

# THE FOUNDING OF THE AGAPEMONE AT SPAXTON, 1845–6

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## INTRODUCTION

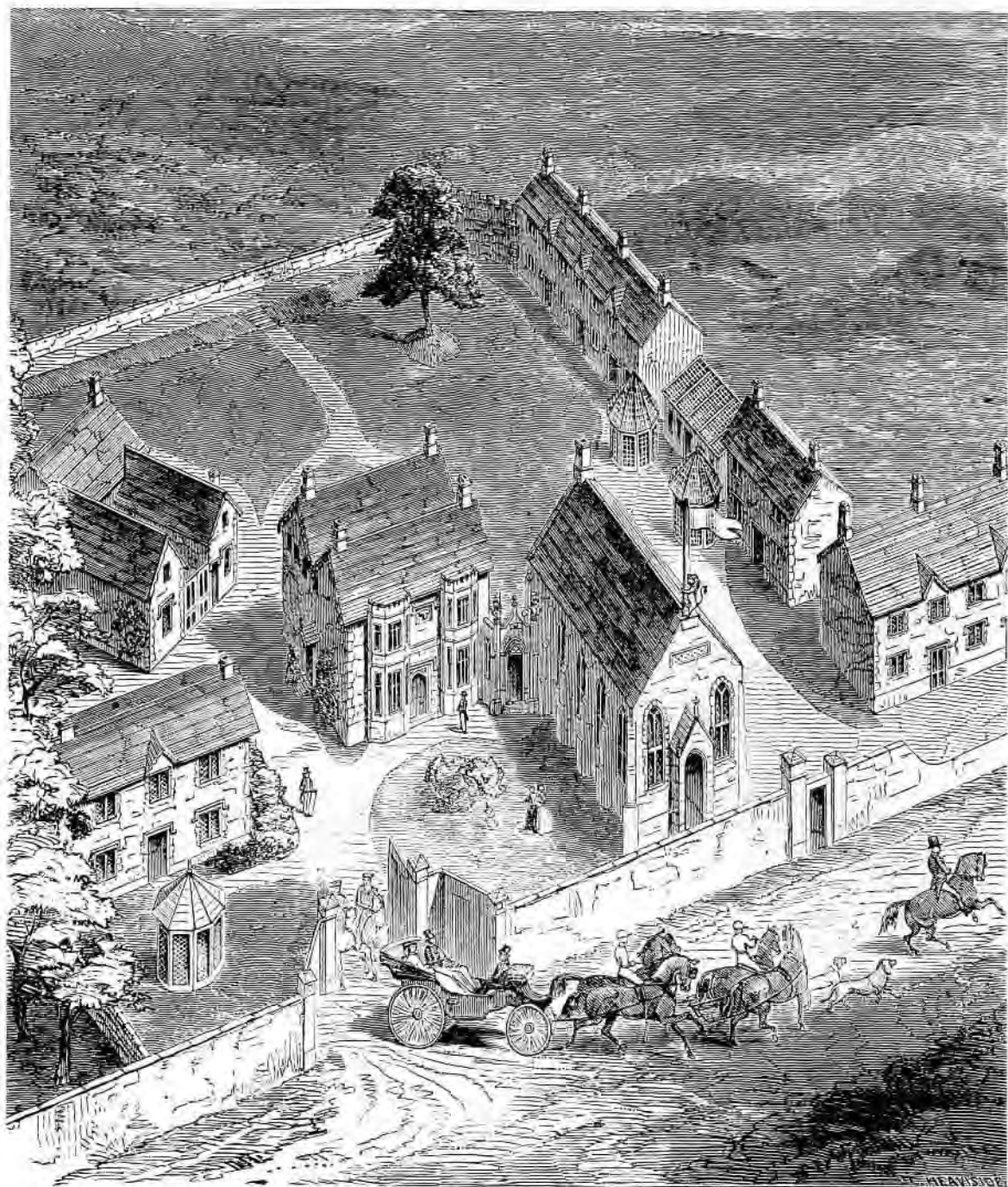
The Agapemone, or 'Abode of Love', was founded at Spaxton in 1845 by the former Anglican curate, Henry James Prince. It was one of the most notorious religious establishments of the 19th century, but has until now attracted little academic attention, despite having been the subject of several popular works, as well as of W.H. Dixon's pioneering study published in 1868.<sup>1</sup> Separatist religious communities such as the Agapemone were never common in 19th century Britain. Only four others have been identified,<sup>2</sup> and earlier writers, such as Dawkins,<sup>3</sup> were certainly mistaken in regarding Prince's progression from millenarian public preacher to leader of a separatist community as inevitable or unsurprising.

