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ANNUAL MEETING OF THE W.H.S.

The Annual Meeting of the Wesley Historical Society was held at Scotland Street Methodist Church, Sheffield, on July 10, 1940. The members were kindly entertained to tea by Mr. and Mrs. John Austen. The Rev. R. H. Wray presided.

In proposing a vote of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Austen Dr. Harrison pointed out that the W.H.S. was for the first time holding its annual meeting in a Methodist Church which did not inherit the direct Wesleyan tradition, and he rejoiced in this widening of our interests and sympathies.

Scotland Street Church, as recorded in *Proceedings*, xxi, 113, succeeds one erected in 1764 on the same site by the Rev. Thomas Bryant who had left the Mulberry Street Wesleyan Methodist Church. In 1797 it became the Mother Church of the Methodist New Connexion. The Conference of the M.N.C. met in it in 1798, 1802, 1809, 1818, 1830, 1842 and 1855. The present building was erected in 1828.

The minutes of the last year's meeting were read by Dr. Harrison. The accounts presented by the Treasurer, (Mr. Herbert Ibberson), after audit by Mr. Duncan Coomer, showed the finances to be in a sound condition.

The General Secretary, (Rev. F. F. Bretherton) presented the numerical statement. During the twelve months ending June 30th, 13 new members were received; on the other hand 11 members had died, 10 retired, and 4 lapsed, showing a net decrease of 12. The names of deceased members were reverently mentioned at the meeting; they have already been reported in the *Proceedings*. Of Life Members 12 are living, honorary and working members number 307, libraries and kindred societies receiving the *Proceedings* number 50, scattered throughout the Empire and the U.S.A., making the total strength of the Society, excluding the branches, 369.

Deep sympathy was extended to the President, Mr. E. S. Lamplough, in his long illness, and he was reappointed. The officers of the Society already mentioned were thanked and

reappointed together with the Assistant Secretary, Miss C. M. Bretherton. The editorial council was renewed: Dr. Harrison and Mr. Bretherton as joint Editors; Dr. T. B. Shepherd; Mr. Leslie T. Daw, who prepares the *Index* for the *Proceedings*. Rev. A. G. Utton, M.A., B.D. was added; also Mr. J. L. Spedding, under whose direction it is hoped to revive the circulation of the manuscript journal. This revival was mentioned at the last annual meeting, but the conditions under which we have been living since then seemed to make the attempt impracticable. The desire was strongly expressed that it should now be made.

The manuscript journal, circulating amongst a few deeply interested persons was the literary organ of the Society before the printed *Proceedings* were issued. When this took place the journal supplied the first draft of many of the most important articles, and served a useful purpose for many years. Some of those who were on the former rota are anxious to resume their co-operation and it is hoped that others will join. Mr. Spedding will be making his arrangements, and as a first step those who wish to proceed in the matter should get into touch with him at 39 Cross Lane, Sheffield 10.

The meeting heard with interest of what is being done to put the affairs of the Wesley Memorial Church at Epworth on a sound footing, and voted a donation of three guineas as a gesture of goodwill.

It was decided to ask the Rev. Richard Pyke to deliver the annual lecture in 1941, and we have pleasure in announcing that he has consented to do so,

Despite all the rush of this year's Conference, the attendance at the meeting was encouraging, and it was evident that the work of the Society is being well maintained.

THE IRISH BRANCH.

The Annual Meeting was held during the Irish Conference. Mr. F. J. Cole, (President) in the chair.

The President, Secretary, (Rev. R. C. P. Crawford), Treasurer and Curator, (Rev. R. Wesley Olver) were reappointed.

Four new members were reported.

The Curator reported a number of gifts of items literary and artistic relating to Wesley, or dealing with matters of Methodist history in Ireland. The Historical Room, or Repository, becomes increasingly useful under his skilled management. He will be glad to hear from any who can help by presenting items worth preserving.

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THE NEW ZEALAND BRANCH.

Our *Proceedings* are sent out regularly to this Branch, but unfortunately the local inset which has formerly accompanied them has been discontinued through the difficulties of the present time.

These same difficulties and the problem of exchange render it difficult for us to maintain as close and regular touch with the Branch as we desire.

The President is the Rev. Dr. C. H. Laws, the Secretary the Rev. George Frost, and the membership approximately fifty.

Readers will remember that on pp. 6-12 of the current volume of the *Proceedings* an attempt was made to assess the claims of certain names mentioned in connection with Wesley's rescue from the Epworth fire. It was therein pointed out that several persons were concerned, and it was considered to be well established that John Brown was the man who stood on the ground beneath the child's window, and Barnard that of the man who stood on his shoulders. He was the ancestor of a distinguished New Zealand gentleman, Colonel the Hon. Sir R. Heaton Rhodes, K.C.V.O., K.B.E. The Colonel's father and uncles once owned the land on which now stands the Tai Tapu Methodist Church.

