



The Emergence of Pentecostalism in Wales: A Historical, Theological Evaluation of the Early Development of the Assemblies of God Denomination in South East Wales

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British Pentecostalism is linked to the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles through T. B. Barratt and Anglican vicar Alexander A. Boddy at Sunderland. Boddy's experience and subsequent ministry set the foundation in Britain for the rise of the Apostolic Church, the Elim Church and the Assemblies of God. Each of these Pentecostal denominations had their roots in Wales.

Following the Welsh Revival of 1904–05 some (enthused by their experience) sought a deeper relationship with God; and this search ultimately led them to Pentecostalism. A group of eager believers emerged around the town of Crosskeys in South East Wales. By 1912 they had established the Crosskeys Full Gospel Mission, which soon became a centre for Pentecostal activity. The central role of the Crosskeys group is seen in the development of the Assemblies of God in Wales and Monmouthshire denomination which was in existence by 1921. The Crosskeys based group had been in correspondence with the American Assemblies of God (AG) regarding joining that denomination as an official presbytery. It was this action that caused a group of like-minded English Pentecostals to pursue the establishment of the Assemblies of God in Great Britain and Ireland in 1924. This British denomination incorporated some thirty-eight Welsh Pentecostal assemblies.

This book considers some of the important theological, political and social influences which shaped the brand of Pentecostalism that emerged in South East Wales in the early twentieth century—a movement which was to have a wide ranging influence on subsequent Pentecostal history far beyond the borders of Wales.

In this book Chris Palmer gives us the first detailed and wide-ranging account of the emergence of Pentecostalism in Wales at the start of the 20th century. He uncovers links that have been unknown to previous historians and shows the crucial importance of Welsh congregations not only to Wales itself but to the whole of Pentecostalism in the UK. Set against a broad social background and supported by careful research there is much here to interest the academic historian and inspire ordinary churchgoers interested in understanding their faith. - *William Kay, Professor of Theology at Glyndwr University, Wales and Professor of Pentecostal Studies at the University of Chester, England.*

Chris Palmer has certainly produced a readable, interesting, indeed intriguing, account of the early 20thC developments in South Wales of the Assemblies of God. He does not restrict its research to confessional hagiography but academically writes of the culture and context of the time in South Wales. He seriously questions - with good detailed evidence – some previous accepted understandings and enlarges the picture-theologically not just relationally. It is certainly worth reading, and for future historians of Pentecostalism to note the influence the 'Children of the (Welsh) Revival' had on the following century's Pentecostal work. - *Dr. Anne E. Dyer, EPTA Secretary and Research Centre Manager, AOG Mattersey Hall College, England.*

This book represents a valuable and original contribution to the early development of Pentecostalism, especially the Assemblies of God in South East Wales. The author identifies several early theological influences from Wales but also England and America. There are fascinating insights into the beginnings of Assemblies in Crosskeys and Newbridge. Not all will agree with the movement's distinctives but this book is a stimulating read. - *Rev. Dr. D. Eryl Davies, Union School of Theology and University of Chester.*

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