Though the Agapemone had so few close parallels during the 19th century, the initial beliefs of its founder were, in contrast, far from unique. Prince's millenarian adventism – the belief that Christ's Second Coming was imminent and would inaugurate a new relationship between man and God – was shared during the first half of the 19th century by the Millerites,<sup>4</sup> the Plymouth Brethren,<sup>5</sup> the Irvingite 'Catholic Apostolic Church',<sup>6</sup> and the Mormons,<sup>7</sup> as well as by numerous entirely respectable Anglican clergymen.<sup>8</sup> Of these groups, however, only the Mormons shared Prince's desire to separate from the world, and their decision was dictated as much by the threat of persecution as by theological principle.

In the course of research, the purpose of which is to place the Agapemone in the context of 19th century adventism, new material has been discovered which casts light on the origins of the settlement. This article begins by considering the events which surrounded Prince's first curacy at Charlinch, and then discusses his wanderings between 1842 and 1845. The events leading up to the opening of the Agapemone in 1847 are examined in detail, and the article concludes with a consideration of why Prince decided to choose the separatist route.

## PRINCE AT CHARLINCH, 1840–1842

The outlines of Prince's life before 1840 are too well known to call for more than brief recapitulation. In 1835, at the age of 24, Prince, who was medically qualified, was forced by ill health to resign his prestigious post as house apothecary to the General Hospital in Bath, his home city.<sup>9</sup> The religiously-inclined young man experienced a call to the Anglican ministry while recovering from a life-threatening operation,<sup>10</sup> and between 1836 and 1839 studied at St David's College, Lampeter. There he became a leader of an ultra-pious Calvinist prayer group known as the



Frontispiece: View of the Agapemone, or 'Abode of Love', at Spaxton, from the *Illustrated London News*, 29 March 1851 (see pp. 113–121 below). The Agapemone, one of the most notorious religious establishments of the 19th century, was founded in 1845 by the Revd H.J. Prince, and survived for over 100 years. Prince claimed to be the embodiment of the Holy Ghost, and waited for the Millennium at Spaxton surrounded by his numerous disciples. The engraving shows his carriage leaving the Agapemone's high-walled grounds, preceded by the bloodhounds which guarded the community from the attentions of the curious.

*From an engraving in the Society's collection.*

Lampeter Brethren, whose fame was destined to reach far beyond the college walls.<sup>11</sup>

Following ordination, Prince took up his first post as curate of the remote West Somerset parish of Charlinch in June 1840.<sup>12</sup> The Rector, the Revd Samuel Starky, had for some years been absent from the parish because of his 'own actual illness',<sup>13</sup> and was apparently living on the Isle of Wight.<sup>14</sup> Prince thus laboured alone in the parish, but for a year failed to make any impression upon his tiny congregation, in spite of sermons 'calculated to arouse the conscience as well as enlighten the mind'.<sup>15</sup> His words found a response elsewhere, however. Some of his sermons had been published, and one of them reached Samuel Starky who was by then at the point of death. As Starky later told W.H. Dixon, the words of the sermon seemed to him 'not only full of grace but full of God', and fell on his soul 'like rain on a thirsty glebe'. When he learned that the sermon was the work of none other than his own curate, he thanked God for sending such a pastor to Charlinch. Though Starky had resigned himself to death, the sermon began to work a marvellous change. 'Strength came back into my limbs; and in a few weeks after that call from a dying bed I was at Charlinch, in my curate's arms.'<sup>16</sup>

