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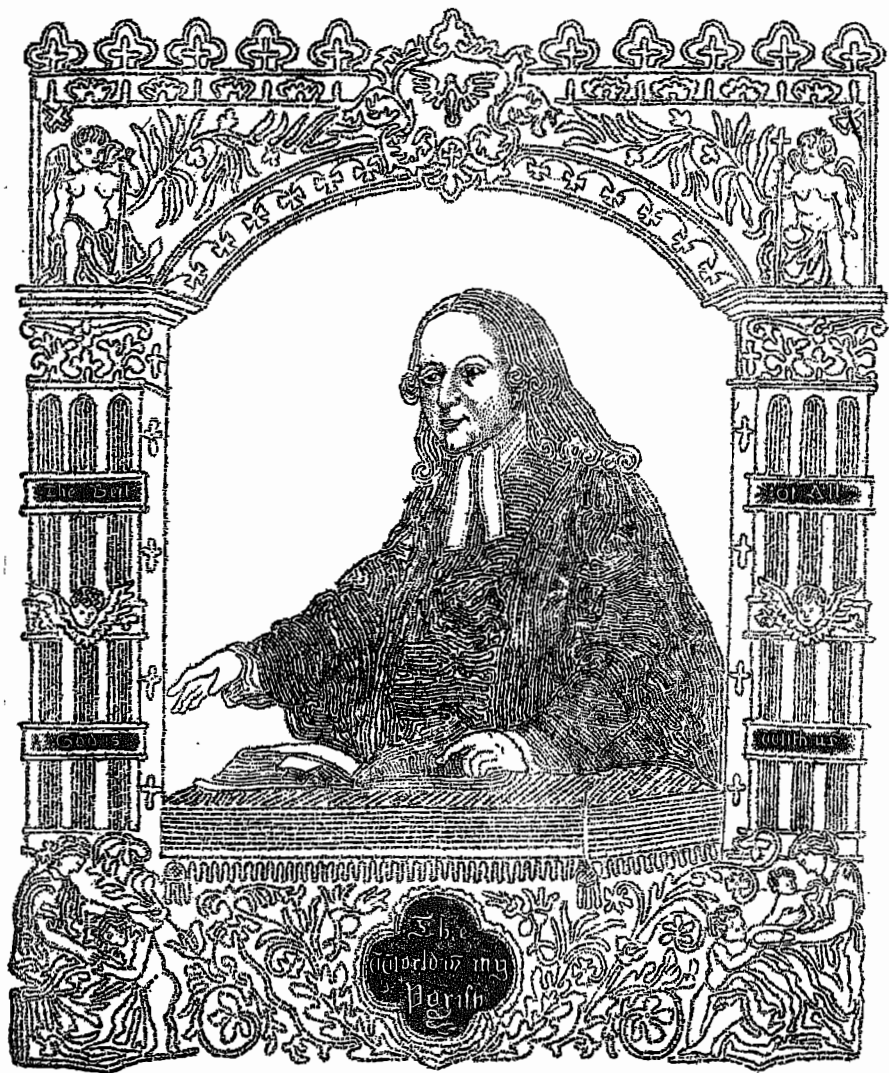
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JOHN WESLEY

Script Portrait by Glück Rosenthal

From photo kindly provided by Mrs. Onstott

A SCRIPT PORTRAIT OF WESLEY.

Mrs. Onstott, the historian of old John Street Methodist Episcopal Church, New York, purchased a little time ago, from the late Dr. Sharp, a pen portrait of Wesley in microscopic script. Mr. Telford informed her that it was made in 1850 by Glück Rosenthal, a Jew, who spent three years in writing it. Mrs. Onstott remarks: This verified what I had already discovered with the aid of a magnifying glass. Seeing in the lower left hand corner a hand with forefinger pointed I found the author's signature,—“Written by Glück Rosenthal.” I also discovered that here the story not only began but likewise ended. Up to this time I had no thought of transcribing it. However, if a man would have enough patience to spend three years writing it, I thought surely some one could at least try to read it. It was a tedious but interesting task, and the temptation came more than once to give it up; but recalling the patience of Susanna Wesley, I continued to the end. On one occasion when Mrs. Wesley was teaching her eldest son Samuel, her husband said: “Sukey, I wonder at your patience, you have told that child the same thing twenty times.” She replied: “I should have lost all my labor had I satisfied myself by mentioning it only nineteen times,—it was the twentieth that crowned the whole.”

As the original was too valuable to use for transcribing I secured a photostat copy of the portrait from which a transcription was made. I soon found it was a biography of John Wesley. The story begins on the lower line in the left hand corner where the mother, Susanna Wesley, is dedicating her son, John, to God. Her letter to a neighbouring clergyman, describing the Rectory fire February 9, 1709, and John's miraculous escape, when six years of age, is here fully described. Following from left to right the story is told of his school days at Charterhouse in London and in Oxford, then of his ordination and the organization of the first Methodist Society and his election as “A Fellow of Lincoln College.” This brings us to the right hand corner where the mother is feeding baby Charles seated on her lap, and John standing at her knee. The artist's conception was, I believe, “The Madonna of the Chair,” for here the story continues with a

description of the "Holy Club" at Oxford as told by John Wesley himself. Then following the Corinthian pilaster on the right, the father's death (1735) is described; then the missionary journey of John and Charles to America with Governor Oglethorpe to the new Colony in Georgia. Reaching the top of the arch, we follow across from right to left in a zig-zag or "sinuous" way, where the story continues with a description of their hardships and severe trials while in America (1736-7) and their return to England where they met Peter Böhler, and of their "heart warming" in May 1738, and John's visit to the Moravians in Herrnhut, Germany; his return to England, and the beginning of his intensive outdoor evangelistic preaching which transformed England, and saved her from the French Revolution. We now follow the left pilaster from the top down, with its story of the riots and mobs, and then the death of the sainted mother Susanna Wesley at the Foundery in London in 1742. Here the script suddenly crosses at the left under the Bible where is told the story of the first Methodist Conference held in London in 1744. Then follows the story of the beginning of the work in Ireland in 1749 with its riots and mobs. Following the outstretched right hand, then up the sleeve of the robe, we find the story of the first missionaries Boardman and Pilmoor, who were sent to America from the Leeds Conference in 1769. Then follows the story of the ordinations for Scotland and America in 1784. The artist used the head and face to describe the death of Charles in 1788. Following the zig-zag lines on the chest and left arm to the hand on the Bible we find the story of the last days of the venerable and beloved John Wesley. Let us now hasten as we follow the fringe and tassels to the left of the pulpit, then over the head of Susanna Wesley and down her back to the same place where we began our journey, "The Alpha and Omega," which has covered nearly the entire Eighteenth Century, 1703—1791. A wonderful story of the Providence of God! It contains about 20,000 words and took me six months to decipher it, verifying the transcript by going over it a third time. Wishing to know more about the writer of this remarkable biographical portraiture of Wesley by Glück Rosenthal, a letter was sent to Rev. F. F. Bretherton, General Secretary of the Wesley Historical Society in England from whom I received the following reply:

