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The Art of Public Worship: Percy Dearmer, William Palmer Ladd, and the American Liturgical Movement

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Abstract

While Percy Dearmer's influence on Anglican liturgy through *The Parson's Handbook* and *The English Hymnal* are well known, his lectures on *The Art of Public Worship*, given in 1919 when he was visiting professor at Berkeley Divinity School in Connecticut, USA, introduce a different phase of his liturgical thought. A new emphasis on modernizing language, brevity of form, and alternative forms of worship would later have expression in England via his association with the Guildhouse in London, and in the hymnal *Songs of Praise*. Comparing *The Art of Public Worship* with the later *Prayer Book Interleaves* by Berkeley Divinity School's Dean William Palmer Ladd leads to the suggestion that this 'second Dearmer' also had an afterlife in the American liturgical movement.

Keywords: Anglicanism, *The Art of Public Worship*, Berkeley Divinity School, Book of Common Prayer, Percy Dearmer, William Palmer Ladd, liturgy, *Prayer Book Interleaves*, Jane Shaw

Dearmer in America

[C]hurch-going has declined steadily and rapidly; this being a free and honest age, people no longer attend that which they do not like.²

Only the turn of phrase hints that these words were not spoken this year; in fact they were uttered just over one hundred years ago by Percy Dearmer, English liturgist and hymnologist, while he was visiting professor at Berkeley Divinity School, then in Middletown, Connecticut. Dearmer is best known as the advocate of the 'English Use' embodied in *The Parson's Handbook*, and for *The English Hymnal* he edited with composer Ralph Vaughan Williams. These both present a restrained

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²Percy Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship* (The Bohlen Lectures 1919; London: A.R. Mowbray & Co., 1920), p. 2.

medievalizing Catholicism in liturgy that remained close to the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, and which continues to be influential in some places, not least in English Cathedrals.

Yet the Percy Dearmer who visited the United States of America after the Great War had a different agenda, whose importance for Anglican liturgy has been less well recognized. This ‘second’ Dearmer, as Jane Shaw has called him, has often been treated merely as an appendage to the earlier, if not ignored altogether.³ In this article I will explore Dearmer’s changing liturgical thought as expressed in the 1919 Bohlen lectures given during his American appointment, published soon after as *The Art of Public Worship*, and then consider its legacy, and particularly its unacknowledged influence in the United States of America through William Palmer Ladd, then Dean of Berkeley Divinity School.

Dearmer before America

Dearmer was 51 when he and his second wife Nan came to Connecticut, after a speaking tour in India in 1918.⁴ His reputation preceded him; *The Parson’s Handbook* was in its sixth edition by this time, and was being published in the United States as well as in the United Kingdom.⁵ While *The English Hymnal* may have been less well known, its influence is evident in the indices to both the 1940 and 1982 Hymnals of the Episcopal Church in the USA.⁶ Dearmer’s foundation of the Warham Guild for the production of ‘the ornaments necessary to the English Use, under fair conditions of labour,’⁷ had added a ‘book’ of artefacts to those printed forms of his early work.

This first Dearmer’s liturgical thought had been shaped by his close connection with Charles Gore at Pusey House, Oxford, and by the historical scholarship of the Alcuin Club, to which his Warham Guild was a sort of practical response or extension. Socialist and artist as well as liturgist, his belief that beauty, truth, and justice are a single whole, of which the liturgy is both an expression and a source, were consistent across his life. He became a Christian, it was later remembered of him, because he found the world ‘extremely beautiful but eminently unsatisfactory.’⁸

³This is the impression one gets in (for instance) Donald Gray’s treatment of Dearmer’s liturgical contribution, ‘Percy Dearmer,’ in *They Shaped Our Worship: Essays on Anglican Liturgists* (ed. Christopher Irvine; London: SPCK, 1998), pp. 71–76; Gray’s own sense of Dearmer’s thought (rather than of its actual influence) is better depicted in his biography, *Percy Dearmer: A Parson’s Pilgrimage* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2009). For Shaw’s reassessment, see the article in this volume and the chapter ‘Percy Dearmer: Beauty’ in her *Pioneers of Modern Spirituality: The Neglected Anglican Innovators of a ‘Spiritual but Not Religious’ Age* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2018), pp. 49–72.

⁴Dearmer’s two biographies are Nancy Dearmer, *The Life of Percy Dearmer* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1940) and Gray, *Percy Dearmer: A Parson’s Pilgrimage*.

⁵Percy Dearmer, *The Parson’s Handbook: Containing Practical Directions Both for Parsons and Others as to the Management of the Parish Church and Its Services According to the English Use, as Set Forth in the Book of Common Prayer* (London: H. Frowde, 6th edn, 1907).

⁶Percy Dearmer, *The English Hymnal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1906).

⁷‘The Warham Guild’ (Anglican Bibliopole, n.d.), <http://anglicanonline.org/archive/special/old/warham-A4.pdf> (accessed August 17, 2020).

⁸N. Dearmer, *The Life of Percy Dearmer*, p. 19.

In his time as Vicar of St Mary's, Primrose Hill, these views were given local expression.⁹ Yet in the second phase of his career, for which this American trip was a turning point, he was to urge quite a different expression of these principles from what is found in that early *opus*.

Dearmer's liturgical publications just prior to the Great War barely hint at an approach much different from *The Parson's Handbook*. He wrote, and published anonymously (with Gore providing a foreword) *A Prayer Book Revised* in 1913,¹⁰ an incarnation of some of the proposals for reform then under discussion. This version of Holy Communion included a eucharistic epiclesis like that in the 1549, Scottish, and American books, but the book also had some modernizing elements such as equal marriage vows, and downplayed the use of general confession and God's wrath more generally. His *Everyman's History of the Prayer Book*, published a year earlier, still seemed to be extolling the virtues of the English liturgy as it ought to be performed.¹¹ Dearmer and Martin Shaw, director of music at Primrose Hill, had also edited *The English Carol Book* in 1913, which was to have a companion volume ('Second Series') published in 1919, just after Dearmer's return from the USA. This project – one of a set of publications which established the use of traditional carols far more centrally in Anglicanism – and its emphasis on folk sources reflects a populist streak that would be articulated more fully in his American lectures.

The Great War itself, however, affected him profoundly. The deaths of his first wife, author and illustrator Mabel White, while they were both serving with British Red Cross ambulance units in Serbia, and of their son Christopher at Gallipoli soon after, placed the horrors as well as the demands of modernity firmly before him. Some of Dearmer's earlier concerns with institution and tradition seem to have been loosened or at least repositioned by this unwelcome meeting with the new world. The needs of those who had been in the trenches and were now often in dole queues would feature more prominently in his liturgical thinking,¹² and his teaching in America represented the first opportunity to outline a new agenda.

Dearmer in America: The Bohlen Lectures

Dearmer's American sojourn arose out of his friendship with William Palmer Ladd, who had just been appointed Dean at the Connecticut seminary in 1918. They had met in London before the War, and Dearmer became the first in a series of prominent English figures who came to the USA via the Berkeley 'English lectureships' Ladd established; G.A. Studdert Kennedy visited in 1923–24, and A.G. Hebert somewhat later.

