

HOPES FULFILLED: THE 'GREY BOOK'

In 1957 I gave an address at the Annual Meeting of the Church Service Society on 'Scottish Worship: the Heritage of the Past and the Needs of the Present', and it was published in the Society's *Annual* for 1958. After tracing the development since the Reformation, in both the Church of Scotland and the Episcopal Church, of the two types of Sunday morning service, one based on the Communion or Ante-Communion and the other on Mattins, I described the existing patterns of worship and suggested that, in a somewhat fluid situation, there were opportunities for fruitful discussion and experiment. I ventured to indicate ways in which solutions might be sought for certain problems. So much has happened in the last sixteen or seventeen years that a re-appraisal of the position in the Scottish Episcopal Church now seems appropriate.

The old Anglican pattern on Sunday mornings was Mattins followed by the Ante-Communion, or perhaps, to be more precise and to show where the emphasis lay, the Ante-Communion preceded by Mattins. There is no doubt that the use of the Ante-Communion, or pre-Anaphoral part of the Mass, as a service in its own right, has a long history. It was the *Missa Catechumenorum* of the early church, the *Missa sicca* of medieval times. The First Prayer Book of Edward VI assumed that on Sundays there would be a Communion but provided that on Wednesdays and Fridays (the weekdays when there was most likely to be a congregation but there might be no communicants) the priest should, after the Litany, vest himself and say at the altar 'all things . . . appointed to be said at the celebration of the Lord's Supper until after the offertory. And then shall add one or two of the collects aforewritten . . . And then turning him to the people shall let them depart with the accustomed blessing'. Edward's Second Book, less confident about the readiness of the people to communicate in substantial numbers, was more explicit: 'Upon the holy days, if there be no Communion, shall be said all that is appointed at the Communion, until the . . . general prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here in earth; and one or more of these collects before rehearsed'. In 1662, by which time the hope that there would be a communicating congregation even on the average Sunday had vanished, the rubric was again modified, to read: 'Upon the Sundays and other holy days (if there be no Communion) shall be said all that is appointed at the Communion until the end of the general prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here in earth, together with one or more of the collects, and concluding with

the Blessing'. Law and practice were alike clear, and remained unchanged for generations.

The combination of Mattins and Ante-Communion is not even now quite extinct, but there are few places where it forms a staple diet of worship. With the revival of more frequent Communion in the nineteenth century, the combination came in general to be one of Mattins not just with the Ante-Communion, but with the whole Communion service. This was lengthy and repetitive. If carried out in full according to the Book of 1662, it involved two confessions and two absolutions, four repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, the recitation of both the Apostles' and the Nicene Creeds and the reading twice over of the Collect for the Day.

This was altogether too cumbrous, and the general trend was to separate the two services, so that people came to have Mattins *or* Communion, but not both. The competition between the two led to a prolonged debate, not yet quite concluded, as to whether Mattins or the Eucharist should be the 'main service' – which for most people meant the 11 a.m. service – on a Sunday. The advocates of the pre-eminence of the Eucharist had as their slogan, 'The Lord's Service for the Lord's Day', and seemed to think that this settled the issue. But it did nothing of the kind. The Lord's Service, the Communion, consists strictly speaking of an action. Our Lord said, 'Do this'; but he did not compile a structure of prayer and praise which might be built up around that action. Granted that 'The Lord's Service' was the service for 'The Lord's Day' there was much room for manoeuvre, although those who used the slogan seem to have been blind to the fact.

The slogan in itself did not even settle the issue between Mattins and the Eucharist. In a letter which I sent to the *Scottish Guardian* away back in 1948, I wrote, 'Those who profess to be bored by Mattins might profitably read the Introduction to Morning and Evening Prayer in the Prayer Book and then ask themselves, "Are these services wrong, or am I wrong?"' And I went on to say in that same letter, 'I do not admit that Mattins, the essential parts of which are extracts from Holy Scripture, can be dismissed as "man-made"'. In the Eucharist we have divine sanction for little except the essentials of the action. Most of the words of the service – not to mention the ceremonial – are man-made'.

What I felt then, in 1948, was that churches which concentrated on the Communion to the exclusion of Mattins were throwing overboard not only a lot of familiar and much-loved phraseology of confession, praise, thanksgiving and intercession. They were also throwing overboard a great deal of Scripture, of which Mattins is so largely composed. In my address to the Church Service Society in 1957 I followed this idea up, and complained that 'the assiduous

attender at Communion services may go through life without ever singing the *Te Deum* or the *Benedicite* and even without ever singing a psalm'. I complained also that 'there must be many devout Episcopalians, regular churchgoers Sunday by Sunday, who hear nothing of the Bible except the same yearly round of snippets of Epistles and Gospels'. Taking into account all the losses suffered by those who were deprived of their Mattins, I suggested that some method should be found of 'adapting the Communion or Ante-Communion so that it contains more of the elements of Mattins'.