I am enclosing some unpublished notes in my possession written in 1906 by Rev. Richard Green, a Wesleyan preacher and one time governor of Didsbury College, who entered the

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ministry in 1853 and died in 1907. He was greatly interested in Methodist History and was prime mover in establishing the Wesley Historical Society in 1893.

Mr. Green's notes are dated December 8, 1906 and as he died the next year were never published, and are as follows, evidently written in reply to an enquiry he had received :

"I have been able to gather the following facts respecting the history of this curious production. They were mainly communicated to me by Mr. William Milner, late of Birkenhead and Liverpool. He was a local preacher and died January 31, 1906. It appears that Mr. Milner, who was born in Sheffield, was in business there and acquainted with Glück Rosenthal, who sold all but one of his copies which Mr. Milner purchased. The stone had been destroyed. Mr. Rosenthal told Mr. Milner the portrait was the work of his own hands and that it had occupied him three years in its execution, and that he had hoped to make a small fortune by it but in this he was greatly disappointed. This remarkable production must have entailed an enormous amount of labor and patience. After preparing the story which was taken from several earlier lives of Wesley, it would be necessary in executing the picture first to design and carefully draw the frame, or border, and the portrait, then the continuous line must have been traced with exactness ; then would begin the minute writing of the whole in its sinuous course. The writing is so small it must have required a very fine pen and use of a lens. When the writing was finished it would be an easy matter to transfer it on and print copies." Mr. Green adds in a postscript "I have transcribed the whole and would be glad to show it to anyone who desires to see it." Mr. Milner had new stones made in 1885 and his reproduction was made in two colours, white and tinted, but were not as legible as the original because of the imperfect copy. These stones were likewise destroyed."

The perfect legibility is taken to imply that our John Street portrait is a Rosenthal original. It is written in black ink on parchment paper, 19 x 22 inches. Mr. Bretherton was unable to find out more about Mr. Rosenthal. Neither is it known what became of Mr. Green's transcript, for he died suddenly the next year. However, it is encouraging to know that I am not the only one who has transcribed this remarkable biographical story,

although as far as known my manuscript is the only one in existence.

Mr. Rosenthal must have been, not only a student of Art and Architecture, but somewhat of a mystic to have given expression to this artistic portraiture with its religious symbolism. He paid a great compliment to motherhood in his conception of Susanna Wesley by placing the weight of the entire structure on her shoulders, with Love as the key stone, for she it was who laid the foundation for the Christian character of her sons in their childhood when she dedicated them to God, trained them, and became their spiritual teacher and adviser. Mr. Rosenthal used in his design the emblem of both the Greek and Roman cross;—persecution, and palm branches for the "Victorious Life." The national flowers of Great Britain and Ireland were also used, the rose, the shamrock, and the thistle. On each pilaster an angel is seen, as if guarding the mother and her children. On top of the right pilaster stands Faith, holding a staff,—while on the left side stands Hope, with the anchor. In the centre above is a Dove, the emblem of Love, Peace, and the Holy Spirit. The Bible lies open on the pulpit, in which John Wesley is seen in the attitude of preaching. Love was the key stone of all his teaching. In his sermon on "Love" he quoted Dr. Nunes (a Jew) who said :

"I wish the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, the Love Chapter, were written in letters of gold, and every Jew would carry it wherever he went."

What a co-incidence the above quotation and conception of Mr. Rosenthal, also a Jew, who designed this picture and recognised Love, the key to the scriptures, and the guide to all truth!

On the pilasters is written in old English John Wesley's last words,—"The best of all, God, is with us," on the medallion under the portrait is his famous motto :

"THE WORLD IS MY PARISH"

ANNA ONSTOTT.

Mrs. Onstott contemplates the publication of her transcription, with appropriate illustrations. We shall await its appearance with interest.

EARLY METHODISM IN BRISTOL. WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JOHN WESLEY'S VISITS TO THE CITY.

(Continued)

V. EARLY METHODIST PREACHING-PLACES IN BRISTOL

When Wesley arrived in Bristol about seven o'clock in the evening of Saturday, March 31, 1739, he made his way to the house of Mrs. Grevil, Whitefield's sister, whose husband kept a grocer's shop in Wine Street. Here Wesley met Whitefield, and later in the evening accompanied him to the Weavers' Hall, which stood near Temple Church. It was the meeting-place of one of the Bristol Religious Societies with which Whitefield had been associated during his ministry in the city, and was used by Wesley and his followers for some years afterwards. It was leased in October, 1751 to "John Dyer, John Sprage, Daniel Jenkins and Robert Willway, Stewards of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley's Society, of and for the use of the said Mr. John Wesley, and his Society."¹

A very interesting description of this building is given in Catcott's manuscript notes on Temple Church and parish.² We could only wish that Catcott had been able to supply us with the actual measurements (spaces for which have been left in the manuscript) and so have enabled us to know the exact size of the Hall. Whether Catcott died before he could fulfil his intention of inserting the figures in his manuscript, or whether he meant to furnish the measurements and failed to get them or overlooked them, we cannot say. But this is his account of the Weavers' Hall, as it was in 1786 when he wrote his notes.