Dearmer's activity in the United States was characteristically diverse and forthright. As well as teaching in Connecticut, he spoke at the General Theological Seminary in New York, in Boston at the Episcopal Theological School, at the

⁹Frances Knight, *Victorian Christianity at the Fin de Siècle: The Culture of English Religion in a Decadent Age* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015), pp. 219–20.

¹⁰*A Prayer-Book Revised; Being the Services of the Book of Common Prayer, with Sundry Alterations and Additions Offered to the Reader* (London and Milwaukee: A.R. Mowbray; Young Churchman Co., 1913); see David J. Kennedy, *Eucharistic Sacramentality in an Ecumenical Context: The Anglican Epiclesis* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 106–107.

¹¹Percy Dearmer, *Everyman's History of the Prayer Book* (London: A.R. Mowbray, 1912).

¹²See Gray, *A Parson's Pilgrimage*, pp. 115–16.

Philadelphia Divinity School, in several parishes, and at Smith and Mt Holyoake Colleges, as well as addressing the Intercollegiate Socialist Society. The two major lecture series he gave in the USA were the Bohlen Lectures at Philadelphia in January 1919, and the Page Lectures (on pneumatology) at Berkeley Divinity School in February, shortly before his departure for Britain. The Page Lectures were promptly published as *The Power of the Spirit*,¹³ a version of the Bohlen Lectures was also given at St Martin-in-the-Fields in London later that year, and the revised lectures with appendices were then published as *The Art of Public Worship*.

A review in *The Living Church* by Leicester C. Lewis of the Western Theological Seminary, a founder in the same year of the *Anglican Theological Review*, said that *The Art of Public Worship* was 'most simply described as an expansion of the preface to [*The Parson's*] *Handbook*.'¹⁴ Lewis was right as far as the tone is concerned; this is the same insightful, impassioned, and bombastic mind and voice, and there are certainly common ideas and demands. Yet Lewis seems to have missed what was new and different about the lectures, and that was considerable. The Preface to *The Art of Public Worship*, dated May Day 1919, trumpets the change in emphasis:

Twenty years ago I hoped the clergy would try the experiment of carrying out the services of the Prayer Book as they stand; nothing would have strengthened us so much or made us so competent for the revision which now must happen, and that thoroughly and quickly.¹⁵

Dearmer was here explicitly pivoting from the model of *The Parson's Handbook*, where doing the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer properly was the solution to the malaise of worship, to reform. The lectures provide a sense of this envisaged change. As he implies, some but not all of this agenda was shared with the prayer book revision processes in motion on both sides of the Atlantic, which his *Prayer Book Revised* had anticipated. He also notes, again in the preface to the published lectures:

I may add that I did not read either the new proposals of American revision – the 'Report of the Joint Commission on the Book of Common Prayer,' or the English 'Report of the Archbishops' Committee of Inquiry on The Worship of the Church' until after this little book was written so that I am able now thankfully to recognize in how many cases my suggestions fall in with those of two such weighty authorities.¹⁶

Yet the more striking elements of *The Art of Public Worship* go far beyond the gentle catholicizing and rationalizing of those revisions, to issues which would only be addressed more fully in the next round of revisions in the mid-to-late twentieth century, long after his death.

¹³Percy Dearmer, *The Power of the Spirit* (The Page Lectures 1919; Oxford: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1919).

¹⁴*The Living Church*, July 24, 1920, p. 435.

¹⁵Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. vi.

¹⁶Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. iii-iv.

The new agenda foreshadowed in the preface is summarized in the lectures as given: ‘public worship as a whole should consist of ritual, at once shortened, purified, and enriched; and of ceremonial which interprets, colours, and enhances the ritual.’¹⁷ This traditional distinction between ritual as text and ceremonial as performance is pursued in the structure of the lectures. As published, the book contains the six Bohlen Lectures, as well as four additional chapters, and two ‘notes.’ The lectures were on ‘Art,’ ‘Artists and People,’ ‘Ritual,’ ‘Music and Ceremonial,’ ‘The Mission Field,’ and ‘Free Services: Conclusion.’¹⁸

Art features largely in the first two lectures, which reflect Dearmer’s established passion for beauty as integral to worship. In the first, he affirms the divine character and origin of art. Christianity requires beauty, just as it needs goodness and truth; not because we like them, but because of their divine origin. While at one point he describes ‘the common worship of God as an art,’ more characteristic is his statement that ‘there can be no public worship without art,’ in other words that liturgy requires attention to various arts, from architecture to music to embroidery.¹⁹ This was not so much a call to involve art more fully, but to involve beauty more fully. ‘We cannot avoid the practice of art’ he says, ‘but we can avoid beauty just as we can avoid truth.’²⁰ The second chapter, on ‘Artists and People,’ continues this theme: ‘the aesthetic aspect is a spiritual aspect’ he says, and ‘right art is rooted in God.’²¹ Dearmer laments the lack of emphasis on art in theological education, barring in homiletics. He thus wishes theological students to be exposed to practicing artists, whose work should be used in the church building and its ornaments – distinguishing such, by the way, from anyone who would advertise in the Church press: ‘artists never advertise.’²² He looks askance at commercialized liturgical accoutrements, both because of his social principles – guilds of artisans were his model, for justice and for quality – and because he disdained forms of art that had become wedded to existing ecclesiastical interest and practice. Here we can admit Leicester Lewis’s perception of continuity, for it mirrors how Dearmer had enlisted Vaughan Williams, no ‘church musician,’ to compile *The English Hymnal* with him.²³ That partnership was based on the same principle being presented some years later, that clergy and others needed to work with the best artists, not with art *per se*, to make worship winsome and effective. The imperative to engage secular forms of art and knowledge was thus common to the earlier and later Dearmers; yet if the practice had long been in evidence, it is made theoretically

¹⁷Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 82.

¹⁸The four additional chapters were on ‘The Art of Making Collects,’ ‘Some Remarks on the Revision of the Psalter,’ ‘Popular Services,’ and ‘A Few Examples of New Services.’ The two notes, only a page or two each, were on ‘Artists and the Church’ and ‘Sitting for the Psalms’ respectively.

¹⁹Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 15.

²⁰Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. 7 and 10; see Shaw, *Pioneers*, pp. 51–52.

²¹Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. 20 and 21.

²²Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 31.

²³It must have been in 1904 that I was sitting in my study in Barton Street, Westminster, when a cab drove up to the door and “Mr. Dearmer” was announced. I just knew his name vaguely as a parson who invited tramps to sleep in his drawing-room; but he had not come to see me about tramps. He went straight to the point and asked me to edit the music of a hymn book.’ Vaughan Williams, cited in ‘Vaughan Williams and The English Hymnal,’ *The British Library*, n.d. <https://www.bl.uk/20th-century-music/articles/vaughan-williams-and-the-english-hymnal> (accessed April 24, 2020).

clearer here. This emphasis on ‘art’ also implies a particular view of the secular world, and something quite different from more recent ideas of ‘art in worship.’