In what I said in 1957 I was speaking for no one but myself, and I had no idea of setting up as a prophet. It now appears, however, that others must have had similar ideas, because in 1970 the Bishops of the Episcopal Church authorized for permissive use a form of service which is very much along the lines I had in mind. This sixteen-page publication, entitled simply 'The Liturgy', is popularly known as 'The Grey Book' from the colour of its cover. It is, in a sense, in the tradition of the 'Wee Bookies' which provided Scottish Episcopalians in the eighteenth century with the text of their Communion Office when it was undergoing the successive experimental modifications which changed it from its 1637 form to its 1764 form.

The structure of the service in the Grey Book is as follows:

The Liturgy of the Word

Prayers of Preparation, including Confession and Absolution and the
Collect for Purity
Kyries
Gloria in Excelsis
Collect for the Day
Old Testament Lesson
Epistle
Gospel
Sermon
Nicene Creed
Intercession

The Eucharistic Liturgy

Offertory
Preface, Sanctus and Benedictus
Consecration Prayer
Lord's Prayer
Pax
Prayer of Humble Access
Agnus Dei
Communion
Thanksgiving or Post-Communion Prayer
Blessing

Within the general framework there is scope for a great deal of variation. Much is optional. Versicles and Responses are provided

for permissive use in the Prayers of Preparation, the Old Testament Lesson is not obligatory, and it is provided that Psalms, Hymns or Canticles may be said or sung between the lections. At points alternatives are offered: the Confession and Absolution may be either the shorter forms allowed in Morning and Evening Prayer or the forms laid down in the Communion Office in the past; the Ten Commandments or the Summary of the Law may be substituted for the Kyries; and the Intercession (itself now punctuated by the response 'We beseech thee to hear us, O Lord') may be replaced either by a Shorter Litany or by the less formal Intercession which appears in the English Series II Communion Office. The Gloria may be transferred from the beginning of the service to its traditional Anglican place at the end.

Some familiar and much-loved things, which have commended themselves to the framers of most Anglican liturgies, have either become optional or have been dropped altogether. The Comfortable Words, which have stood in every Anglican Liturgy since they were first introduced in the Order for Communion of 1548, no longer form part of the fixed rite, but their use after the Absolution is expressly permitted. The Summary of the Law, even the Ten Commandments, we can still have. Gone completely, however, is the brief Invitation, 'Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking from henceforth in his holy ways: Draw near with faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees.' This also goes back to 1548. Clearly it would no longer be appropriate before a Confession coming at the very beginning of the service and not closely associated with the Act of Communion. Perhaps it is a pity that the revisers did not have the enterprise or the boldness to recast it to make it conclude 'Draw near and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort', and use it, as simply an invitation to Communion, immediately after the Pax. It comes there in 1929, and the exhortation in the Pax, 'Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God', could be followed most appropriately by an invitation to those who 'are in love and charity with your neighbours' to come forward to communicate. It would also have done no harm to modify the Prayer of Humble Access, which now follows the Pax, and so avoid one of the few pieces of repetition surviving in the new Liturgy: the Prayer of Consecration asks that we may be made 'one body with Him, that He may dwell in us and we in Him', and the Prayer of Humble Access concludes 'that we may evermore dwell in Him and He in us'.

The revisers may have decided that it was on the whole wiser either to retain a prayer in a familiar form, without alteration, or

else to omit it altogether, rather than cause irritation by tinkering. They did, however, do some tinkering, with the longer prayers. The 1929 Office was, not without justice, criticized for verbosity, and there has been some pruning. The Intercession, or Prayer for the Whole State of Christ's Church, has lost – to the regret of some – its final clause: 'that at the day of the general resurrection, we, and all they who are of the mystical body of thy Son, may be set on his right hand and hear his most joyful voice, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world'. These words, introduced in the First Prayer Book of Edward VI, were dropped from subsequent English Books but were revived in the Scottish Book of 1637. Possibly they were regarded as a Scotticism and therefore jettisoned. From the Consecration Prayer as it stood in 1929 and as it is now reproduced in the Grey Book two passages are marked for optional omission, so that three paragraphs read:

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, [most humbly beseeching thee to grant, that by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we and all thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins and all other benefits of his passion.]

And here we humbly offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice unto thee, beseeching thee [that all we who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ and be fulfilled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us and we in him.

And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee] to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits but pardoning our offences. . . .

Most of the phraseology which can thus be omitted was, like the omission from the Prayer for the Church, introduced in 1549 and revived in 1637. Taking them all together, one may just wonder whether the motive was the excision of Scotticisms or a desire to shed the accretions of Edward VI and return to a medieval model. This has certainly been the result.