On Sunday, 14th April 1940, a special Commemoration Service in connection with the unveiling of a memorial tablet by Colonel Rhodes was held in the Church, Rev. L. B. Neale, B.A., F.R.G.S. President of the New Zealand Methodist Conference, presiding.

The tablet commemorates the fact that the site on which the Tai Tapu Methodist Church stands was formerly owned by the brothers, William Barnard Rhodes, Robert Heaton Rhodes and George Rhodes, an ancestor of whom rescued John Wesley from the flames at Epworth Village, Lincolnshire, on 9th February, 1709, thus preserving to the world the life of one who became the most influential figure of the eighteenth century in England.

We are indebted for this information, and for a copy of the carefully prepared order of service, to the Rev. M. A. Rugby Pratt, F.R. Hist.S., of Christchurch.

INTERNATIONAL METHODIST
HISTORICAL UNION
(EASTERN SECTION).

The Sheffield Conference re-appointed this Committee. The names were printed on page 96 of this volume of *Proceedings*. In his report, Dr. Harrison (Secretary) said that one meeting had been held during the year when arrangements were made for the observance of Wesley Day in London. Looking forward in hope the meeting set on foot arrangements, with Mr. Stanley Sowton as Secretary, to honour the memory of the Rev. Charles Wesley on Wesley Day, May 24, 1941. In preparation for this attention has been bestowed this year upon his monument in the old burial ground of the Parish of Marylebone. The grave was situated in the centre, and was originally marked by a simple gravestone. This was replaced half a century or so later by a more impressive obelisk. Ten years ago the memorial was thoroughly renovated and a ceremony was held on Wesley Day, 1930. An illustration of the restored obelisk appears in *Proceedings*, xvii, 149.

A few years ago the burial ground was made into a playground, and the Charles Wesley memorial was removed from its central position to one near the railings which separate the enclosure from the street.

The course of comparatively few years once more brought about deterioration, and a scheme of restoration was taken up and successfully carried through. The 900 letters of the inscription were re-cut, plain York stone substituted for the battered railings. The necessary money was raised by Mr. Stanley Sowton. Marylebone is associated not only with the Sweet Singer of the Methodist revival but with its present concern for the world-wide interests of the Kingdom of God, for the Methodist Missionary Society has transferred its headquarters to new premises in the Marylebone Road.

The Epworth appeal for a £3,500 Endowment Fund was commended as a Wesley Day appeal. We repeat that the Union has no literary organ and that we are always glad to report its doings in the *Proceedings*.

THE CONFERENCE LECTURE.

The annual lecture, under the auspices of the Wesley Historical Society, was given at the Sheffield Conference by the

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Rev. F. F. Bretherton, B.A. It is number six of the series and is in the same excellent format as its predecessors but the Epworth Press have found it necessary to increase the price to 1/3. Every member of the Society should have a copy, and should make a point of keeping the series, as they are real contributions to our history. Mr. Bretherton's lecture is no exception to this rule. The subject is *Selina, Countess of Huntingdon*, who is not so well known to Methodists as she should be. She has been unfortunate in her biographers, though the curious can obtain a great deal of information and some amusement from sidelights on the Evangelical Revival if they wade through the two volume biography that appeared over a hundred years ago. Mr. Bretherton has given us 48 pages of knowledge about the Countess which throws much much light on the ministry of Wesley, Whitefield, and their helpers as well as on her own abundant activities and charities in the cause of the kingdom of God. She is part of our own heritage and we do well to remember at this time that Wesley's first Conference (1744) was entertained by Lady Huntingdon at her town house in Downing Street. At a later date the controversy over predestination separated her from the Wesleys but she died in the same year as her great contemporary and wept at the announcement of his death. As the late Rev. H. J. Foster wrote, "the misunderstanding of twenty years melted away." It was a happy thought that led our W.H.S. lecturer this year to the study of the Countess of Huntingdon.

A.W.H.

The Lecture was presided over by Mr. John Austen; he presented a greeting from his brother, Mr. Edmund Austen, who wrote recalling the valuable work of the Countess of Huntingdon in his home county of Sussex.

After the opening devotions a pleasing little interlude took place. The Rev. Thomas Bryant, referred to above, was buried in 1804 beneath the pulpit of the Church in which for forty years he had preached the Word. A tablet to the memory of this preacher and his wife was unveiled by Mrs. Elsie Harrison. In an effective little speech she said that it was a beautiful thing that after the storms of the past Methodists could meet together in unity.