The third and four chapters on ‘Ritual’ and ‘Ceremonial’ are the longest. They develop further the agenda of beauty with an emphasis on simplicity that is also part of a populist theme. Dearmer identifies four factors in ritual, but treats them at greatly differing length: first is the scholarly emphasis on continuity and precedent, to which he merely nods here before moving on (leaving his friends in the Alcuin Club behind, as it were); second is beauty, already clearly given pride of place in theory, and for which he readily claims the English of both the Prayer Book and the Bible – meaning here of course the versions then in use – as ‘a supreme form of art.’²⁴ The third principle he calls ‘convenience,’ which may be deceptive; he seems to mean both offering a changed populace a simpler and more accessible liturgy, and drawing on a changed human experience as a resource to perform it. The crisis of attendance and belief after the War is presented as a pressing need, and as a resource. He decries the inflexibility of the expected Sunday services, wherein Mattins, Litany, and ante-Communion were typically celebrated in succession without (legal) abbreviation. The need for compression of this long and repetitious Sunday routine had already become prominent in the conversation about revision, as for instance in Walter Frere’s *Principles of Liturgical Reform*, but is now depicted as a crisis rather than merely desirable.²⁵ Dearmer makes a number of specific proposals for a tighter and clearer structure of the Daily Office (still used then as principal services), a few of which have some subsequent history, such as the shortening of the *Venite* and use of the last section of the *Te Deum* as a separate set of *preces*, both taken up in the USA not in the 1928 revision but in that of 1979.²⁶ In one of the supplementary chapters he also suggests a half-hour limit for each service (thinking here of Morning Prayer, Eucharist, and Sermon in sequence, each as a separate ‘service’), saying ‘It is essential, then, to shorten our services, and to shorten them in the right way by removing those features which have been added to them and are no real part of them.’²⁷ This historicized critique suggests recovery of a simpler and more primitive form as the answer to a recent problem. The appendices also provide examples, mostly still focused on the Daily Offices.

These two central chapters also include scathing discourse about recent hymnody, which expands his ‘beauty’ principle, but also reflects the populist theme. Hymns, he says, ‘make it possible to keep our worship in touch with the age; they make change and movement easier; they open our doors to new thought, fresh emotions, in words and in music.’²⁸ Although occasional services during the war had given opportunity for new language to be minted, the results did not impress him much. And he marveled – as do other Anglicans, still – that Christians in the free democracy of the United States had taken upon themselves the yoke of an official hymnal. He compares the 1916 Hymnal, fresh off the press, to the

²⁴Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 46.

²⁵Walter Howard Frere, *Some Principles of Liturgical Reform: A Contribution towards the Revision of the Book of Common Prayer* (London: John Murray, 2nd edn, 1914), pp. 154–62.

²⁶Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. 43, 56.

²⁷Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 186.

²⁸Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 48.

1861 *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, calling both 'blatantly individualistic and weak.'²⁹ He offers, timelessly perhaps, that 'all things are possible to official committees,' adding that 'the book that results contains nothing that seems new or strange to the oldest member of the committee as he ponders over his nursery reminiscences.'³⁰ Dearmer's remedy is the rhetorical high-point of the lectures:

Avoid, then, my brethren, the frozen mediocrity of an authorized hymnal. Refuse to use it; and by the measure of your refusal will you have power with the generation that is rising about you . . . Burn your official hymn-books then. Refuse to touch the new one. Here is the chance now to break loose. Cut from your hymn lists all that you do not know to be true and believe to be beautiful.³¹

Dearmer criticizes the specifics of the hymnal, but more importantly the structure and process that gave rise to it and its authority. New material is crucial, and the canonized hymnal precludes the means to introduce it. He thus demands conditions that would enable the liturgist and musician to seek new forms to meet the changed demand of the changed world.

On the 'ceremonial' or performed aspect of hymnody, Dearmer further develops the populist theme in a way perhaps anticipated in the folkloric tendencies of his earlier work with Vaughan Williams and Martin Shaw, but which is now extended to contemporary popular music. He evokes Walter Frere's 'co-operative principle,'³² wherein the performance of the liturgy must be seen not merely as a narrowly clerical prerogative but as a communal activity – something now perhaps taken for granted, but not at all self-evident in 1919. The demands of ordinary members of the community appear as both an inevitable force and as a source of real innovation or power:

. . . the truth is that the people want certain kinds of music, and they will have those kinds, whether bad or good. They like music-hall tunes . . . They like the wholesome sentiment, the cheerfulness, the humour, which they once had in folk-song, till the educated classes frowned it down because it was not Italian; and they still like better than anything else the folk songs they know, most of which happen to be Scottish, because English folk-song had been frowned almost out of existence.³³

The Church musician should be concerned to teach congregations and not just train choirs, he says. He also hopes to lessen the role of organs, yearns for the gallery band or even the piano, and, drawing clearly on his wartime experience, even proposes 'sing-songs' before Evensong, seasoned perhaps with 'the incense of Woodbines.'³⁴

²⁹Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 49.

³⁰Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 50.

³¹Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. 50 and 51.

³²Walter H. Frere, *The Principles of Religious Ceremonial* (London and New York: Longmans, Green, 1906), pp. 36-37.

³³Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. 84-85.

³⁴Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 90.

The populist strand is also manifest in his fourth factor of ritual, which is truth. Widespread cynicism and disengagement reflect how ‘the clergy have made too great demands upon . . . reason, have failed in fidelity to truth.’³⁵ Dearmer advocates verbal change in the Prayer Book most explicitly here, and while his concern seems to be honesty and edification, his specific proposals imply abbreviation again. The decalogue and the creeds are used too often, the Psalms too fully and uncritically. The extended penitential language of the introduction to the Daily Offices, and of the General Confession, was too anthropomorphic, suggesting a tyrannical God whose ‘wrath and indignation against us’ has indeed been most justly provoked. Hypocrisy is attacked as much as excess of humility, and he approvingly quotes John Ruskin’s complaint that this repetition of begging for mercy made a mockery of the rarer experience of actual repentance.³⁶ This all implies theological change considerably more profound than the 1928 proposals were considering.

The short fifth lecture on the ‘Mission Field,’ mostly on his recent Indian experience, also reflects the themes of beauty and populism, with as robust a case for enculturation as could be envisaged at that time. Dearmer laments that Anglican services in India often seemed to bear accoutrements unsuited to climate and culture, and says that eastern Churches there often did better in presenting the liturgy. His critique includes a sense of how colonialism worked hand in hand with missionary activity. He laments that:

When the good missionary arrives at a new place, he is followed by Messrs. Zuccheroso, the music publishers, and Messrs. Swettham and Undersel, the church furnishers, in the next bullock-waggon . . .³⁷

This acknowledgement of liturgical practice playing a part in how British capital sought new markets for its own commodities in the Empire complements his better-known and more domestically focused critique in *The Parson’s Handbook* of the acceptance by the Church of the products of sweated labor.³⁸

During one characteristic call for beauty, he offers an aside:

But do not think, I pray you, that I am so stupid as to suppose that a simple meeting for prayer within four bare walls cannot be beautiful: it is indeed generally when we begin to decorate the bare walls that we make beauty impossible.³⁹

This foreshadows what was to happen in the coming years in his association with Maud Royden and the Guildhouse.⁴⁰

³⁵Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 77.