Structurally, the great change made by the Grey Book is the re-emergence of the Ante-Communion. In the Scottish Liturgy which appeared in the Prayer Book of 1929 – as indeed in the Scottish Liturgy ever since it took on its characteristic pattern in the

eighteenth century – the Ante-Communion was truncated because the Prayer for the Church was removed to a place after the Prayer of Consecration (which came immediately after the Offertory). The 1929 version did indeed contain an ‘Introduction’, consisting of the Collect for Purity and the Commandments, the Summary of the Law or the Kyries, and ‘the Ministry of the Word’, consisting of the Epistle and Gospel followed by the Creed and the Sermon; but the twofold division of the whole Communion service was – I suspect consciously and deliberately – effaced. By contrast, the Liturgy of the Word in the ‘Grey Book’ has restored the Prayer for the Church to a position before the Consecration and indeed has placed it before the Offertory. The Eucharistic Liturgy begins with the Offertory, so that an Offertory Hymn can help to demarcate the two parts of the service and provide an opportunity for persons not wishing to remain for Communion to leave the church if they so desire. The two parts are further differentiated if the celebrant conducts the Liturgy of the Word from a position outside the sanctuary and then dons his chasuble and proceeds to the altar only at the Offertory.

In the Grey Book the Liturgy of the Word has been so expanded and strengthened that it is a good deal more than the old Ante-Communion, and, if the various options are fully used, it can be presented or regarded as something more like Mattins. Certainly, with a Confession and Absolution, Versicles and Responses, an Old Testament Lesson, Psalms and Canticles, it has much of the content of Mattins, as the following table shows. (Optional items are shown in brackets.)

<i>Mattins</i>	<i>The Grey Book</i>
Sentence(s)	(Sentences)
Introduction	(‘Let us humbly confess . . .’)
Confession and Absolution	Confession and Absolution
Versicles and Responses	(Versicles and Responses)
	Collect for Purity
	Kyries
Venite	(Gloria)
Psalm	
	Collect for the Day
Old Testament Lesson	(Old Testament Lesson)
Canticle	(Psalm, Hymn or Canticle)
New Testament Lesson	Epistle
Canticle	(Psalm, Hymn or Canticle)
	Gospel
	Sermon
Apostles’ Creed	Nicene Creed
Lord’s Prayer	
Versicles and Responses	
Collects	

(Intercessions)	Intercession
(Sermon)	
(Offertory)	Offertory
Blessing	

The Liturgy of the Word is enriched not only by the addition of an Old Testament Lesson but also by the introduction of a new lectionary which gives a two-year cycle of Old Testament Lessons, Epistles and Gospels. It is therefore no longer true that there is only 'the same yearly round of snippets of Epistles and Gospels', and I was evidently not alone when I said in 1957 that 'a two-year, or even a three-year, cycle would have much to commend it'. Equally, it is no longer true, or need no longer be true if the service is enlarged as the Grey Book authorizes, that worshippers are deprived of the psalms and canticles familiar in Mattins. The directions are so flexible – 'A Psalm, Hymn or Canticle' – that the tastes can be met of those who may not want to sing the *Te Deum* undeviatingly Sunday by Sunday, except possibly during Advent and Lent. Any of the morning canticles – or for that matter an evening canticle (and either the *Magnificat* or *Nunc Dimittis* can be very appropriate on occasions) – can be introduced.

In short, it is now possible to combine with the Communion the main elements of Mattins without raising the complications that used to be caused when Mattins as a whole preceded the Communion. Enthusiasts for Mattins – those who have been called 'Mattitudinarians' – can find in the Grey Book the entire substance of Mattins and even much of the familiar phraseology of that service. The whole Liturgy of the Word assuredly contains the elements so nobly set forth in the old Introduction: 'Although we ought at all times to acknowledge our sins before God, yet ought we most chiefly so to do when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy Word and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul.'

One of the changes which has come over Episcopalian worship – not only when conducted according to the Grey Book – in recent years has been an increase in participation by the congregation. The Grey Book itself does not, indeed, make much explicit change, except by authorizing the practice which had grown up of the congregation joining with the celebrant in saying the Prayer of Humble Access. But custom and usage have gone far beyond this. The Old Testament Lesson and the Epistle are now commonly read by lay people. The congregation may join in the following: the Collect for Purity; the sentences said at the Offertory, beginning 'Blessed by thou, O Lord God, for ever and ever' and ending 'All things come of thee, and of thine own do we give unto thee'; two paragraphs of the

Consecration Prayer ('And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving . . .' and 'And here we humbly offer and present unto thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies . . .'); and the Post-Communion Prayer, 'O Lord our God, thou Saviour of the world, through whom we have celebrated these holy mysteries, receive our humble thanksgiving and of thy great mercy vouchsafe to sanctify us evermore in body and soul; who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.' The sharing in that last prayer suggests, perhaps more strongly than anything else in the service, how the congregation and the celebrant are associated together in the priestly act.

GORDON DONALDSON
University of Edinburgh