The tablet was the gift of Joseph Ward, Esq., J.P., LL.D.

THE "RICHMOND" LETTERS OF CHARLES WESLEY.

In *Proceedings*, xxi, 57-60, we gave some account of the Wesleyana at Richmond College, and indicated that the treasures there were receiving examination. In sorting the papers in an old safe recently the Rev. S. G. Dimond, M. A., the Resident Tutor found a collection of fifteen autograph letters of Charles Wesley. By his kindness copies have been made and sent us by Dr. C. Ryder Smith, with many annotations.

It may be assumed that, like so many of the other Wesley treasures at Richmond, these came to the College through Thomas Jackson. The letters are all written on sheets measuring nine inches by seven and a half. Some of the sheets are double. The letters are here printed with the original spelling and punctuation. For the following reasons it seems certain that these are not the letters that Charles Wesley sent to his various correspondents, but copies that he wrote and kept. (a) None of the sheets has been folded for the post. (b) In some cases more than one letter is written on one sheet, and these are of different dates, and sometimes they are written to different people, e.g., the letters to Mrs. Sparrow and the two to William Perronet are all written on one (double) sheet; see also the notes on the letter of Oct. 8, 1749. (c) As will be seen below, Charles Wesley has himself headed one letter (to his brother John) with the words, "Copy of etc" (d) Some of the letters are signed with initials only, and this seems more likely in the case of a copy that was to be kept than in that of a letter that was to be sent. (e) In a letter from Kinsale on September 8, 1748, to Ebenezer Blackwell, Charles Wesley says, "Excuse Irish paper" while the Richmond paper is the same throughout.

All the letters are printed here except three to Ebenezer Blackwell, as noted below, which are included in Jackson's *Journal of Charles Wesley*, ii, 170-182. Experts in Wesleyana may be able to point out where others have been printed. If so, the Editors will be glad to hear from them on the point. It seems unlikely that any have been printed in books that are readily accessible now. For convenience the letters are arranged in chronological order.

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Notes in square brackets are in the handwriting of Thomas Jackson.

C. RYDER SMITH.

I

Bath.

Mrs. Jones's at Formon Castle.
Glamorganshire. South Wales.

Aug^r 26, 1746

Dear Madam,

I have often thought of writing to you, because I always have you in my heart, and desire above all things, that you may be conformed to the image of the Son of God. God has shewed you his goodness plenteously, and strove to win your heart from the world by a series of miraculous mercies. How often has he lifted you up from the Gates of Death? How often has he weighed down your spirits into seriousness by his fatherly connections. He has chosen you in the furnaces of affliction; and walked with you in it, and brought you out of it—and tried you every way, and every moment. What has he spoken to you in all these gracious visitations, but 'my Child, give me thy Heart.'

But has my dear Friend obeyed the repeated call! Are you crucified to the World, and the world to you? Wholly taken up with the one thing needful? Do you look steadily into the things unseen; eternal? Is the residue of your days entirely devoted to God in serious thankful love? Answer these questions, my Friend not to me but to God and y^r own conscience. And if you are still conformed to the world, more or less, & if you do not yet love much, O stir yourself up to lay hold of the Lord, & labour more abundantly having obtained mercy. Work; work out your salvation, before the night cometh (etc.) Be a widow indeed! this is Desolate, (cut off from the World) trusting in God, and continuing in prayer & supplication night & day—You have no time to lose. Every moment is precious; & if well employed will add a Jewel to your crown. Let me then conjure you my dear friend & sister to break off *Entirely* that friendship with the world which is enmity with God. God and your own heart will tell you whose conversation forwards and whose stops you in the way to heaven. Remember by your

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words you shall be Justified, or by y^r. words you shall be condemned. The Lord forgive you and me all our idle words, & give us grace & resolution from this moment to have, all our conversation in heaven!

I have found time for this long letter by a particular Providence having sprained my foot a fortnight ago, which still confines me to my room, & I am not yet able to set it to the ground. I promise myself the pleasure of your answer to this. Your letter will find me here & assure me I trust that my plain dealing is not disagreeable to you. My excuse (if it needs one) is that I love & honour you, and hope to live with you for ever—where is no more death neither sorrow nor crying, nor Pain!

Partner of this Heavenly Hope,
Travel on & meet me there!

A few more weary steps, and the days of our Mourning are ended. Till then remember your Brother and Companion in tribulation, & pray always for me that I may save my own soul & those that hear me—

Your ever Affectionate

C. Wesley.

To Mrs. Sparrow at Lewisham in Kent.

References to the Sparrow family will be found in John Wesley's *Journal and Letters* (see indexes to the Standard editions). Mrs. Sparrow died in 1748 and Charles Wesley preached her funeral sermon (note in *Standard Edition* of John Wesley's *Journal*, ii, p. 422). The family of Mr. Blackwell was related to Mrs. Sparrow.