³⁶Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. 79-80.

³⁷Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 120.

³⁸See Dearmer, *The Parson’s Handbook*, p. 5.

³⁹Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 131.

⁴⁰Jane Shaw, *Pioneers*, pp. 63-70; and ‘Percy Dearmer Goes to America,’ *Journal of Anglican Studies*, forthcoming, doi:10.1017/S1740355320000157.

The sixth and final lecture is on 'Free Services,' which is also the subject of two appendices. These pages give a sympathetic account of gatherings for corporate prayer, without the Prayer Book. Dearmer is clear that these events are additional to the Offices and sacraments and not alternatives, except – in another significant turn to the populist and secular – insofar as some individuals who would not come to the Holy Communion or Mattins at all might attend less formal or occasional events:

There are multitudes of potential worshippers, people who want to pay some tribute to God, and would come to a service that appealed to them, helped them, and did not frighten or weary them. Our Church has unequalled opportunities, because it can appeal to this class, as well as to those who understand sacramental worship, or the conventual system of the choir offices.⁴¹

He holds up a service of prayer in wartime which he had attended at St Paul's Cathedral in Boston as very satisfactory, in part because it had so little of the Prayer Book; one purpose of these events was 'indeed . . . to keep the regular services intact.'⁴² The order of this service is given as an appendix to the book; it involved a procession before a series of occasional prayers, responsories, hymns, and an address in a position rather like that then expected at the end of Evensong.⁴³ Yet Dearmer is also clear that 'free services' need not be so formal:

The service will consist naturally of prayer, reading, and the lecture, interspersed with hymns – enough framework to give the minister support, but complete freedom of choice in all the matter used. The speaker in many places might be a layman or a laywoman – for the amount of power that we throw away every year by not using the preaching abilities of women is incalculable. That alone is sufficient to account for half our weakness.⁴⁴

Given the comments already made about space, and now the form of service and the role of women preachers, we see again his theoretical contribution to the Guildhouse.

Dearmer after America

Soon after the Bohlen lectures were given, Dearmer returned to England. The lack of a new appointment allowed his focus on the extraordinary project, more fully discussed by Jane Shaw, that illustrates the theory of the Bohlen lectures on 'free services.'⁴⁵ With assistance from Martin Shaw, he and Maud Royden began the Guildhouse largely as a platform for Royden's preaching. With its associated League of Arts led by Gustav Holst (and with involvement of the folklorist Cecil

⁴¹Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 133.

⁴²Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 134.

⁴³Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 207.

⁴⁴Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 136.

⁴⁵Shaw, 'Percy Dearmer Goes to America.'

Sharp),⁴⁶ the Guildhouse flourished for over a decade, often attracting crowds of over 500. No communion services were ever undertaken, maintaining the principle of complementing the authorized liturgies of the Church of England, to which Dearmer and Royden both continued to belong.⁴⁷ Despite Dearmer's theoretical account of how these events complemented the liturgy, this exercise conducted so far outside the boundaries of the existing liturgical conversation contributed to Dearmer spending more than ten years waiting for another ecclesial appointment.

Dearmer's best-known liturgical achievements in the post-American period were in hymnody, in the publications of the hymnal *Songs of Praise* in 1925 and of the *Oxford Book of Carols* in 1928.⁴⁸ Both were collaborations with Vaughan Williams again, as well as with Shaw, and both introduced or revived significant compositions which became widely known and used. *Songs of Praise*, a book much broader in appeal than *The English Hymnal*, was to be enormously popular in schools as well as churches of different traditions in the UK, was revised in 1931, and gave its name (and perhaps part of its ethos) to the continuing BBC TV series.⁴⁹

These later collections were to *The English Hymnal* what *The Art of Public Worship* could almost have been to *The Parson's Handbook*. They do represent the second Dearmer, who goes beyond the principle of doing the existing liturgy properly to think about more radical possibilities, emphasizing the popular and the accessible. His commentary *Songs of Praise Discussed*, published after the expanded edition of that hymn book, is the closest thing to a further theoretical discussion of any of these second-phase practices and projects.⁵⁰

Yet what was possible in hymnody was not mirrored in liturgy, either in theory or practice; there is no fully worked-out equivalent to *The Parson's Handbook* for this second phase of Dearmer's life and work, perhaps of necessity. Dearmer's belief that the 'free service' was a complement to the liturgy rather than an alternative was borne out by his eventual return to more conventional ecclesiastical territory, the last years of his life being spent in a canonry of Westminster. This was less than some had once expected for him, but the theory of *The Art of Public Worship* and the practice of the Guildhouse had between them made him seem less suited to the needs of the Church of England, or to the forms that the liturgical movement was to take there in the following decades. While the next generation of English liturgical theorists such as A.G. Hebert joined him in seeking simpler and more primitive models, they were not thinking so far outside of the existing structures. Thus we look in vain for evidence that the second Dearmer really influenced the next generation of liturgical change in England despite, or perhaps because of,

⁴⁶See, for instance, Alfred Kalisch, 'London Concerts,' *Musical Times*, 1921; the activities of the League are often mentioned in contemporary news publications.

⁴⁷Shaw, *Pioneers*, pp. 63-70; 'Percy Dearmer Goes to America.'

⁴⁸Percy Dearmer, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Martin Shaw (eds.), *The Oxford Book of Carols* (London: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1928); Percy Dearmer, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Martin Shaw (eds.), *Songs of Praise* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1931).

⁴⁹Not all judgements have been favorable. Geoffrey Cuming describes its texts as 'bowdlerized'; *A History of Anglican Liturgy* (London: Macmillan, 1982), p. 193.

⁵⁰Percy Dearmer, *Songs of Praise Discussed: A Handbook to the Best-Known Hymns and to Others Recently Introduced* (London: Oxford University Press; H. Milford, 1933).

his clarity and urgency in seeking it.⁵¹ The first Dearmer was too traditional for the time, the second too radical. Yet as Jane Shaw suggests, what ‘he articulated in his writings and demonstrated through liturgy, the arts and his political engagement the connections between God, justice and beauty,’ may yet find a new audience and continued relevance.⁵²

America after Dearmer

Both Dearmers, the advocate of the ‘English Use’ and the modernizing populist radical, were at work at Berkeley Divinity School in 1918–19. Dearmer arranged an oratory in one of the Middletown lecture rooms, when the New England winter conditions and fuel shortages made use of the free-standing St Luke’s Chapel impractical for a community that had dwindled during the War. This involved, predictably to readers of *The Parson’s Handbook*, an English altar with dossal, riddle posts, and two lights.⁵³ That reconfigured space, reflecting beauty and simplicity as Dearmer saw them, was left behind when the School moved to New Haven and affiliated with Yale in 1928; however, promotional material even from as late as the 1960s suggests a simpler form of this arrangement had made its way to the second St Luke’s, a dossal and two candles still clearly visible in photographs of the Chapel (Fig. 1).