"In Temple Street about—yards south of the Church there is a large Hall called the Weavers' Hall, where the Master and Company meet to choose officers and accompany them before the Mayor to be sworn according to their Charter. This Hall was let for many years to the People called Methodists of whom Mr. John Wesley, A.M., is the Head or Leader In this place the Methodists

1. W.H.S. Vol. ix., pp. 195-6

Simon's "John Wesley and the Advance of Methodism," p. 281

2. George S. Catcott's manuscript notes on Temple Parish in Bristol Central Library.

used to preach every Wednesday and Saturday, paying the Weavers' Company a clear annual rent of——per annum.³ But O dictu horrendum, and so subject to change are all terrestrial things the Jews, the professed enemies of Christ, have taken at an advanced rent of 8 guineas per annum on a lease of 100 years this very place where the glad tidings of salvation once were published. To do justice, however, to this deluded people, it must be owned they have spared no pains or expense to decorate the edifice, which though but small, for neatness and simplicity as to its interior beauties, may (perhaps) vie with any of the like kind in England."

Thus one of the earliest Methodist meeting-places became a Synagogue, and we can imagine from this description the unpretentious building it must have been when Wesley knew it, and his followers met there.

Wesley had been in Bristol less than two months when he took steps to build his first meeting-place in the city. The origin of the "Room" in the Horsefair is to be traced back to the Religious Societies meeting in Nicholas Street and Baldwin Street.⁴ The Journal gives repeated references to Wesley's visits to these Societies, where he expounded the Scriptures to large companies of people. In fact, the success of Wesley's expositions became a source of embarrassment to the Societies, which began to suffer from serious overcrowding, and the provision of adequate accommodation became imperative. So on Wednesday, May 9, 1739, Wesley writes, "we took possession of a piece of ground near St. James's churchyard in the Horsefair, where it was designed to build a room large enough to contain both the Societies of Nicholas and Baldwin Streets, and such of their acquaintance as might desire to be present with them, at such times as the Scripture was expounded. And on Saturday the 12th the first stone was laid, with the voice of praise and thanksgiving."

There were many difficulties for Wesley to face in the building of the Room.⁵ Finding that subscriptions towards the building, when it had already been started, were smaller than he had anticipated, Wesley paid the workmen himself, although eleven "feoffees" had been appointed to be responsible for the erection of the Room. He soon discovered that he had contracted

3. "Leased in 1751 for seven years at the rent of £3 per annum." Handbook of Wesleyan Conference, Bristol, 1923, p. 79.

4. For a full account of the Religious Societies see Simon's "John Wesley and the Religious Societies."

5. Ibid, pp. 289. 290

a debt of more than £150. His friends in London, Whitefield among them, refused to come to his aid until he had discharged all the "feoffees" because writes Wesley "such teoffees always would have it in their power to control me; and, if I preached not as they liked, to turn me out of the room I had built." So Wesley cancelled the deed, took the management into his own hands, and then received the help of his friends.

The success of Wesley's work in Bristol was so great that still further accommodation was needed in 1748. The room had been hastily built and certain structural alterations had become necessary to make it safe. So on February 9, Wesley met about sixty of his Bristol members to discuss the matter. It was agreed to make the necessary alterations and enlarge the room. Within a very few days £230 had been collected from subscribers, and five stewards were appointed with those already holding office to superintend the work. Whereas the Old Room had been insured for £300, the new policy was for £500, and the New Room held twice as many people as the original building.⁶ On October 17, 1748, the New Room was certified as a place for religious worship under the Act of Toleration of 1689, but not without protest from Charles Wesley who regarded such registration as "needless, useless, and senseless." However, this step was taken to secure the safety of the worshippers in the New Room.

The following items from the deeds of the "New Room," now deposited with the Corporation of Bristol,⁷ throw interesting light upon its history.

- (1) 1653, Mar. 17. Agreemt. Anthony Bassett with Roach Consalves & Thos. Stratton re a garden & lodge, St. James Parish.
- (2) 1697, Aug. 19 Administration to Eliz. Wiltshire of the goods of Joanna Kirby or Turner.
- (3) 1737, Nov. 10 Lease for a year, Robert Kyrby to Wm. Lyne of garden & lodge, St. James Parish.
- (4) 1737, Nov. 11 Release do. do.
- (5) 1739, June 29. Conveyance Wm. Lyne to Rev. John Wesley, do.
- (6) 1767, Mar. 14, Conveyance in trust for pious uses as within, Rev. John Wesley to John Dyer & ors.
- (7) 1930, Mar. 25. Copy Council Minutes re deposit of deeds with Corpn.

6. Simon's "John Wesley and the Advance of Methodism," pp. 54-60.

7. Quoted by the courtesy of the City Archivist, Bristol.

Item (7) gives the names of the original trustees as follows :—
John Dyer, Gentleman, Henry Durbin, Chymist, Daniel Jenkins,
Corkcutter, William Hopkins, House Carpenter, William Pyne,
Printer, William Green, Twine Spinner, John James, Skinner.⁸

Shortly after the death of Wesley the "New Room" ceased to be used by the Methodists, and at the end of the 18th century passed into the hands of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists (Presbyterians) who continued to use it until in 1929 it was restored to the Wesleyan Conference after thorough renovation under the direction of Sir George Oatley.

This oldest Methodist chapel, (though Wesley never spoke of it as such) stands out in the history of Methodism, for Wesley held no less than eighteen conferences here. The first two in the Old Room built in 1739, and the other sixteen in the Room as it was from 1748.

On September 29, 1779 a Methodist Chapel was opened by Wesley in Guinea Street, Redcliffe. It is described in "The New Bristol Guide" for 1799 as "above half a mile south from Bristol bridge. This has been greatly enlarged, has galleries on three sides, nearly semi-circular, supported by fluted pillars of wood, and is very neat and decent."⁹ From this account of the chapel as it was twenty years after its opening, it appears that the original building was comparatively small. And this is confirmed by Wesley's statement that on Friday, August 11th, 1780 "the sultry heat continuing, I would not coop myself up in the chapel but preached again near Redcliff Parade, with much comfort and peace." The chapel stood on a site now occupied by the St. Mary Redcliffe Parish Room, and all traces of it are gone. But old plans¹⁰ of the Bristol circuit show Guinea Street to have been an important preaching-place in the early days of Bristol Methodism.

