Gibbon (1737–94) and early Christianity', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 44.4 (1993), 661–72.

⁴⁰ With A. Cameron, 'Survey excavation on the Long Field at Rookery Farm, Great Wilbraham', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, 81 (1992), 5–13; with J. A. Hadman, 'A deposit of Roman lead from North Lodge Farm, Barnwell, Northants', *Britannia*, 25 (1994), 224–6.

⁴¹ *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 52.1 (2001), 83–102.

historian of Late Antiquity, Frend was very much concerned with the history of ideals and ideas, and above all the interrelation of ideas and their background in individual or collective experience. Although it is rooted in French and German scholarship, Frend's very individual kind of ecclesiastical history really has no precedents either in French or in German, and regrettably few ecclesiastical historians have tried their hands at it since. Frend had a visual memory, which enabled him to retain, not always altogether accurately, an immense knowledge of evidence both textual and archaeological. It was in his bringing together of archaeological and literary evidence that he made his great contribution as a historian. As an archaeologist Frend's biggest strength was his enthusiasm. His digging methods were a little primitive, but he knew an incredible amount about North African Christianity, which allowed him quickly to place his discoveries into a historical context. Following the French, he was one of the first scholars of early Christianity to use archaeological material in a 'scientific' way.

Everyone who met him was struck by his enthusiasm and boundless energy. It was this which inspired numerous pupils. He took an interest in their careers and rejoiced at their successes. They liked and admired him, but did not find him easy to know. Frend was rather touchy. He resented that an age bar prevented him from being elected on to the committee of the Patristic Conference at the age of 75, and also the fact that in spite of his life-long interest in North Africa the British Academy did not elect him on to its Tunisian Committee. In his last years he was very disappointed, indeed felt that he had been unjustly treated, when an application to get him a public honour, which had the support of some very well-known scholars, was rejected by the patronage commission. Frend certainly sometimes irritated colleagues. In his capacity as member of the editorial board of the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* Frend was a pertinacious defender of the Early Church, and seeing himself as its only defender he proved difficult and disruptive to a succession of chairmen. He was very sure of his opinions, and not ready to change them under criticism. While he was open-minded about receiving new thought, he could be distinctly prickly about colleagues who disagreed with him. But he did not bear grudges, and as G. R. Evans noted in *The Church Times*, there was profound humility under his sometimes seemingly over-self-confident and even bumptious exterior, and above all he always had a great sense of humour.

Frend expressed some worries over the future of his subject. Here are some of his reasons for concern. Interest, especially in the United

Kingdom, in the history and doctrine of the Early Church has declined seriously. One main cause is the lack of training in Greek and Latin in schools. A second reason is the decline in importance of the first four councils, and particularly of the Council of Chalcedon with its Christological definitions, in the thinking of the Anglican Church. The creeds and definitions remain the title deeds of the Church, but an understanding of their meaning and why they were framed the precise way in which they were would be restricted to a minority. The divinity faculties in Britain have not developed either a centre for the study of Antiquity and Christianity on the lines of the *J. D. Dölger Institut für Antike und Christentum*, or an organisation for the publication of a long and continuing series of translated and annotated patristic texts, as achieved by the *Sources Chrétiennes* or the *CSEL* in Vienna. Without these or similar outlets there is little to encourage theological research students to embark on a career devoted to the early history and doctrine of the Church.⁴²

But Friend's naturally optimistic spirit was aware of a positive side: the greatly increased involvement of classicists and archaeologists in the study of late antiquity, and the steady flow of new evidence being revealed by discoveries in the fields of archaeology and papyrology. Characteristically, he did his best to the end to help the positive factors to prevail. In 1982 he presented the Society of Antiquaries with the 'Friend Medal', in order to encourage young British archaeologists to take an interest in overseas archaeology. In 1999 he founded a travel scholarship for young persons at the beginning of their career. In the words of Rosemary Cramp, former President of the Antiquaries: 'Friend is a man of abounding good will, who has used his intellectual and financial resources with great generosity for the benefit of others.' Near the end of his life Friend had begun to work on a book about the early life of St Augustine. He died on 12 August 2005. A week earlier, in hospital, he told his vicar, the Revd Rhiannon Jones, that he was not afraid of dying; he did, however, want to finish off a few footnotes for his latest book.

WOLFGANG LIEBESCHUETZ

Fellow of the Academy

⁴² Shortened from *From Dogma to History*, pp. 169–71.

Note. In preparing this memoir I have been assisted by Frennd's daughter Mrs Sally McIntyre, the Revd Rhiannon Jones, the Revd Simon Tebbutt, Professor Pauline Allen, Professor Gerald Bonner, Professor Rosemary Cramp, Dr Richard Duncan-Jones, Dr Peter Linehan, Professor Robert Markus, Dr Richard Miles, Professor Malcolm Schofield, Professor Frances Young, the anonymous obituaries of *The Times* and *Daily Telegraph*, and the obituary in *The Church Times*, written by Professor G. R. Evans. I have also used the biographical and bibliographical material deposited by William Frennd with the British Academy, and two tapes in the possession of his daughter, in which Frennd, interviewed by David Talbot, describes his experiences during the war and immediately after.