

A Saga of Retrieval



for
Rev. Henry Swabey's
Monograph
on
Usury and the Church of England

Rev. Henry Swabey was a *Social Creditor* and the founder of the political journal *Voice*, printed by *J. Hayes & Co. in Liverpool* publishers of *The Social Creditor*. Swabey contributed a feature article on Ezra Pound to the January 17, 1953 edition of *The Social Creditor*. The *Burke Library* at *Hamilton College* in Clinton New York...Ezra Pound's *alma mater*...has eighteen issues of *Voice* from 1954 and three issues from 1955. *Gallup's Bibliography of Ezra Pound* cites 17 pieces in Swabey's journal *Voice* in 1956/57 under the pseudonyms H. Briscoe and W. Watson.

April 2008

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selected & edited by Peter Etherden

From: Thomas Greco
To: John Papworth; cc: Toni Pinschof; Peter Etherden; Chris Wright
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2004 2:45 AM
Subject: Usury and the Church of England

Dear John,

Given your long and close association with the Church of England, and your concern for social justice, I thought you might be interested in the attached manuscript. It is the work of the Rev. Henry Swabey and came to me from Mike Aldana. I believe it is an unpublished work that was found in the papers of one of our late associates, David Horton. I don't know when it was written. Best wishes.

Tom

From: John Papworth
To: Thomas Greco; cc: Toni Pinschof; Peter Etherden; Chris Wright
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2004 12:07 PM
Subject: Re: Usury and the Church of England

Tom,

One of the theological curiosities of the *Church of England*, and of the *Catholic Church* too, is that the only references to usury in the gospels is a repetition of the same story in both Mark and Luke of a master who gives his servants care of some money in his absence. On his return they return it enhanced in size by having resorted to usury, whereas one who did not because he was scared of losing the money altogether was soundly abused for not doing so and 'cast into outer darkness'. I can find no evidence in the gospels that usury was condemned or regarded as immoral and I am puzzled by the attitudes of the church in consequence. There are of course many adverse references to usury in the *Old Testament*, but the only two in the gospels appear to favour it! The references are *Matthew 25: 27* and *Luke 19: 23*. There are no other references in the *New Testament* to usury at all. I will suss out the Revd Sawby tomorrow. Best.

John

From: Thomas Greco
To: John Papworth; cc: Mike Aldana; Chris Wright; Peter Etherden; Toni Pinschof
Sent: Monday, November 29, 2004 8:19 PM
Subject: Re: Usury and the Church of England

Dear John,

Yes, the *New Testament* contains only those two references to usury, however the point of that parable was not to condone usury but to chastise the servant for not making even the slightest use of his talents. I think Swabey covers this. Still, "the letter of the law killeth, but the spirit giveth life." We need to consider any behavior from the standpoint, not of its strict legality, but the spirit and intention. Further, it is the economic arguments that will defeat usury, not the scriptural ones. There has not been enough deep questioning of the reasons behind the scriptural prohibitions in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Peter Challen, Mike Rowbotham, et al in the UK can probably provide much on this score.

Tom

From: Anton Pinschof
To: Thomas Greco; John Papworth; cc: Mike Aldana; Chris Wright; Peter Etherden
Sent: Thursday, December 01, 2005 9:51 AM
Subject: Re: Usury and the Church of England

Having rediscovered the Swabey manuscript in my archive and traced the associated correspondence, I should dearly love to know whether the Reverend Swabey is yet alive and, if not, whether his family & friends can be contacted. The manuscript seems to be incomplete. It does not correspond to its table of contents, or the layout beyond the beginning of chapter VIII is unfinished. Certainly I cannot find the bibliography. The address on the title page is as follows: Rev Henry Swabey, 29 High Street, Maxey, Peterborough PE6 9EB England. The manuscript cannot be all that old, since it exists in digital form and the new post codes did not exist when I emigrated. Swabey's erudition contains so many references to Tawney that I think John should not have dismissed him out of hand. Swabey may deal mostly with England, but he echoes what little I have studied of the struggle in central Europe to oppose capitalism in the centuries before & after the Reformation. Quite obviously, as Tom wrote, the economic arguments against usury will suffice (capitalism does not deliver the goods and destroys habitat & climate), whatever the New Testament says (or said, before the *Third Council of Nicea* rewrote it). To which I would add the precautionary ethical argument against accumulating so much political power in so few "invisible hands". Yours.

Toni Pinschof, in dark and wet and windy Brittany

From: Michael Aldana
 To: Anton Pinschhof; Thomas Greco; John Papworth; cc: Chris Wright; Peter Etherden
 Sent: **Thursday, December 01, 2005 10:23 PM**
 Subject: Re: Usury and the Church of England

I have I believe somewhere in my collection (the complete updated version of the latest known draft) of the writings referred to here. I had previously sent an incomplete copy out via e-mail to find someone who may be interested in helping preserve this large document and possibly promote it, if it is of value to the right people/students. I have no clue about Mr. Swabey but I do have some of his latest and original correspondents relating to it. This work was important to Mr. Horton as he gave me a copy in 1995 and that is reason enough for me to pursue this. I believe they had hoped to publish it. What thoughts do any of you have on this?