By the time Starky reached Charlinch, a revival had already started to gather momentum in the parish. In October 1841, Prince began delivering Friday lectures, and on Tuesday evenings held prayer meetings, as he did also before Sunday matins.<sup>17</sup> Starky became an active participant in the revival during November. At this point, Prince's spiritual turmoil became such that he found himself unable to preach and had to beg for the prayers of the faithful to free his tongue.<sup>18</sup> Dixon claims that word of the dumb parson spread quickly and that mockers came on Sundays to jeer at him. But they mocked in vain. On Sunday 21 November, Prince's burden lifted and he preached a sermon 'searching as fire, heavy as a hammer, and sharper than a two-edged sword'. Men dropped their heads to their chests, and nearly all the women sobbed and shrieked.<sup>19</sup> By December, similar effects were being produced in the school. Out of 50 children present at one lecture, there were by the end of it fewer than ten who could stand upright: 'boys and girls, great and small together, were either leaning against the wall quite overcome by their feelings of distress, or else bowed down with their faces hidden in their hands, and sobbing in the severest agony.'<sup>20</sup> Thereafter the number of converts grew. On 6 February 1842, more than 60 believers communicated, of whom 14 were unconfirmed children (God's approval having first been obtained). In all, some 102 persons were converted,<sup>21</sup> a remarkable total considering that the population of Charlinch was less than 200.<sup>22</sup>

Prince's desire to separate the 'truly' converted from those who merely paid lip service had the predictable effect of dividing the parish. Husbands threatened to murder their wives; wives threatened to leave their husbands; and amongst those alienated by the activities of Prince and Starky were many of the local gentry.<sup>23</sup> The pastoral crisis in the parish was only resolved when, on 4 May 1842, the Bishop of Bath and Wells dismissed Prince from his curacy,<sup>24</sup> on the grounds that he had 'visited persons in other parishes than his own', had 'admitted children to the Lord's table that had not been confirmed', and had 'recommended several respectable people to remain away from it'.<sup>25</sup>

In suffering ejection from his curacy, Prince was following a well-trodden path. Key figures in an earlier generation of evangelical Anglicans, such as Thomas Charles, had suffered before him, some being driven into joining dissenting denominations, others into establishing proprietary chapels.<sup>26</sup> Prince had not yet been forced to make so decisive a break, and earlier writers were wrong to suggest that he already lay well beyond the pale of respectable Anglicanism. In spite of the

extreme nature of the events at Charlinch, Prince had been guilty more of excessive zeal than of serious theological error, and his ejection is quite likely to have enhanced rather than damaged his reputation among evangelical Anglicans and the Lampeter Brethren. His published works, including *The Charlinch Revival*<sup>27</sup> and a set of exhortatory letters to the Brethren,<sup>28</sup> had been well received, and it must still have seemed possible in 1842 that Prince would eventually find a living in the Established Church. That was a possibility which few would entertain for much longer.

#### SUFFOLK AND BRIGHTON, 1842–1845

After his departure from Charlinch, Prince began a short period of freelance preaching in the Bridgwater area, and then, accompanied by Starky, took up a new curacy in Suffolk. His unconventional style led to controversy even more quickly than in Somerset, and for the second time he was ejected, an event which now finally persuaded him to turn his back on the Anglican Church.<sup>29</sup> By early 1843 he was in Brighton, preaching the Second Coming on the sands, and late in the year he took over a proprietary chapel.<sup>30</sup> Starky, for his part, seems to have spent some time in Weymouth, preaching in friendly pulpits, although it was not until 1846 that he finally resigned the living of Charlinch.<sup>31</sup> He had once more been excused duties in the parish because of 'bodily infirmity',<sup>32</sup> and the fact that he was able to retain the living unchallenged by the diocesan authorities seems at least partly attributable to the paralysed state of the diocese at that period. Bishop Law was now 'mentally infirm', and his work was being done by a variety of agencies, including a special commissary, until his death in 1845.<sup>33</sup>