That second Chapel, however, also gave way to different configurations of space, just as the material influence of *The Parson’s Handbook* elsewhere is now fairly hard to discern in the US Episcopal Church generally. ‘English’ altars are few, many presumably lost, like that at Berkeley, with the shift to celebrating *versus populum*. Remaining Anglo-Catholic churches tend to proclaim their disdain for the Warham Guild and its Anglicizing ways with massive reredoses and six candles. It is hard to find a Lenten array; Roman color schemes abound instead, with the exception of the fictive ‘Sarum Blue,’ that mostly reflects squeamishness about the penitential tone of Advent.⁵⁴

What of the American liturgy and the ‘second’ Dearmer? In the Bohlen lectures, he praises the ability of a child to like ‘an old Christmas carol, and the colour of green grass,’ even as he bemoans how bad taste is taught.⁵⁵ Carols bridge the two phases of his work, as a form of popular religiosity which embodied his concern for beauty and simplicity together. Even though this interest was not new, it finds stronger expression in the Bohlen lectures and in his subsequent work. Dearmer instituted a carol service in Middletown, and introduced music which, as Ladd reminisced to Nan Dearmer after Percy’s death, had seldom been heard in that country.⁵⁶ In the 1930s, Ladd recalled a continuing tradition at Berkeley Divinity School,

⁵¹He is not mentioned at all in the quite comprehensive account of the liturgical movement by John Fenwick and Bryan Spinks, *Worship in Transition: The Twentieth Century Liturgical Movement* (London: T & T Clark, 1995).

⁵²Jane Shaw, *Pioneers*, p. 70.

⁵³Dearmer, *The Life of Percy Dearmer*, p. 217.

⁵⁴This may actually constitute another piece of the conjunction between Dearmer and Ladd, on which see further below. On blue, see J. Barrington Bates, ‘“Am I Blue?” Some Historical Evidence for Liturgical Colors,’ *Studia Liturgica* 33 (2003), pp. 75–88.

⁵⁵Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 26.

⁵⁶N. Dearmer, *The Life of Percy Dearmer*, p. 218.

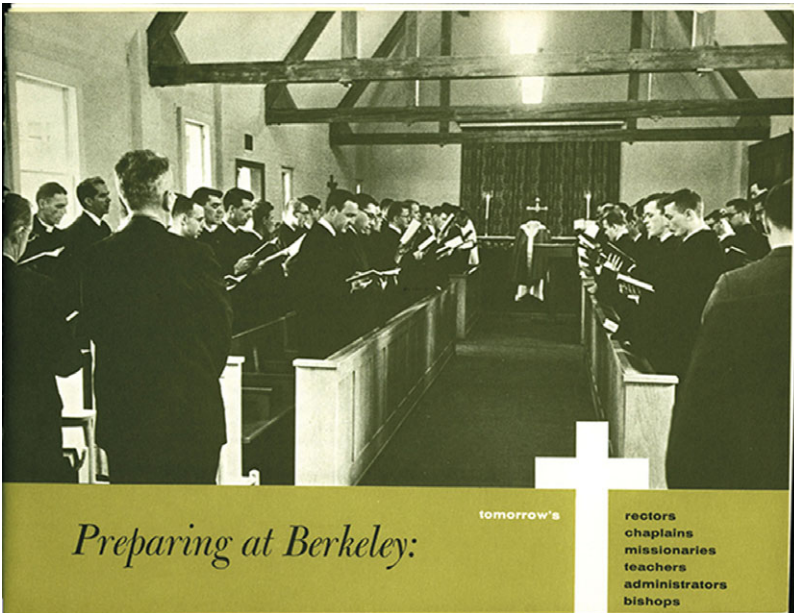


Figure 1. English altar in St Luke's Chapel, Berkeley Divinity School, 1960s.

and the use there of what was by then presumably the *Oxford Book of Carols*.⁵⁷ In the 1950s, Berkeley Divinity School historian Edward Hardy could refer to 'the annual carol service with its unusual music, which filled the chapel with friends and neighbors as well as students,' without reference to its originator.⁵⁸ The carols join the two Dearmers, but do not reveal quite what was distinctive to the 'second.'

Songs of Praise also had indirect influence in the United States, but provides an example of how the second Dearmer's work could be received but missed. Reporting the publication of the *Hymnal 1982* of the Episcopal Church, the *New York Times* noted that 'One of the new hymns was once a best-selling record by Cat Stevens. "Morning Has Broken Like the First Morning" was popular on the radio in recent years.'⁵⁹ The song actually started not with Cat Stevens but with *Songs of Praise*, arising from Martin Shaw's request of a text from Eleanor Farjeon for the expanded edition of 1931. The more recent manual, *Welcome to Church Music and the Hymnal 1982*, points out that Vaughan Williams is represented by more tunes and arrangements in that book than any other, but fails to mention Dearmer,

⁵⁷... the books edited by him'; N. Dearmer, *The Life of Percy Dearmer*, p. 218.

⁵⁸Edward R. Hardy, 'The Berkeley Divinity School One Hundred Years 1854–1954,' *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 24.1 (1955), p. 33. Hardy's nod to Dearmer's visit in the same account is perceptive if understated, however; Dearmer is described merely as 'unconventional liturgist' (p. 31).

⁵⁹'Episcopalians Revise Hymnal,' <https://www.nytimes.com/1982/09/10/us/episcopalians-revise-hymnal.html> (accessed April 25, 2020).

who not only contributed numerous texts and translations, but more importantly whose initiative had made Vaughan Williams' and Shaw's work available at all.⁶⁰

While the *The Art of Public Worship* probably reflects some of what was taught in Middletown, there is little sign that the published book directly influenced large numbers, either in the England or the USA, in the way his earlier works had and would continue to do. Nan Dearmer's biography of Percy does give the Bohlen lectures a prominence that could be read as remedial or almost plaintive, with two whole pages of description and quotations, mostly on art in the stricter sense; 'these passages are the key-note to so much of his belief and thought,' she insisted.⁶¹ Not many have paid much attention, at least when assessing Dearmer's legacy, excepting Jane Shaw's recent essays. When liturgical historians show any awareness of *The Art of Public Worship*, they tend to attribute to it the aestheticizing tendency later evident in liberal Protestantism, as though it was about 'the arts' in liturgy.⁶² This mis-reads the ambiguous use of 'art' in the title, and misrepresents Dearmer's concern for the aesthetic in relation to other factors.