Mike Aldana

From: Anton Pinschhof
 To: Michael Aldana; Thomas Greco; John Papworth; cc: Chris Wright; Peter Etherden
 Sent: **Friday, December 02, 2005 1:56 AM**
 Subject: Re: Usury and the Church of England

Thanks for your reply. I shall hasten to send a postcard to the address quoted in the manuscript. This should take but 4 days from here and might at least elucidate the present existence of the Reverend Swabey. There is no doubt in my mind that this work is indeed of great value and should be promoted in any way possible, including publication. Between us, we know plenty who would be keen to help, including specialist groups within the churches of England and other places. If a more complete digital version is available, I for one should be delighted. Not that I ever really needed to derive my ethics from any book...Old or New...Yours.

Anton



From: Peter Etherden
 To: Toni Pinschhof; cc: Thomas Greco
 Sent: **Saturday 24th December 2005**
 Subject: Usury and the Church of England

Toni

Attached is a pdf file of the (almost) complete *Swabey Papers* so that we have a couple of back-up versions of the manuscript in-house in case of disaster (it's 1750kb)...only two of the four appendices have come across from Idaho...so we are missing the appendix on Disraeli and the one on Reformation Plays. I'll ask about them later but we have done well. I have edited for the web almost halfway to page 41...mainly by breaking up paragraphs into smaller chunks. With my current page set up there are 102 pages in all (I have not corrected the table of contents' page numbering). The easiest way to put the *Swabey Papers* on the website for me is by chapter in *Adobe pdf format* as I can turn my *Apple Works* document into a pdf file by the *print to pdf* command. We could password lock the twelve pdfs and charge punters for the password before they can view and download. Let me have your thoughts.

Peter

From: Anton Pinschhof
 To: John Papworth; cc: Tom Greco; Chris Wright; Kirkpatrick Sale; Peter Etherden
 Sent: **Monday, January 08, 2007 1:56 PM**
 Subject: :Swabey, Usury and the Church of England

John

I wish you all the best for 2007 and beseech you to follow up my effort to trace the Reverend Henry Swabey, 29 High Street, Maxey, Peterborough PE6 9EB England. I wrote him a postcard at the time of the last message (1-XII-2005) and got no answer. Please could you, through the Anglican Church, discover whether he yet lives or has heirs whom we could contact?

Toni Pinschhof

De: John Papworth
Pour: Anton Pinschhof
Sujet: Re: Swabey, Usury and the Church of England
Date: Sun, 29 Apr 2007 12:35:15 +0100

Toni,

Am in contact with Henry Swabey's widow, who has promised to send me a copy of his 'pamphlet' (her description), in a day or two when she has found it.

John

De: Anton Pinschhof
Pour: John Papworth; Copie: Peter Etherden Kirkpatrick Sale , Tom Greco

Sujet: Re: Swabey, Usury and the Church of England
Date: Sun, 29 Apr 2007 16:06:51 +0200

Thank you indeed.. Is there any chance of your sending us her name & address?

Toni Pinschhof

From: Anton Pinschhof
To: John Papworth; cc: Kirkpatrick Sale; Peter Etherden; Tom Greco
Sent: Tuesday, 24 July, 2007 10:33:18 PM
Subject: Re: Henry Swabey and the Polish sheep

John,

Swabey: No, I have heard nothing since you told me you were in touch with the widow. The Swabey ball has in fact been in your court since April when you wrote that you were "in touch with her" and that she had "promised to send a copy of his 'pamphlet' (her description), in a day or two when she has found it". My answer to you in April was: "Is there any chance of your sending us her name & address?" to which no answer came.

My News: On the way back from a meeting in Poland recently, I had the good fortune to be able to visit a small town called PINCZOW where ancestors of mine bred sheep and also officiated at the Synagogue from the 15th to the 18th centuries. They left around the time of the French Revolution, ending up in Vienna, so it was about time for us to check the place out. The Synagogue has been restored and was open; it was a tremendous experience, just being there. There were vineyards around the town and some sheep were to be seen, but I did not stop to check whether they were Jewish or polish sheep. Yours

Toni Pinschhof

PS: John, see page 250 of your copy of Paul Johnson's "*History of the Jews*", 1987,(which I took for bedtime reading when last in Purton and opened at random at that page. He is not in the index, but my ancestor Jakob Polak figures on p.250).