Prince's religious opinions became rapidly more extreme and idiosyncratic. To a chosen few he revealed the fact that the Holy Ghost had, in some manner, become incarnate in him, replacing the sinful self of H.J. Prince with a divine one: his commands were now those of God himself.<sup>34</sup> The reason for this incarnation was that the end of the world, and God's final judgement, were imminent, and to Prince had been given the task of separating the saved from the damned. When he attempted to communicate his new status to the Lampeter Brethren and others, they rejected his inspiration as being grievously mistaken, if not heretical,<sup>35</sup> and a letter written in 1844 by some of the Brethren denounced him to his Brighton congregation.<sup>36</sup> Prince's spiritual excitement seems to have reached some sort of resolution on 21 March 1845, when he received a testimony or divine sign of the Second Coming – 'Behold he Cometh' – derived from the parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (Matthew 25:6).<sup>37</sup> At the same time, his supporters in Brighton were rapidly deserting him, and by June or early July 1845, he was forced to give up the Brighton chapel.<sup>38</sup>

#### DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WEST, 1845–1847

It was natural that at this decisive moment, Prince should turn once more to the West Country. In spite of all that had happened at Charlinch, he had retained a strong Somerset following, and his successor as curate at Charlinch, George Robinson Thomas, was another Lampeter graduate.<sup>39</sup> It is quite likely that Thomas gave support to local 'Princite' dissenters as well as ministering to his own flock, and a 'Charlinch Free Church' was already in existence by the time of Prince's departure for Suffolk in 1842.<sup>40</sup> A dissenting chapel, licensed during 1843 to



William Goodman at his home in Balls Lane (now King Street), Bridgwater, may have housed a further 'Princite' congregation.

During April 1845, Prince had made a return visit to Somerset, where a follower called William Cobbe, a civil engineer on the Bristol and Exeter Railway, was building a chapel at Spaxton. The chapel was evidently intended for George Thomas<sup>41</sup> – who had in his turn parted company with the Established Church<sup>42</sup> – and was destined before long to form the centrepiece of the Agapemone complex. The chapel was officially opened on 9 June that year, with Prince, Starky, Thomas and others in attendance.<sup>43</sup> Prince's permanent return to the West Country was delayed until late summer, and followed one of the least admirable but practically most significant episodes in his career. He persuaded three wealthy spinsters, the Nottidge sisters, to marry impecunious members of his entourage. The triple wedding was celebrated on 9 July 1845 at Swansea, a location which was chosen, it seems, because a follower, Thomas Williams, was curate there, and also because it was relatively inaccessible to the girls' mother and brother-in-law, who opposed the match. The sisters, who were members of Prince's Brighton congregation, had already contributed some £300 to the building of the Spaxton chapel, and their marriages now gave him effective control of £18,000 worth of shares. Whether or not Prince's motives in promoting the marriage were as entirely calculating as has sometimes been suggested, there seems little doubt that this windfall was to play a significant part in the subsequent development of the Agapemone.<sup>44</sup>

The strength of the following which Prince commanded when he finally returned to Somerset was witnessed by the number of licences sought for the establishment of 'Princite' chapels in the Bridgwater area during 1845. On 4 January 1845, Cobbe had sought a licence for a dissenting chapel at a cottage he owned in Charlinch Lane; on 12 January, Ellenora Carver requested a licence for her house at Wedmore; on 19 May, a licence was requested for George Toogood's house at Huntspill, and on the following day there was a similar request for Thomas Toogood's house at Wedmore; on 2 June, Henry Amery applied to license his house at North Petherton, and on 7 June a licence was sought for Thomas Squire's house in the Bridgwater hamlet of Hamp.<sup>45</sup>