Accounts of the subsequent liturgical movement in the USA note Ladd's initiative in bringing Dearmer to the USA, but tend to overlook the Bohlen lectures and Dearmer's part in Ladd's own history. Urban T. Holmes thus credits Ladd with the initiative for bringing Dearmer, but identifies him only as author of the *Handbook*, as though the visit were intended to promote the 'English Use.'⁶³ Michael Moriarty, who examines and emphasizes Ladd's own great influence on the later liturgical movement in the USA, notes additionally the social and political concerns the two liturgists shared, but once again does not mention Dearmer's lectures. He also gives later English visitor Gabriel Hebert credit for bringing the next generation of ideas from the English liturgical conversation, when in fact Hebert's 'English lectureship' at Berkeley Divinity School was not until 1948–49, after Ladd's death.⁶⁴

The remaining question is whether and how the Dearmer whose agenda was articulated in *The Art of Public Worship* was also at work at Berkeley Divinity School, and in conversation with Ladd, who was in the coming years to be seen as the driving force in the liturgical movement in the USA. The visit to Berkeley Divinity School was the most formal opportunity to teach liturgics Dearmer ever had. The Bohlen lectures themselves presumably reflect an intellectual legacy conveyed in his classroom teaching on liturgics and other conversations at the seminary, but the additional chapters of the published book also read like lectures, in the more circumspect sense of classroom teaching rather than in the declamatory style of the public lectures. The additional and fairly technical chapters on collects

⁶⁰Matthew Hoch, *Welcome to Church Music and the Hymnal 1982* (New York: Church Publishing, 2015), p. 9.

⁶¹Dearmer, *The Life of Percy Dearmer*, p. 220.

⁶²James F. White, *Christian Worship in North America: A Retrospective, 1955–1995* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997), pp. 69–70.

⁶³Urban T. Holmes, 'Education for Liturgy: An Unfinished Symphony in Four Movements,' in *Worship Points the Way: A Celebration of the Life and Work of Massey Hamilton Shepherd, Jr* (ed. Malcolm C. Burson; New York: Seabury Press, 1981), p. 120.

⁶⁴Michael Moriarty, 'William Palmer Ladd and the Origins of the Episcopal Liturgical Movement,' *Church History* 64.3 (1995), p. 442.

and the Psalter in particular seem very likely to come directly from this setting, given that these were also instantly available for the remarkably quick publication of the book. The fact he gave the public Page lectures in Middletown on a quite different subject adds to the likelihood of this connection, since he had already shared his liturgical thoughts freely with students in class. So *The Art of Public Worship* reflects his teaching and conversation in the USA more generally, but what happened to it, if anything?

Prayer Book Interleaves: William Palmer Ladd

Whatever students may have learned in the Middletown classroom, the piece of the puzzle remaining in assessing Dearmer's visit and impact is Ladd himself.⁶⁵ Ladd was born in 1870 in New Hampshire, and graduated from Dartmouth in 1891 before he spent the years 1893–96 studying in Paris, Oxford, and Leipzig. After study at the General Theological Seminary, Ladd was ordained and served as a parish priest in the Diocese of New Hampshire, before beginning postgraduate study at Harvard. He received an MA there in 1903 and began but did not complete his doctoral work, instead taking up appointment as professor of church history at Berkeley Divinity School in 1904.⁶⁶ His own social commitments were well known; he was asked to chair a significant commission on child welfare for the State of Connecticut, and not long after Dearmer's visit was accused of Bolshevism for allowing voices commending the October Revolution to be heard.⁶⁷ Jane Shaw and Bryan Spinks have both noted the difficulty in tracing the specifics of Ladd's development in thought, not least because of the paucity of his papers and publications.⁶⁸ Despite the modesty of his output, Ladd was to be uniquely influential in the United States in the few decades after Dearmer's visit, and even after his own death. His work was arguably the most important means by which the Dearmer of *The Art of Public Worship* also had real (if less explicit) influence, at least in the United States.

Although they shared political leanings, Ladd and Dearmer came from somewhat different ecclesial backgrounds to their common interest in liturgy. Dearmer was formed as a very English sort of Prayer Book Catholic, but Ladd emerged from latitudinarian New England Episcopalianism. He had a deep interest in history, and a desire to use tradition as a tool selectively for renewal, but less interest in anything as

⁶⁵The more focused studies of Ladd by Michael Moriarty are his article 'William Palmer Ladd and the Origins of the Episcopal Liturgical Movement,' already cited, and 'William Palmer Ladd,' in *They Shaped Our Worship: Essays on Anglican Liturgists* (ed. Christopher Irvine; London: SPCK, 1998), pp. 57–63.

⁶⁶The unsigned biographical sketch in a memorial pamphlet published after his death is the fullest of which I am aware; see Berkeley Divinity School. *In Memoriam: William Palmer Ladd, Dean of the Berkeley Divinity School 1918–1941* (Berkeley Divinity School Bulletin 99; New Haven, CT: Berkeley Divinity School, 1942), pp. 16–20. Hardy's brief account is also worth reading; 'The Berkeley Divinity School: One Hundred Years 1854–1954,' pp. 30–31.

⁶⁷Edward Watson, 'A Lesson from the Socialist Controversy at Berkeley Divinity School,' <https://edseyreview.wordpress.com/2017/01/12/pastoral-lessons-from-the-socialist-controversy-at-berkeley-divinity-school/> (accessed September 13, 2020).

⁶⁸Shaw, 'Percy Dearmer Goes to America'; Bryan Spinks, 'The Intersection of "English Use" Liturgy and Social Justice: Snapshots of Augustus Pugin, Percy Dearmer, Conrad Noel and William Palmer Ladd,' *Journal of Anglican Studies*, forthcoming.

obviously archaizing as the 'English Use.' The two shared a disdain for the Romanizing wing of Anglo-Catholicism, and both avoided the term as equivalent to that tendency. They of course shared a deep and positive concern for the Church's social witness, and saw it as deeply related to liturgy and sacraments. Despite his lack of sympathy for medievalizing in Anglicanism, Ladd became very interested in the liturgical thought of the contemporary Roman Catholic Church, such as was emerging from the Abbey of Maria Laach in Germany. Like many liturgists, he participated in an ecumenical shift of emphasis in the post-war period that looked to the early rather than medieval Church as source of renewal.⁶⁹

Ladd himself confirmed Dearmer's influence both on him and in the seminary in Connecticut when he wrote to Nan Dearmer after Percy's death:

I am sure that Dearmer would be gratified to know that Berkeley is now one of the chief centres of the Liturgical Movement and of Anglican principles of ceremonial in the Church of this country. For this we owe much to him.⁷⁰

This acknowledgement seems to encompass both 'Dearmers,' with the second mentioned first. By the time Ladd was writing, the 'liturgical movement' of course meant something quite different from what it had in 1919, but *The Art of Public Worship* had anticipated some of what was to come, or at least had anticipated a method with which to approach the issues.

When Ladd's voice appears in the conversation, it has a tone strikingly like that of the 'second' Dearmer. By the time he wrote to Nan in the mid-1930s, Ladd himself had become the leader in the United States of that different stage of the movement for Anglican liturgical renewal. Urban T. Holmes, writing just after the adoption of the Prayer Book of 1979, acknowledged Ladd as 'the principal catalyst for the liturgical awakening in the Episcopal Church.'⁷¹ Ladd becomes a figure of note after the neater 1928 reform process had finished in the USA, but speaks critically about that 'new' Book of Common Prayer, strikingly soon after it had been promulgated.