8. (If the following identifications are correct.)

John Dyer, Gentleman was made a freeman of the City on March 25, 1754, "for that he married Ann, the daughter of Peter Stratton, Mercer, deceased." (Burgess Book, No. 11, Folio 73)

William Hopkins, House Carpenter, was made a freeman of the city on February 2, 1742 "for that he was apprentice of Daniel Millard." (Burgess Book, No. 9, Folio 132).

John James, Leather dresser, was "admitted to the liberties of the city by vote of Common Council dated the 21st inst. and paying a fine" of five pounds five shillings." From this we infer that he was not a native of Bristol.

9. "Guide"—Section x, p. 124

10. Ellacombe Manuscripts, Vol. 7, 1657—1800 in Bristol Central Library

Another early Methodist preaching-place in Bristol of which no trace can now be found existed in Little George Street, where Wesley preached on the evening of Wednesday, March 12, 1788, and on the morning of Friday, September 19, 1788, when he was eighty-four years old, "in the poorest part of the city." *Matthew's Directory*, 1793-4, mentions a chapel "belonging to Mr. Wesley's connexion" in George Street. But nothing more appears to be known about the George Street Chapel.¹

Before leaving early Methodist preaching-places in Bristol, we ought to notice some of Wesley's favourite spots for his "field-preaching," for it was in the open-air that he drew his largest crowds and the success of his preaching there accounts for the rapid growth of membership in the Bristol Society during his ministry in the city.²

Wesley's first attempt at "field-preaching" in Bristol was made on Monday, April 2, 1739, when he preached on "a little eminence" at the farther end of the Brickyard in St. Philip's Plain, now generally regarded to have been near the site of the present London Midland and Scottish Railway (St. Philip's) station. He was not happy about this venture because it was a violation of the Second Conventicle Act of 1670, and it was Wesley's reluctance to put himself into opposition to the law that occasioned the entry in his *Journal* for April 2, 1739 when he "submitted to be more vile and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation."

On the Wednesday following this first open-air sermon in Bristol, Wesley found another "pitch" in a plain near Baptist Mills,

1. p. 80. See also footnote in the *Journal*. Although it was not built until 1792, two years after Wesley's last visit to Bristol, mention should be made of the Methodist Chapel in Portland Street, Kingsdown, for here are buried some of the prominent Methodists of the period we have been reviewing, e.g. Captain Thomas Webb, Thomas Westall, William Hunt and others. "That Methodism in 1792 had the sympathy and good-will not only of the poor, but of persons of position and wealth is demonstrated by the names of some of those who contributed to the building of the chapel. Of these we would mention John Harford, probably an ancestor of the Harfords of Blaize Castle, James E. Coleman; and the widow of Henry Coleman who had filled the office of High Sheriff of Bristol Another subscriber and well-wisher was Henry Bengough one of Bristol's merchant princes, who was successively, Sheriff, Alderman and Mayor of the City and who founded and endowed the Alms Houses in Horfield Road known by his name, and there were also many other well-known citizens of the time who gave financial support"—H. J. Lambert's *The Chapel on the Hill* p. 35

2. The Society numbered well over a thousand at one time though Wesley's frequent "purgings" caused the membership to fluctuate.

and soon he was conducting field services at Rose Green, Hanham and elsewhere with characteristic regularity. As time went on he preached to thousands in the New (now King) Square, at Lawford's Gate, in St. James's Barton, at Stokes Croft, on the Bowling Green, at the quay and near the docks in Prince Street. The following account of an open-air congregation on Sunday, September 17, 1769 is in many respects typical of others to be found in the Journal. Wesley writes, "I preached to a serious congregation in Prince's Street, near the docks. In the crowd were many sailors who gaped and stared as if they had never heard a sermon before." This was more than halfway through Wesley's Bristol ministry, when the citizens had begun to listen "seriously" to his message, and is in contrast to the early days of his field-preaching when Wesley had to face mobs and persecution.

Another favourite spot with Wesley was the "Old Orchard" of the Dominican Priory, which he frequently used until the end of the year 1755, when the "Orchard" was being built on. It appears that he often preached there during the rebuilding of the Room in the Horsefair in 1748. The "Old Orchard" was not far from the Horsefair on the site of the present Penn Street and Callowhill Street. George Fox, the Quaker, had preached in the same place before Wesley, and his associations with the neighbourhood are perpetuated in the street now named Quakers Friars.

From 1776 onwards there are several references in the Journal to open-air sermons which Wesley preached in "the Paddock" at Bedminster. The first mention of the Paddock is on Saturday, September 22, 1776, three years before the opening of the Guinea Street chapel near Redcliffe Parade. We shall see later that one of Wesley's closest friends in this part of the city was Henry Durbin, "chymist," of Redcliffe Street, Church-Warden of St. Thomas's,³ and Trustee of the New Room. John Wesley's Diary and Charles Wesley's Journal make frequent reference to the hospitality which the brothers enjoyed at Mr. Durbin's. We must surely associate Wesley's many visits to the south part of the city with the friendship which had sprung up between him and the chemist, and in all probability the success of Methodism in this neighbourhood and the erection of the Guinea Street chapel was due in large part to the influence and support of the loyal Henry Durbin.

3. c.f. page 34, above.

Is there any connection between "The Paddock" and Henry Durbin? A footnote in the *Journal* for September 22, 1776, says that the Paddock "is now covered by Messrs. Wills's works in East Street," but I am inclined to doubt this identification, and to find a connection between the Paddock and Henry Durbin.

In the 17th century, a close of a meadow or pasture adjoining Redcliffe Mead was granted to the use of the Mayor for the time being. In 1870 the Baths Committee of the Corporation considered a scheme for erecting Baths and Wash-houses on the site. These were completed in 1871, and are known to-day as The Mayor's Paddock Baths. There is a record in the City Council Proceedings to the effect that "Henry Durbin, of Bristol, chemist, holds the piece of ground called the Mayor's Paddock by lease 8 February, 1772 for 99 years to commence 25 March, 1772. Fine £5."⁴ On a plan dated August, 1741, the Mayor's Paddock is shown as an open space coloured green. What an excellent spot this would be for Wesley's open-air preaching! And it does not seem to me unlikely that Wesley's "Paddock" is to be identified with the Mayor's Paddock leased in 1772 to his friend and loyal supporter, Henry Durbin.