The opening of the new chapel at Spaxton in no way inhibited the operation of these other chapels or the public evangelising which was becoming characteristic of Prince's sect. On 28 June 1845, the *Somerset County Gazette* reported that a 'fanatical Irishman, named Cob . . . has been haranguing audiences in the streets of this town, on the coming of Christ to judge the world, and declaring the end of all sublunary things is shortly to take place.' Cobbe's activities were contemptuously dismissed as an 'exhibition . . . thoroughly revolting to everyone of common sense',<sup>46</sup> and his style of preaching was compared with that of the Irvingites, who had a chapel in Dampiet Street.<sup>47</sup> On 27 June Cobbe and others applied for licences for chapels at Cobbe's house in King Square, and in a warehouse on Bridgwater Quay,<sup>48</sup> though it was some weeks before the 'Charlinch Believers or Latter Day Saints' again came to the attention of the press.<sup>49</sup> At the end of August, the *Somerset County Gazette* reported that 'on last Monday evening . . . Messrs Prince and Starky preached in a commodious room, which was formerly occupied as a warehouse by Messrs Stuckey and Bagehot, adjoining the quay.' The room had been fitted up for some weeks for preaching purposes, the *Gazette* reporter noting that Mr Cobbe had 'occasionally "held forth" in it on Sundays and other days'. On this occasion, the warehouse was crowded to suffocating, and the message being preached was a simple one: it consisted of elaborations upon, and frequent repetitions of, Prince's Brighton 'testimony'. The 'rant and bellowing' of the

faithful were said to be intolerable, and the cries of 'Behold He Cometh!', repeated at least one hundred times, could be heard half a mile away.<sup>50</sup> About a fortnight later, there was another 'Disgraceful Scene' when 'prophet Cobbe' and Lewis Price (another Lampeter graduate and former Anglican curate) stood in turn on a table placed under a gas lamp near the bridge, and 'harangued an audience on the speedy coming of Christ to judge the world'. A riot had almost broken out before the police moved the orators on. The *Gazette* was of the opinion that such open-air preaching should be punished by the police, and advised the preachers to retreat indoors for the future.<sup>51</sup> It appears that the advice was taken, since no further reports of open-air preaching reached the newspaper. Instead, the Agapemonites seem to have redoubled their efforts to find legal accommodation. On 26 September 1846, Clement Toogood of Huntspill applied to license his house, as did James Rogers of Kingston St Mary on 27 September. On 9 October, John Ternblitt applied for a licence to use his house at Perry Green, Wembdon, as a chapel, and finally, on 13 November, Benjamin Giblett sought a licence for his house in Wedmore.<sup>52</sup>

Further details of the 1845-6 campaign in Bridgwater come from the *Bridgwater Times* of 1850, at a period when the Agapemone was again scandalising the neighbourhood. It was reported that Prince had hired a loft in the town where congregations, which included young girls, participated in 'nightly scenes of religious depravity' (involving the denunciation of disbelieving relatives!). The newspaper noted that several townsmen had become followers of Prince, but had since seen sense. 'The agricultural districts supplied fresh victims to swell the number of these fanatics,' it continued, 'amongst whom were many respectable farmers.'<sup>53</sup> The exact location of the loft is not clear. If the newspaper's chronology is correct, then it may have been at the Goodman house in Balls Lane, since that was the only Bridgwater location licensed before the opening of the chapel at Spaxton. It is also possible that the loft was at Cobbe's warehouse on the Quay.