Ladd's only significant book-length publication was *Prayer Book Interleaves*, originally a set of columns in the magazine *The Witness*, and published in book form only after Ladd's death.⁷² The original 1943 Oxford University Press edition of the essays was followed by a Seabury reprint in 1957, now with a foreword by Ladd's protégé Massey Shepherd, who was to become the driving force behind the Prayer Book of 1979. The 1957 edition was described in a review in the *Journal of Religion* as a 'cherished and old friend,' which had already then 'influenced . . . thousands along the clergy and laity.'⁷³

⁶⁹Michael Moriarty, 'William Palmer Ladd and the Origins of the Episcopal Liturgical Movement,' pp. 438-51.

⁷⁰N. Dearmer, *The Life of Percy Dearmer*, p. 217.

⁷¹Holmes, 'Education for Liturgy,' p. 120.

⁷²William Palmer Ladd, *Prayer Book Interleaves: Some Reflections on How the Book of Common Prayer Might Be Made More Influential in Our English-Speaking World* (ed. Ailsie Taylor Ladd; Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1942).

⁷³William H. Baer, 'Review of Prayer Book Interleaves, by William Palmer Ladd,' *The Journal of Religion* 38.3 (1958), pp. 212-13. *Prayer Book Interleaves* was published a third time in 2018 for the centenary of Ladd's appointment, by Wipf and Stock in conjunction with Berkeley Divinity School.

It is striking to read *Prayer Book Interleaves* beside *The Art of Public Worship*, which has rarely been done. Ladd's book is not about art, and says little about music. Dearmer's name appears only twice in *Prayer Book Interleaves*, and then somewhat incidentally. Content is not the main basis for comparison but method, and tone. These resonances are so strong as to suggest that the 1918–19 visit had been a catalyst for the reforming impetus in Ladd's work, and thus also, if less directly, in his students such as Shepherd.⁷⁴ Many echoes of specific proposals as well as a strong alignment of the commitments and the arguments underlying them are present.

The Art of Public Worship had looked past both American and English prayer book revision processes, to express a different vision that was not merely about tidying certain elements of the 'ritual.' While Ladd has much less to say than Dearmer about art and music, he too looks past the words to the environment and structure of liturgical practice. In a subsection on art in his own chapter on 'Ceremonial,' titled tellingly not 'art' but 'beauty,' Ladd observes that 'Worship is an art which requires the help of many other arts like architecture, music, and elocution.'⁷⁵ The elaboration of this dictum, arising from a swipe at the usual mediocre Church décor, is a Dearmerite epitome, with a Yankee self-help element taking the place of Dearmer's guild socialism:

... their furnishings almost always have the mark of the fortuitous and the ready-made. A revival of simple, honest church architecture would be a spiritual blessing. Good colored prints and plaster casts can be provided at little expense. Figured stuffs are quite as desirable as elaborately embroidered hangings. Copper, silver, and iron are as sacred as brass. Home-made woodcarving is often best.⁷⁶

Deprecation of excessively penitential emphases in Cranmer's and later prayer books is also common to both works, long before it became a more popular theme. Dearmer had written of the 'unreality' of constantly bewailing our wickedness, his emphasis more existential,⁷⁷ while Ladd's discussion made use of the emerging emphasis on seasonal variation in the developing liturgical movement. Thus while he can lament the 'general gloom' that he saw as having descended via medieval Christianity, and deprecated its interest in 'penitence, fasting, humiliation, and asceticism,' Ladd saw even the penitential tone of Lent as a poor substitute for an emphasis on catechesis as the characteristic of the season, and thought of Advent not as a penitential season at all.⁷⁸

The two also shared a special concern for liturgical brevity, grounded in sensitivity to modern needs. While Ladd is less explicitly addressing a crisis such as that perceived after the Great War, he too could be seen as a populist in this vein; his version of this especially tuned to the 'practical,' a good New England Yankee

⁷⁴Shepherd gave his own Bohlen lectures in 1959; they hold Ladd up as an inspiring figure for the reforms then coming into view. See Massey H. Shepherd, *The Reform of Liturgical Worship: Perspectives and Prospects* (The Bohlen Lectures 1959; New York: Oxford University Press, 1961).

⁷⁵Ladd, *Prayer Book Interleaves*, p. 82.

⁷⁶Ladd, *Prayer Book Interleaves*, p. 82.

⁷⁷Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. 77–78.

⁷⁸Ladd, *Prayer Book Interleaves*, p. 11; cf. p. 26.

concept that in Ladd carries the weight both of effective ministerial practice, and of liturgy winsome to his implied audience. Ladd not only echoed the general emphasis on brevity as a tool for winning or keeping adherents (as well as some of Dearmer's specifics, such as concern about the over-use of the Creed), but put it into direct practice at Berkeley Divinity School. He calls for the Eucharist (to which attention has by that point largely shifted) to be 'more catholic and primitive, and at the same time more modern and practical, and above all shorter.'⁷⁹ This of course echoes Dearmer's pithy summary of the need for liturgical renewal in 1919. Ladd in fact developed a 'Berkeley Rite' to embody this, that reduced the 1928 Prayer Book Communion service from eighteen pages to four, and not only used it at the seminary but followed Dearmer's example by appending it to *Prayer Book Interleaves* as published.⁸⁰ This was not as radical as the Guildhouse experiment in one sense, but perhaps more so in another, in that Ladd did not see the need to declare the Prayer Book itself sacrosanct. In any case, the Berkeley Rite instantiates another common feature Ladd shared with Dearmer, the willingness not only to advocate brevity and adaptation but to conduct the experiments necessary to find out what could work.

Dearmer and Ladd also both emphasize lay leadership and participation in ways ahead of their times. We saw that Dearmer evoked Frere's 'cooperative principle'; more specifically he supported lay preaching, at least in the 'free services,'⁸¹ and lay persons ('a reader of either sex') leading additional offices such as Prime and Compline,⁸² while at the Eucharist he hopes for 'clerk (be he layman, evangelist, or catechist), to read the Epistle.'⁸³ Ladd shares the view that the offices should be led by lay persons, but by the late 1930s is again speaking within an agenda focused more on eucharistic worship. Although Ladd is less explicit about promoting women's leadership, he imagines a Churchwarden reading the Gospel, or assisting at the altar or with the chalice.⁸⁴ Both men saw these opportunities, however, not merely as ways to include lay voices in the liturgy, but as reflections of the wider leadership and gifts these same people would offer in the Church and secular world.

Both Dearmer and Ladd stood on the toes of some opponents in characteristic and similar ways. The wincing of church musicians can almost be heard between the lines of Dearmer's comments about hymnals, and in the preface to *The Art of Public Worship* he even addresses his own frankness:

... a good deal of criticism and even of denunciation is inevitable, and the present opportunity makes plain speaking more than ever a duty, lest all the widespread desire for better things be thwarted by the weight of habit . . . It is difficult again to counter the forces of ignorance and stupidity, as men have to do in the case of any reform, without risking the appearance of unkindness The hope of the world lies in the increase of the number of

⁷⁹Ladd, *Prayer Book Interleaves*, p. 51.