We may add that Wesley's success as an open-air preacher in Bristol, as elsewhere, is the more remarkable when we consider how much it cost the preacher. As late as 1772, thirty-three years after his first open-air sermon in Bristol, and in the very year when the Mayor's Paddock was leased to Henry Durbin, Wesley says, "To this day (Sunday, September 6th) field-preaching is a cross to me."

SOME EARLY FOLLOWERS OF WESLEY.

The success of Wesley's ministry in Bristol during the fifty-one years he was visiting the city is well reflected in the varied types of people whom he gathered into his Society. They were drawn chiefly from the lower middle classes and the poor, though some wealthy people threw in their lot with the Methodists, who included young and old.

The earliest group of people who can be said to be followers of Wesley in Bristol met in the evening of Wednesday, April 4, 1739, on the fifth day after Wesley's arrival in the city, "to confess their faults one to another and pray for one another, that they may be healed. At eight four young men agreed to meet in pursuance of the same design." A letter by Wesley's hand,

4. Ref. : Rental 1740, 04043(4) p. 76.

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preserved in the Moravian Provincial Archives at Fetter Lane, London, and published in the *Moravian Messenger* for 1877, gives the names as follows: Women—Mrs. Norman, Mrs. Grevil, Mrs. Panon; Men—Samuel Wathen, surgeon; Richard Cross, upholsterer; Charles Bonner, distiller; Thomas Westall, carpenter.

Mrs. Norman and Mrs. Grevil (Whitefield's sister) have already been identified.⁵ Conjectures have also been made concerning some of the others. But in these conjectures Thomas Westall has not been definitely identified with the veteran itinerant of that name, who entered the ranks of Wesley's preachers in 1740, outliving him and dying in the ranks in 1794, when he was buried at Bristol in the graveyard of Portland Chapel. From an examination of Bristol Poll Books it has been shown that there was a Thomas Westell, a cabinet maker, living in the city in 1781, and in 1783-4-5, a joiner of the same name, and in 1786 a Thomas Westell, gent. figures among the voters. This last entry suggests that Westell had then retired from his prosperous business. It has been suggested⁶ that the two Westells were cousins, although it is by no means certain that the itinerant may not have been a carpenter, and the very man whose identity is sought in connection with Wesley's first group of followers.

There is, however, an entry in one of the old Apprentice Books⁷ preserved in the Archives Department of the Corporation of Bristol, which reads thus:—"9th September, 1734, Thomas Westell, son of Thomas Westell, late of the City of Bristol, puts himself to Luke Wilmot, joiner, and Grace, his wife for 7 years." And the following entry from the Burgess Books shows that he was made a freeman of the city seven years almost to the day, after beginning his apprenticeship: "September 10th, 1741. Thomas Westell, joiner, is admitted into the liberties of this city for that he was apprentice of Luke Willmot and hath taken the oath of obedience and paid 4/6."⁸ Did this Thomas Westell come into touch with Wesley in 1739, a year or two before his apprenticeship was due to end, and eventually become the itinerant we are seeking to identify? If so, we have here further confirmation of the entries in the Poll Books which show Thomas Westell to have been a freeman.

5. W.H.S. Vol. ii. p. 5. Vol. iii., pp. 40-1. Vol. iv., p. 97. Vol. vi., pp. 106-7

6. Ibid.

7. By the courtesy of the Archivist, I have been permitted to search these books.

Samuel Wathen,⁹ surgeon, is thought to have come from Dorking, to which Wesley made frequent visits after January, 1764. But there is nothing to account for his being in Bristol in 1739, and the Bristol lists do not mention a Samuel Wathen. This may be because Wathen graduated M.D. at King's College, Aberdeen in 1752 and took the L.R.C.P. in 1756. This Wathen died at Dorking in 1787. He may, therefore, be the Samuel Wathen in question, and a young man in 1739 when Wesley began his ministry in Bristol.

We must not make the mistake of supposing that these two groups of men and women formed *Methodist* Classes. The characteristic Methodist organisation—the Class meeting—was not instituted until February 15th, 1742. These earlier "Wesleyans" formed two bands of the strictest Moravian pattern. In fact, Wesley wrote out for them certain of the Rules which Peter Böhler had drawn up for his Society in London.

On Sunday, April 8th three more "bands" were formed, each consisting of five men, of whom one was appointed leader. Thus was established a system which has since been described as "a Moravian graft upon an Oxford stock."¹⁰ We are indebted to the recently published *Letters of John Wesley* for the names of these bands. Writing from Bristol on April 16, 1739¹¹ to James Hutton, of London, Wesley says :

"Sunday, April 8, about eight in the evening, Mr. Wathen, and his brethren met and received several persons into their little Society. After prayer their leaders were chose and the bands fixed by lot in the order following :

I Band. Richard Leg (Haberdasher) leader, Thomas Mitchell, Charles Bonner, William Wynne, Richard Cross.

II Band. Jo. Palmer, leader. James Lewis, John Davis, James Smith, William Waters.

8. Ref. Burgess Book No. 9, Folio 108

9. Dr. George Parker of Clifton, who has carried out researches in Bristol medical history, tells me Samuel Wathen, surgeon, cannot be traced in the local lists. But Wathen lived at a time when the records are worst and many men escaped registration on any list.

A Diary of John Cennick's preserved at Fetter Lane, London, tells us that the young man who failed to turn up when expected at Kingswood for an open-air meeting under a sycamore tree on a June day, 1739, was "Sammy Wathen."

10. Dimond's "The Psychology of the Methodist Revival," p. 110

11. Letters. Vol. i, p. 296

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III Band. Henry Crawley (Barber) leader.
Thomas Harding, John Wiggins,
Samuel Wathen, Thomas Westall.

It was further agreed that a few other persons then mentioned might be admitted into the Society.