Prince's followers only made the news once more in Bridgwater for some years to come. On a Tuesday evening early in March 1846, at a house in King Square belonging to the 'Rev. Mr Cobbe, one of the Prince-ites street preachers', the *Somerset County Gazette* reported that the occupants could be heard singing hymns and spiritual songs and making 'dreadful discordant noises'. James Britton, who had signed several of the applications for chapel licences, was one of the participants. His wife came to fetch him and, on being refused entrance, broke eight panes of window glass before being taken in by the police.<sup>54</sup> Only one chapel seems to have been licensed to Agapemonites after this, that in William Gatting's house in Fryern Lane, Bridgwater, in July 1846.<sup>55</sup>

Contemporary sources agree that early in 1846, Prince took steps which reflected his certainty that history was moving to a final consummation. On or around 1 January 1846, he collected together the Dorset faithful (identified, according to a hostile witness, as all those willing to assent cheerfully to the damnation of their unconverted relatives) at a tea meeting in a Weymouth Inn (probably the Royal Hotel). There he announced that 'Jesus had left the Mercy Seat, that the Door of Mercy was shut that therefore sinners could no longer be saved through the intercession of Jesus, but that it gladdened his . . . heart to think that all before him were safely shut up in the Kingdom of Heaven whilst others were left to the outer darkness.'<sup>56</sup> This is surely the meeting mistakenly placed by Dixon in mid-1845, when he has Prince announce in Weymouth that 'the Son of Man was about to come; that the world was in its latest day; that the godly few were being chosen from the mass; and that the wicked many were about to perish in penal fires.'<sup>57</sup> The day of mercy was at an end, and accordingly 'all were expelled the chapel except

those who had embraced the doctrines preached by the Princites.<sup>58</sup> Prince then 'gathered us who had received the Testimony into the Agapemone'.<sup>59</sup>

Symbolically it was fitting that the closing of the spiritual door of mercy should be expressed through the closing of the physical doors of the chapel at Spaxton. But this neat parallel seems to be a retrospective simplification of events. In January 1846 the evidence is that Prince was leader of a small if vigorous sect in Southern England. The previous year's activity in a radius of about ten miles around Bridgwater points to an expectation of widespread evangelizing and indeed to the existence of numerous existing converts. Other considerations also make it unlikely that there was an immediate curtailing of the sect's wider activities. It is noticeable, for example, that Prince had as yet spent very little time in the Bridgwater area, and from the evidence already cited, Cobbe appears to have been the major actor in the Bridgwater 'campaign'. Prince visited only briefly in April and June 1845, and on returning from South Wales he seems to have departed soon after to Weymouth, remaining there until January 1846 with Starky and the female members of his immediate entourage. Not until early 1847 does Prince appear to have settled permanently in the Agapemone.<sup>60</sup>

It would have been difficult for him to have done so any earlier: the complex of buildings, pleasure grounds and greenhouses which appears in the well known picture of the Agapemone published in the *Illustrated London News* of March 1851<sup>61</sup> does not seem to have existed in January 1846. Unfortunately, exact dating of the main dwelling house has not been possible. But contemporary sources mention only the chapel as being in existence in June 1845, and in the same month, Prince's party had lodged in hotels at Taunton.<sup>62</sup> In January 1846, letters were dated from Bridgwater rather than Spaxton or Four Forks, and work on accommodation at the Agapemone was still not complete in November 1846<sup>63</sup> when members were being housed in a cottage belonging to the Waterman family. Indeed it is hard to believe that there was ever any real expectation of fitting all the believers into the Agapemone buildings. In the 1860s, Samuel Starky claimed that there were some 600 Agapemonites.<sup>64</sup> Be that as it may, in 1851 only 65 people were in residence,<sup>65</sup> and thereafter numbers declined somewhat. There were 20 more followers on a farm at Chilton Trivett,<sup>66</sup> and over 80 other known believers who remained in their own houses at places such as Wedmore. Groups of Prince's followers remained in Brighton and the Weymouth areas well into the 1850s.<sup>67</sup>