⁸⁰Joseph Britton, 'The Berkeley Rite,' in *The Serious Business of Worship: Essays in Honour of Bryan D. Spinks* (ed. Melanie C. Ross and Simon Jones; London and New York: T & T Clark International, 2010), pp. 119-29.

⁸¹Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 136.

⁸²Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. 196-97.

⁸³Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 129.

⁸⁴Ladd, *Prayer Book Interleaves*, p. 82 etc.

those who follow their highest light in the matters which are specially their own, and, in the far more numerous realm outside, keep themselves from the careless prejudices of the crowd by consulting other specialists.⁸⁵

Ladd's adherence to a similar principle of forthright conversation rings out clearly, two decades later:

But why is it uncharitable to criticize both services and sermons? Lawyers have to win their cases in court in the face of aggressive criticism. The misfortune of the clergy is that they have to plead only before uncritical, not to say submissive, congregations. Thus they fall under the lure of a self-satisfaction that carries them on from bad to worse. Their best friends are their friendly critics, and if they had more such friends they might improve both services and sermons to the point of winning back some of the discerning lay people who now simply stay away from their churches.⁸⁶

This similarity of tone or mode of debate may reflect affinity as much as influence, but Dearmer's oratory surely had its impact on Ladd.

There are some other, more minute, places where comparison might suggest influence, such as comments on the Advent collects and on preaching, but we need not belabor the point.⁸⁷ More important overall is the shared emphasis for brevity and dignity, grounded in an acute sense of the changing reality in which the Church found itself, offered with frankness and vigor. Given the similarities between their work and interests, the other concrete instances of Dearmer's influence at Berkeley, and Ladd's acknowledgement of the connections, we can thus suggest that Ladd himself and Berkeley Divinity School more generally were significant channels for the influence of the 'second' Dearmer in the United States. Even while a different audience continued to read *The Parson's Handbook* and learn from the 'first,' and while church musicians would constitute yet a third point of contact through the various hymn and carol books, the agenda that Ladd was to promote in the American Church did owe something to the second Dearmer.

It would be wrong of course to downplay Ladd's originality. Ladd's work reflects his considerable interests as a teacher of history, and in particular the patristic focus in liturgics that had blossomed in the time between the appearance of the two books. He also shares, as we have seen, the later liturgical movement's emphasis on eucharistic worship, and an admiration for contemporary Roman Catholic scholars and reformers. And part of Ladd's contribution is that the Episcopal Church in the USA received the liturgical movement via its 'Broad Church' wing, of which he was clearly a member, whereas in the Church of England it was an outgrowth of the Catholic movement. Dearmer did not have the same prominence in the post-war liturgical conversations in England as, for example, Hebert, who did not visit Berkeley until after the Second World War. Ladd himself acknowledges this

⁸⁵Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. iv-v.

⁸⁶Ladd, *Prayer Book Interleaves*, p. 148.

⁸⁷Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, pp. 158-59; Ladd, *Prayer Book Interleaves*, pp. 26, 42.

difference, referring to the ‘weakness’ of the English version of the liturgical movement that emerged, because it:

... is the outgrowth of ‘ritualism.’ Its leaders have been so long travelling on the pro-Roman road that they find it difficult to turn about. They undervalue Anglican tradition and they are so devoted to their ‘Western use’ that they find it hard to face realities.⁸⁸

Although Ladd discusses Hebert’s work more directly in *Prayer Book Interleaves*, both appreciatively and critically, he sees the momentum in the United States as lying with a quite different group:

Evangelically-minded churchmen are faced with a great opportunity. By carrying the Prayer Book reform inaugurated at the Reformation a step further forward, and by adapting our inherited forms of worship to the modern situation, they can prepare the Church to meet the needs of a generation it has done so much to mislead and to alienate.⁸⁹

This sums up Ladd’s place in the movement that eventually led to the adoption of another revised prayer book in the American Church in 1979, almost four decades after his death.

Despite these differences or because of them, Ladd’s and Dearmer’s intellectual trajectories had intersected in a fortuitous way in 1918–19. The English Catholic Dearmer with his medievalist leanings was beginning a more modernizing phase, while the latitudinarian Ladd was absorbing modern Roman Catholic scholarship. The resonances between *The Art of Public Worship* and *Prayer Book Interleaves* give a sense of how the English scholar’s work catalyzed that of the American Dean.

A Century Later

One hundred years after Ladd’s appointment as Dean of Berkeley Divinity School and Dearmer’s time there as visiting professor, the General Convention of The Episcopal Church declared a new period of liturgical experimentation, without great clarity about the purposes or outcomes expected.⁹⁰ The origins of this move seem to lie neither in widespread popular dissatisfaction in the pews, nor in urgent messages from the liturgists, but in real or perceived concerns about who might not now be coming to Church.

Dearmer and Ladd had also expressed such concerns, and their common view that beauty, truth, and justice must be combined in the reform and in the practice of liturgy would make them companions worth retrieving on this journey. Both radicals in their own times, part of their gift would be to remind the Church that even

⁸⁸Ladd, *Prayer Book Interleaves*, pp. 166–67.

⁸⁹Ladd, *Prayer Book Interleaves*, p. 167.

⁹⁰Matthew S.C. Olver, ‘Did General Convention Authorize Prayer Book Revision?’ *Covenant*, August 24, 2018, <https://livingchurch.org/covenant/2018/08/24/did-general-convention-authorize-prayer-book-revision/> (accessed June 20, 2020).

radical reform is necessarily grounded in tradition, as well as in deep scrutiny of what has led to the present moment. Both would suggest that experimentation and traditional forms of liturgy could be complements, rather than alternatives, carefully chosen and crafted for different occasions. Both would also remind us that the emphasis in any authentic theology of worship must be on the God of Jesus Christ, and that concerns for the needs of any and all communities must be grounded in that basic commitment.

It may be fitting to give Percy Dearmer the last word, with what were also the closing words of the Bohlen lectures. Some may hear an echo of the essay *Of Ceremonies* from the first Prayer Book, but like his thoughts quoted at the beginning of this essay, they are curiously apt a hundred years later:

Yet our course is clear and simple. It is to serve God for his own sake: to serve him in spirit and in truth, to worship him in the beauty of holiness, and in the holiness of beauty: to give up all that is unreal and insincere, ugly or depressing, tedious, artificial, or mawkish, unsocial, narrow, quarrelsome – not seeking any reward, but because there is a God above us: and in this new way to persevere in a quiet conscience, and therefore with consistent principle, without restlessness or impatience; until gradually the people realize that the Church has some better things for them. We shall not want for ever increasing encouragement; but there will be no sudden response, no flocking back into the churches that have been chilled so long. Only, if we do what is right, for the sake of the right, all will come right in the end.⁹¹

⁹¹Dearmer, *The Art of Public Worship*, p. 148.