Monday, April 9th at two in the afternoon, Mrs. Panon and Mrs. Grevil met together with Esther Deschamps and Mary Anne Page (Mrs. Panon's sister,) whom they then received as sisters, and Esther Deschamps was by lot chosen leader of the band, which stood as follows :

Esther Deschamps, J. Panon, H. Page, Eliz. Davis (then proposed and admitted) and Eliz. Grevil.

At five in the evening, Anne Williams, Mary Reynolds, Eliz. Ryan, Esther Higham, Frances Wilde, and Rachel England met together and agreed to meet every Sunday. Anne Williams was chosen their leader

At eight (on Wednesday the bands of men met at the Society Room in Baldwin Street and received into fellowship with them William Lewis, James Robins, Kenelm Chandler, Anthony Williams and Thomas Robins”

We have quoted this letter at some length because it gives the actual names of some of the disciples of Wesley in Bristol, and further research may help to identify many of them and throw light on their occupations and positions in society.

W. A. GOSS.

INSCRIPTIONS FROM WESLEY'S "NEW ROOM" AT BRISTOL.

Through the gracious act of friends in New Zealand the restoration of the "New Room" at Bristol has been made somewhat more complete. The panes of the windows in John Wesley's study and bedroom bore certain inscriptions made thereon with a diamond. Many years ago, when the building had passed out of Wesleyan ownership and there seemed no likelihood of possession being regained, two of these panes were purchased and brought to New Zealand. One, which in course of time has

unfortunately become reduced to a fragment, yet bears the only signature it originally had, viz. that of Thomas Treffry. This was secured by the Rev. Samuel Griffith and has been willingly returned. The large pane is almost complete in size and was purchased by the late Rev. T. W. Newbold, whose widow, on learning of the restoration of the New Room, has most generously donated her treasure to the Trustees. It bears the following three inscriptions:

- (1) Prepare to meet thy God
Nich. Manners
June 12. 1769
- (2) The Lord have mercy on thy soul.
G. E. Ham 1776
- (3) On brittle glass I grave my name
A follower of the bleeding Lamb
But Thou canst show a nobler art
And grave Thy name upon my heart.
Francis Woolf.

These are all remarkably clear except that the second initial of Mr. Ham is somewhat uncertain. A few facts about the authors of these records may be interesting.

(1) Nicholas Manners became a Methodist preacher under John Wesley in 1759. In 1768 he was stationed in Wilts (South) circuit. He evidently visited Bristol in June 1769. He was appointed to York at the Conference of that year.

(2) G. E. Ham. The only trace of such a name is to be found in *Standard Journal*, Vol. VI p. 183 where Wesley having arrived at Dublin records the death of "Mr. Ham" as having taken place the day before,—“a strong, lively healthy man. From the time he was taken ill he was a mere self-condemned sinner, deeply convinced of his unfaithfulness to God I am not worthy,” said he, “I have been no credit to you.” The picture of the man is strangely accordant with the inscription on the pane.

(3) Francis Woolf (sometimes “Wolfe”) began to travel in 1768, was stationed in the Bristol Circuit in 1773 and removed to Oxfordshire the following year. He came thence to the Wilts (South) circuit in 1776 and ceased to travel in 1782. A number of letters from John Wesley to Woolf are included in the Standard Edition of the “Letters.” We get a suggestion of his gracious

character from various phrases such as, "He was of a truly child-like spirit"; "A mild tender-hearted man"; John Wesley "hears nothing but good of him"; and his wife, "Sister Woolf," is described as "a lovable creature," The inscription though undated was probably made in 1773 and in a letter dated Sept. 15, 1773 Wesley writes "Franky, are you out of your wits? Why are you not at Bristol?"

It is thought that another pane bearing the inscription of John Wesley himself once existed, but no trace of this can be found in New Zealand.

C. H. LAWS.

LETTERS BY
JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY.

JOHN WESLEY TO LADY RAWDON.

Madam,

If Faith implied no more than a system of right opinions, one could not reasonably doubt of the faith of so eminent a Defender of several Christian Doctrines as Mr. H. was. But if it implies a Divine Evidence of things not seen in particular of God's love to me, then I cannot but doubt of the faith of every man on earth, who does not possess (in some good degree) all the Christian Tempers, in the front of which Lowliness and Meekness stand. But from many ear and eye witnesses, I have learned that Mr. H. did not possess these Tempers, and if he did not, he had not Christian Faith, how well so ever he defended the Christian Doctrines.

Of his Death, indeed, I never received any account. But if the Hope he therein expressed, was the Fruit of deep Repentance for his uncommon Pride—ungovernable passion, and high contempt of all his opponents,— It was true Christian Hope, I should not then doubt, but he is lodged in Abraham's bosom.

It is an easy thing to make allowances to any who (so far as we can judge) have the mind that was in Christ. I love and reverence all the externals of religion. But what are all these to the Kingdom of God within us? Let us spend the most and choicest of our time in confirming and enlarging this.

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I want Holy Tempers and can scarce waste a thought on anything which does not conduce to these.

O that his Lordship and you may abound in them more and more.

I am,

Your affectionate servant for Christ's Sake,

JOHN WESLEY.

Corke, July 21, 1758.

"While in some quarters the preachers had to endure numerous privations and even persecution, there was one part of the country in which they were kindly received by the rich and noble. In 1750, Lady Elizabeth Hastings, daughter of the Countess of Huntingdon, had married Lord Rawdon, son and heir of the Earl of Moira, and both she and her husband resided at Moira, and were friendly to Methodism."

(Crookshank : *History of Methodism in Ireland.*)

Mr. Robert Morgan calls our attention to this reference, and says further: Moira and its surrounding country have always been good and fruitful Methodist ground, and the Earl and Countess of Moira have frequent, and honourable, mention in Crookshank. Their Dublin residence, where they often entertained Wesley, is still a prominent place on the river Liffey, though now fulfilling a very different purpose, as the "Mendicity Institution," where poor people are housed and fed.

Mr. H... was (probably) Bishop Hicks, a noted controversialist of the time.

CHARLES WESLEY TO

Bristol,

Oct. 17, 177—

Madam,

My Partner is justly sensible of your obliging concern for her sorrow. A daughter of affliction cannot but feel for others and you have had a large share of these sufferings, which none who travel this bad road can miss.