For how long the house chapels were used is unclear. 'Services' were still occurring in Cobbe's King Square house in March 1846, and if Gatting's Fryern Street Chapel was an Agapemonite creation it would appear that there was still a need for more premises in the summer of 1846. None the less, the effective cessation of applications for licences after 1845 does call for explanation. Was there sufficient accommodation by then or did chapels cease to feature in Prince's plans? The numerous accounts of the Agapemonites' activities which feature in the *Bridgwater Times* from 1850 onwards make no mention of any chapels, so it is likely (though not certain) that they were disused by then. Indeed the Spaxton chapel itself soon passed out of use. By 1849 the Agapemonites cheerfully admitted to their disregard of Sunday as a holy day, the disuse of fixed prayers and ceremonies, and the conversion of the chapel into an ordinary room.<sup>68</sup> The renunciation of prayers and disuse of Bible readings seem to have occurred in late 1845 according to Agnes Thomas.<sup>69</sup> Visitors to the Agapemone in the 1860s found the chapel furnished as a drawing room.<sup>70</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Why did Prince suddenly give up his 'barnstorming' around the South and West? Dixon thought that he had moved to declare himself too soon and that with patience he could have built up a 'powerful sect' in the counties of Sussex, Dorset and Somerset,<sup>71</sup> rather than settling for idle parlour games at Spaxton. Sellers, writing in 1891, offered a particularly cynical rationale for the retreat to Spaxton. 'He and his friends knew that if such converts as the Nottidges were to be preserved, they must be separated from their relations and guarded from outside influence.'<sup>72</sup> It is, indeed, a truism amongst sociologists of religion that unconventional sects seek either physical or social isolation from everyday society in order to preserve their peculiar beliefs.<sup>73</sup> The acquisition of substantial finances must have facilitated the move.

It may be, none the less, that Prince's own beliefs offer the best single explanation of his actions. God had told him, in the testimony 'Behold He Cometh', that judgement was upon the world. In such circumstances further effort would soon become futile, and a secure haven would provide an opportunity to take as many people as possible away from the corrupting effects of the flesh. The same idea inspired the contemporary Oneida Perfectionists in the United States<sup>74</sup> and the later Jezreelites in Britain.<sup>75</sup> The belief that the doors of mercy would be closed upon sinners shortly before the Advent was not unique to Prince; it had appeared a year or so earlier amongst the Millerite Adventists in the United States.<sup>76</sup> Long before he went to Lampeter, Prince had desired to withdraw from commerce with the worldly minded. The opportunity, and the need, had now come. How his sect came to terms with the non-arrival of the expected millennium belongs to the Agapemone's later, more notorious, history.

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15. H.J. Prince, *The Charlinch Revival: or, an Account of the Remarkable Work of Grace which has lately taken place at Charlinch, in Somersetshire* (1st ed., 1842), 5.
16. Dixon, op. cit., 240.
17. Prince (1842), op. cit., 6.