From: Peter Etherden
To: Toni Pinschhof ; Michael Albana; Thomas H. Greco; John Papworth; Chris Wright; Kirkpatrick Sale; Linda Etherden
Sent: Friday, 27 July, 2007 10:13:36 AM
Subject: Swabey Update

Toni

Really helpful seeing your bits of the *Swabey Saga* gathered together in a single narrative...bet that took a few hours. *Meo culpa* on this one too as I have been sitting on the digital files Michael Albana sent us ages ago and have (to date) failed to keep my promise to get *The Swabey Papers* onto the web for Tom's 70th birthday last October (intended to incentivate me).

The last time I listed priorities on my 'nice to do' projects (ie. work over and above day to day pro-action and re-action claims on my time energy & enthusiasms) on Thursday 19th July 2007 it came in at third place behind fixing the HoloBolo jigsaw on Connie's website and doing final edits on William Shepherd's *Wealth of Counties* and *England's Climate & Energy Politics* manuscripts.

This is the highest it has got so far. Unfortunately I don't stick to my priority list...tending instead to go on what I feel like doing on any particular day...when I feel like doing anything at all apart from living life. Little subtle e-mail hints can sometimes produce wondrous bursts of activity on a particular topic as like most people I rarely fire on more than one of my four cylinders...we have 120 waking hours available to us each week so we have an amazing theoretical capacity for 'doing more'...whatever that means.

I have been spending time working on *Wikipedia* of late...and this was never on any priority list or agenda. To get a little oomph behind our pursuit of the Swabey widow she can be told that a *Wikipedia* entry is under preparation.

Peter

From: John Papworth
To: Thomas H. Greco, Jr; Toni Pinschof; Peter Etherden
Sent: Tuesday, 21 August, 2007 10:27:32 AM
Subject: Henry Swabey's Widow

When I finally located the widow of the late Henry Swabey she undertook to send me a copy of some of his work on usury. I waited but nothing arrived and I lost sight of her address. Hence the long silence. Your exchange prompted me to renew the search and I have since again spoken to her. She tells me she has found a booklet entitled *The Church of England and Usury* and has promised to send me a copy. To confirm matters I am writing to her and sending her a copy of *Fourth World Review*. She is well into her eighties and has asked me not to pass on her address, but as soon as I hear anything positive I will pass it on. Were there any other documents on your hit list?

John

From: Peter Etherden
To: Mike Aldana; cc: Thomas H. Greco, Jr.; Toni Pinschof; John Papworth
Date: Tuesday, 21 August, 2007 10:45:08 AM
Subject: Usury and the Church of England by Rev Henry Swabey

Mike

Thought you would be pleased to hear this from our colleague Rev John Papworth. If Henry's library is still intact it could turn out to be a treasure trove too.

Peter

From: Mike Aldana
To: Peter Etherden
Date: Tuesday, 21 August, 2007 2:27:45 PM
Subject: Usury and the Church of England by Rev Henry Swabey

Thanks Peter

This is good news. As far as I know the papers I have are letters between Rev Swabey and David Horton about the manuscript -- getting perfected and in good shape... I assumed for the purpose of publishing. I had printed two copies before the death of David Horton as he gave it to me on floppy disks. Do I recall an old e-mail from you (sent to my old e-mail address a few years ago) about your mention that there may have been some pages missing in the large electronic copy I had sent you at that time? If so, I could compare that what you have with my copy to see what may be missing? This booklet referred to above may be an older manuscript that is much improved upon by now in what we have. It will be good to compare the two. I do hope we can bring this all to light!

Mike Aldana

From: Peter Etherden
To: Thomas H. Greco; cc: Mike Aldana; Toni Pinschof
Date: Sunday, 6 April, 2008;20:40 PM
Subject: Usury and the Church of England

Tom

[Usury and the Church of England](#) by Rev. Henry Swabey is now available online. It's not very pretty but it'll do for the moment. I figured they'll be lots of people needing it over the next few years. So happy 70th birthday...and apologies for being a few months late...as a forfeit I am reading the *Age of Jackson* by Arthur Schlesinger (my own cloth-bound 1946 edition!). It has everything America needs to deal with the mayhem caused by the evil men of Wall Street.

Peter

From: Peter Etherden
To: Sabine Kurjo McNeill; cc: Tom Greco; Toni Pinschof
Date: Monday, 7 April, 2008;13:07 PM
Subject: Tawney & Attwood

Sabine

Henry Swabey's [Usury and the Church of England](#) is now online at <http://historyofusury.blog.co.uk>. I'm just working on improving the presentation of the chapter on the 17th century which links R.H.Tawney with Thomas Attwood...then it's off to *Dartington Great Hall* for a rehearsal of *Monteverdi's Vespers* with the *Dartington Community Choir*. Planning to include a link to your (brilliant) page on Thomas Attwood [here](#). Trust that is OK. Have a relaxing week

Peter