Man (you know and feel) was born to trouble by his first Birth, how much more by his second !

Great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth out of all, and even now, while the flesh is troubled, he saith, Let not your *heart* be troubled, I go to prepare a place for you.

I know very few Christians who live up to their privilege.

From the first moment of our believing, why should we not *go in Peace*—till we reach our Father's House ?

What need have we to pray, "Lord, increase our Faith." Our comfort, love and holiness must increase in the same proportion.

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

And it is the will of our Lord that we should ask and receive fulness of joy, perfect peace, and finished holiness.

I want the spirit of grace and supplication. Then should I, if that were given, wish for you and all my friends, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

The continuance of your prayers for me and mine is the greatest joy you can bestow upon us.

I am, dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES WESLEY.

This letter, and the foregoing by John Wesley, have recently appeared in the *Irish Christian Advocate*, to which they were sent by Mr. Robert Morgan on behalf of the owner. Mr. Morgan has kindly sent them for use in the *Proceedings*. So far as we know they have not been published previously.

JOHN WESLEY TO HIS WIFE.

Congleton,

Friday, April 1, 1774.

5 o'clock.

My Dear Love,

I am just come hither, by the mercy of God in good health, and no more tired than when I set out from hence. I am extremely well satisfied with my journey, as well as with all the steps which you have taken. I do not see that you could possibly have acted better; and wish you would, when you have opportunity, make a farther search at Kingswood: it is not improbable something will be found that is worth the labour. If I am secured from George Carter's beginning another Chancery Suit, then I might venture to administer; not for my own sake, but for the sake of the Poor. Many of these would be the gainers.

I can hardly persuade myself to think that there is nothing of Providence in all this. But if there is, ought I to throw up the Administration? Would not this be making that Providence of God of none effect? This is worth our most serious consideration. It is true, if I undertake it there will be much trouble and much reproach. But am I, at this

time of life, for fear of trouble or reproach, to throw away any opportunity of doing good ?

I am,

My Dear Molly,

Your ever affectionate

Husband,

JOHN WESLEY.

Next Saturday I am to be at
Chester ;—following, at Halifax.

To

Mrs. Wesley
At the New Room
in
Bristol.

This letter, and the Charles Wesley letter which follows, have been made available for the *Proceedings* by the good offices of the Rev. John Heaton and the kindness of the owner, Mr. T. Cann Hughes, of Lancaster.

Many letters from Wesley to his wife are given in the *Standard Letters*, but this does not appear amongst them. It helps us to understand more clearly the record in the *Journal*:

30 April, 1774. I went on to Congleton, where I received letters informing me that my presence was necessary at Bristol. So about one I took chaise, and reached Bristol about half an hour after one the next day. Having done my business in about two hours, on the Friday afternoon, I reached Congleton again (about a hundred and forty miles from Bristol) no more tired (blessed be God !) than when I left it.

CHARLES WESLEY TO HIS BROTHER SAMUEL.

Dear Brother,

This spring we hoped to have followed our inclinations to Tiverton, but are more loudly called another way. My Father declines so fast, that before next year he will in all probability be at his Journey's End ; so that I must see him now, or never more with my Bodily Eyes. My Mother seems more cast down at the apprehension of his death than I thought she could have been, and what is still worse he seems so too. I wish I durst send him Hilarion's Words of Encouragement to his departing soul—"Go forth, my soul ; what art thou now afraid of ? Thou hast served thy God these threescore and ten years, and dost thou tremble now to appear before Him ?" Methinks such a man as He should "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" ; while he enters his Haven, after such a succession of storms : or rather, (to use Mr. de Renty's words) while his spirit is

applied to that joy which a creature ought to have, "to see itself upon the point of being re-united to its First Principle and its Last End."—For the sake of many others, as well as myself, I hope your lease is renewed with Hezekiah's, and that, in spite of your mutual fears for each other, my sister and you will long see the goodness of God in the land of the living. I comfort myself under my disappointment with the thoughts of seeing you both still better at ye end of the year, than I should had we met in ye beginning. Let Phil stay where she is, as there is no room for her mending—in a bodily sense, as you say; for as to her temper, I hope it still answers her parents law and doubt not but she will outlive her Spirit of Government as she has done her Parsimoniousness. My Love pray to my sister and her. You may tell her (and by this time she may understand you) that I expect to find her as Generous and Meek and Goodnatured as her Mother would have her.

When you write we should be much obliged to you for your elegy upon S. Molly. My Brother preaches her Funeral Sermon at Wroot, when he gets thither, and will still leave Matter enough for a Copy of Verses. I should be glad to follow him in either way, but can't say which I shall be soonest qualified for.—As to my Title of Tutour I shall lose it with Dick Smith, unless Sam Bentham succeeds, whom I should be glad to take, and not sorry should he prove my Last. You, or He, have forgot ye promised quotation out of Ferne. What news from school? Folk say how it flourishes much.

My Brother joins in love.

I am your affectionate Brother,
CHARLES WESLEY.

Xt Church,
Oxon. Mar. 25th, 1735.

This letter is addressed to The Revd. Mr. Wesley, Schoolmaster of Tiverton, Devon. As far as I can discover it has never been published. It harmonises with the long letter, also addressed to S. Wesley, junior, in which Charles Wesley describes his father's last hours. Samuel Wesley, senior, died April 25, 1735.

JOHN WESLEY TO SAMUEL TOOTH.

Dear Sammy,

As soon as bro. Jenkins gives you a particular description of the Building and the Elevation of it, it would undoubtedly

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be proper to sign an Agreement to perform work for such a sum. I think he will not scruple or delay to do this, for he is a reasonable man. I would not that any time sh^d be lost.

Remember Closets &c. just as in John Atlay's House.

I am,

Your affectionate Brother

J. WESLEY.

For this letter we are indebted to Mr. A. Middleton who procured a copy from Mr. H. Worrall of Sheffield. The original came to Mr. Worrall from his step-mother's father, a well-known solicitor in Halifax, who died at a great age about twenty-five years.