18. Idem.
19. Dixon, op. cit., 279.
20. Prince (1842), op. cit., 9.
21. Ibid., 32.
22. S. Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of England* (4 vols, 1840), 490.
23. Prince (1842), op. cit., 41.
24. SRO, D/D/Bc 7, p. 64.
25. Prince (1842), op. cit., 43.
26. I. Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness* (1976), 62.
27. Prince (1842) [2 eds.].
28. H.J. Prince, *Letters Addressed to his Christian Brethren at St. David's College, Lampeter* (1st ed., Llandovery, 1841).
29. Dixon, op. cit., 292.
30. PRO, C 31/804/101, 6 May 1850, p. 7.
31. SRO, D/D/Bres 4, 5 Feb. 1846.
32. SRO, D/D/Bbr 9, pp. 97 and 135.
33. *DNB*: 'Law, George Henry'.
34. J.G. Deck, *A Word of Warning: the Heresy of Mr. Prince, with Extracts from his Letters* (London and Weymouth, 1845), 10.
35. Ibid., 13.
36. PRO, C 31/804/101, 6 May 1850, p. 8. Prince seems to have learned a lesson from this catastrophe: for the rest of his life, both he and his followers were vague about his precise relationship with the Trinity (see, e.g., Deck, op. cit., 16).
37. H.J. Prince, *Behold He Cometh: the Testimony. Songs and Hymns* (Weymouth, 1845).
38. PRO, C 31/804/101, 6 May 1850, p. 21-2.
39. SRO, D/P/chlch 2/1/2, no. 112.
40. Dixon, op. cit., 282.
41. Ibid., 288.
42. The breach occurred between 1 Dec. 1844, when Thomas officiated at a baptism, and 19 Dec., when a new curate was licensed (SRO, D/P/chlch 2/1/2, no. 275, and D/D/Bc 7, p. 64). He lost his curacy for offences similar to Prince's two years earlier: H.J. Prince, *A Hook in the Nose of Leviathan* (Bridgwater, 1877), 26, records that Thomas was accused of having 'divided the congregation into different classes in preaching, held prayer meetings at the Rectory and permitted persons from other parishes to attend them, allowed a layman to read the lessons and visited, ministerially, the poor in another parish.'
43. PRO, C 31/804/101, 6 May 1850, p. 12.
44. A good account of this episode is provided by Dixon, op. cit.
45. SRO, D/D/Rm 9, 1842-52.
46. *Somerset County Gazette*, 28 June 1845, 3.
47. William Bragg, *A General Directory for the County of Somerset* (Taunton, 1840), 63.
48. SRO, D/D/Rm 9, 1842-52.
49. The allusion to the already disreputable Mormons is, no doubt, intentional. They may have had a congregation in the area at this time; there was certainly one present in 1851. The term 'Agapemone' first appeared in print in 1849 (*Bridgwater Times*, 14 June 1849, 2), and the term 'Princite' in 1846 (*Somerset County Gazette*, 14 March 1846, 2).
50. *Somerset County Gazette*, 30 Aug. 1845, 3.
51. Ibid., 13 Sept. 1845, 3.
52. SRO, D/D/Rm 9, 1842-52.
53. *Bridgwater Times*, 14 Feb. 1850, 4.
54. *Somerset County Gazette*, 14 March 1846, 2.
55. SRO, D/D/Rm 9, 1842-52.
56. PRO, C 31/804/208, 29 April 1850, p. 32.
57. Dixon, op. cit., 296.
58. *Bridgwater Times*, 14 Feb. 1850, 4.
59. George Thomas and Samuel Starky, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ as the Son of Man*;

*the Mystery of the Seven Stars and the Seven Golden Candlesticks Opened by the Testimony of the Two Anointed Lectures delivered at the Agapemone* (1862), 89.

60. PRO, C 31/804/208, 29 April 1850, p. 52.
61. *Illustrated London News*, 18, 29 March 1851, 253–4.
62. PRO, C 31/804/101, 6 May 1850, p. 13.
63. *Taunton Courier*, 4 July 1849, 2.
64. Dixon, op. cit., 330.
65. SRO, census returns 1851, Spaxton.
66. SRO, census returns 1851, Cannington.
67. See, e.g., *Brighton Guardian*, 25 July 1849, 3, and *Bridgwater Times*, 23 May 1850, 2.
68. *Taunton Courier*, 4 July 1849, 2.
69. PRO, C 31/804/208, 29 April 1850, p. 31.
70. Dixon, op. cit., 236.
71. *Ibid.*, 295.
72. E. Sellers, 'The Founder of a Peculiar Sect', *Newbery House Magazine*, 5 (1891), 586–95.
73. B. Wilson (ed.), *Patterns of Sectarianism* (1967), 36.
74. Hayden, op. cit.
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