The letter is framed, and no address appears. But there can be little doubt that it was addressed to Mr. Samuel Tooth. There are similar letters in the sixth volume of *Standard Letters*. Mr. Telford's note is :—

Samuel Tooth had been an itinerant for one year; then he became a timber-merchant and builder. He built City Road Chapel, which Wesley opened on November 1st, 1778. He was now preparing to build the house in which Wesley first slept on October 8, 1779, and where he died in 1791.

NEW EDITION WESLEY LETTERS.

ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA.

The letter which Wesley wrote to Joseph Benson from Witney, 22, October, 1777, has recently been offered for sale at Sotheby's. The original contains a paragraph which is not included in the version printed in *Standard Letters* VI, 285. It reads as follows :—

“In discovering that few of the Methodists are ‘perfected in Love,’ J—— H—— has discovered just nothing. They never will be, till they are taught to expect it instantaneously. This is y^e Preaching wch GOD owns, in preference to all other.”

In the original the name is given as John Helton, the letters following the initials being struck out.

A LETTER OF DR. ADAM CLARKE

The following letter was written in Dr. Clarke's old age to Ruth Thurston, afterwards Mrs. Christopher Gabriel, Norfolk House, Streatham, London. The original is at the New Room, Bristol, and we are indebted to Dr. Platt for the transcription.

My dear Ruth,

Nothing but to please you has caused me to light this fire ; of which I feel no need. This morning is mild, and altho' it is only half past four, I thank God, my blood even at the age of three-score years and ten, runs so freely as to carry with it, through all the lanes of life, a Sufficiency of the of the Surrounding pabulum of life, to sustain the vital heat, and maintain a due proportion of that healthy action by which the current of my earthly being is kept freely flowing. From God we came & unto God we shall return. In *him* we live and move and have our being.

Affly yours,

Adam Clarke

Want of clear light prevents me from seeing what I have written.

The letter which evoked this from the Doctor follows :

Dear Dr.

If you should leave before I have risen, please do write one little line to your affte. Ruth.

$\frac{1}{2}$ past 8 Monday night

Pray oblige me by lighting the fire as soon as you rise.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

735. EARLY METHODISM IN LONDON.—The Rev. George H. McNeal has published a most interesting pamphlet with the title, *In the footsteps of Wesley in London* (3d.). It is surprising how many Methodist shrines he has discovered and how much variety he has put into his dozen pages. Not only Wesley sites are visited, but the beginnings of Primitive Methodism and of the different branches of the United Methodist Church have all their special corner. The illustrations back and front are artistic sketches of Wesley's Chapel and the Central Hall, Westminster, drawn by Miss Margaret McNeal. It will be a very useful guide, not only to visitors to London, but also to Londoners who have any interest in the history of Methodism in the Metropolis.

A.W.H.

736. Consequent upon the erection of the New Town Hall and the clearance of old buildings in the Westgate area, some stone steps from which it is said that John Wesley preached

on his visit to Barnsley on Friday, June 30, 1786, have been removed from the Old White Bear Yard. Through the kindness of the owners, these steps came into the possession of Mr. Herbert Ibberson, the Secretary of the Barnsley Methodist Council, and were offered by him to the Trustees of the Pitt Street Methodist (formerly Wesleyan) Church. The Trustees have had the steps re-erected in front of Pitt Street Church and it is proposed to affix to them a tablet recording their historic interest. Within recent years there were three sets of stone steps in the Old White Bear Yard, two being of similar construction. One of these was removed some years ago and the other is now being preserved. A photograph of the third is in the Vestry at Pitt Street Church. These steps were generally believed to be the steps from which Wesley preached, but there is abundant evidence that this is not the case. One sufficient reason is that they were erected subsequent to Wesley's visit to Barnsley. The evidence that the steps now secured are the identical steps upon which Wesley stood to preach is very strong. In any case, they are one of a pair of similar steps which stood in the Old White Bear Yard on the 30 June 1786. The building now known as the Royal Hotel was at that time called the White Bear Inn.—

(*Barnsley Chronicle*, 24 February, 1934.)

737. JOHN WESLEY'S LONG JOURNEY, 26 & 27 MARCH, 1789—
An interesting point arises from a comparison of the *Journal* and *Diary* entries for these days, as given in the *Standard Journals*, (vii, 481). I called attention in our manuscript journals to an apparent discrepancy between these entries, and my note evoked the following comments. The late Rev. John Elsworth wrote: There is certainly confusion in stating two long days of journeying. He suggests that what actually happened was this:
- Thursday, 26th. 4-30 a.m. Chaise from Shrewsbury to Oswestry by 8. Chaise at 7, at 12, at 2-30, at 5-30 to Llanrwst, which was reached at 8 p.m., and furnished shelter for the night.
- Friday, 27th. 4-30 a.m. Chaise from Llanrwst to Conway at 8. Chaise at 9 to Bangor Ferry; Chaise at 11-30 to Gwyndu; Chaise at 4-30 to Holyhead.
- Dr. Harrison suggested a simple emendation in the text of the *Journal* to bring it into harmony with the *Diary*. If the entry could be made to read "taking post-horses to Llanrwst, reached Conway between 8 and 9, *next morning*." F.F.B.

A LECTURE AT CONFERENCE.

Under the auspices of the Wesley Historical Society a Lecture will be given at the time of the next Conference. It is hoped that our members, especially those resident in the locality, will do their best to support this venture themselves and to make it as widely known as they can.

Lecturer - Rev. Henry Bett, M.A., Litt. D.,
Handsworth College

Subject - "The Early Methodist Preachers"

Chairman - Rev. John Telford, B.A.
(President of the W.H.S.)

Place - Bishop Street Methodist Church, Leicester

Time - Wednesday, July 25, 1934, at 8 p.m.

THE W. H. S. ANNUAL MEETING

The Conference Handbook calls this Lecture a Meeting. But our members should note that the Annual Meeting of the Society will be held in the usual way during the preceding week. It has been arranged to take place on

Thursday, July 19, at 2 p.m.

on the premises of

**St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, New Walk
Leicester**

The Officers of the Society will be pleased to see any of the members whether they are members of the Conference or not.

Our thanks are due to the Conference Arrangements Committee and the Presbyterian friends for thus facilitating our work.