II

[XXXIII. Wesley Papers — Original letters from the Rev. Charles Wesley to Mr. Blackwell and others.]

Holy Head Aug. 13th, 1748

My Dear Friend,

I send you a hasty line just as I am embarking for Dublin. You will follow me with your Prayers. Our Lord often brings you to my remembrance, and I trust we shall both (with all that sail with us in the Ship) at last escape safe to land.

Be pleased to keep Mrs Sp—— Legacy, till my return. If God should otherwise dispose of me, be so good as to give it to

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my Brother. With most earnest wish-es for yours and your
dearest Friend's and Mrs. D's Perfection, I remain Your

faithful & Affectionate

C. Wesley

A line from you would comfort me in a strange country.
The Lord Jesus give you the Victory which overcometh the
world.

There are many references to Blackwell in the *Standard Journal and Letters*. He was a partner in Martin's Bank in Lombard Street, and he lived, like the Sparrows, at Lewisham, where he often entertained both the Wesleys. No doubt 'Mrs. Sp.' in the following letter is Mrs. Sparrow, who had recently died. Charles Wesley wrote this letter just as he was taking ship for his second visit to Ireland. His earlier visit, in the previous year, gave very good ground for his anticipation of possible dangers there. In the Eighteenth Century too the voyage from Holyhead to Dublin was not without serious risks. From later letters it seems clear that 'your dearest friend' refers to Mrs. Blackwell and that 'Mrs. D.' is Mrs. Dewal, for whom reference may be made to the *Standard Journal and Letters*.

III

This letter to Ebenezer Blackwell was written at Kinsale on Sept. 8, 1748, and is printed by Jackson. It describes Charles Wesley's triumphant evangelism in the South of Ireland, asks Blackwell's help in building a Preaching House at Cork, and says 'Pray pack up my Brother and send him by the first ship.' On the Richmond copy there are two notes: [Whitehead, i, 328, and Oct. 10, 1748. M.S. letter to Mr. Lund (?). See Whitehead, i. 331 (?).]

IV

Bristol, April 29, 1749.

Dear Sir,

Just on the wing, I send you an hasty line of thanks for your last. A man of businens (and consequently hurry) like you can scarce believe me, or I would afsure you I have not felt the least hurry or discomposure of mind for some time before, and ever since my Marriage; which I esteem as a signal favor from God, and a token of good to come. His grace (I am now purrsuaded) is alike sufficient for us in all conditions. Without that we must perish, in whatsoever estate, and *with that* we are safe in the Lions Den, or in a fiery furnace. You should not expect that example

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in me a novice, which I may justly look for in you, who have so long experienced *The Honorable Estate*. Let us pray for each other, that the Lord may make us such as we ought to be. My heart is always with you and your dear partner and our friend Mrs. Dewal—Meet me in the Name of the Lord at his Altar tomorrow sen'night. I earnestly commend you all to his peculiar care—Farewell.

Yr. ever Affec.^d Friend & Bro^r.

C. Wesley.

To

Mr Blackwell

in Change Alley

London.

Charles Wesley married 'Sally' Gwynne at Garth on April 8, 1749, and wrote on the same day to Blackwell (Jackson, *Life of Charles Wesley*, i, 525f.), saying 'I live in hopes of spending the holidays with my friends in London.' (What he really did may be gathered from the context of the reference given.) Every reader will surmise what he thinks best about Blackwell's reply, from the contents of the above letter. Were both friends writing partly in jest and partly in earnest? This short letter was printed by Jackson, but it is too interesting to omit.

(Charles Wesley wrote a long letter to Blackwell on his wedding-day, April 8, 1749. It is reproduced by Telford in his *Life of the poet*. F.F.B.)

VI

This letter to Ebenezer Blackwell was written from Bristol on Sept. 4, 1749. The earlier part was printed by Jackson (The Richmond copy lacks the first sentence as found there.) The letter begins with a humorous account of the invasion of Charles' house by his wife's sisters, invites Blackwell to visit Bristol, with his wife and Mrs. Dewal, and describes Charles Wesley's eagerness to 'redeem the time.' Then there comes the sentence 'Part of my first Family Hymn follows,' with the four verses printed in Osborn's *Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*, viii, 401f. The 'part' seems to have become the whole. The letter ends with the sentence 'I send you a letter now and then under Mr. Belchier's cover.' The Richmond copy has no signature. Belchier, like Blackwell, was a banker (*Standard Letters*, ii, 131).

(To be continued.)

THE FIRST METHODIST SOCIETY

THE DATE AND PLACE OF ITS ORIGIN

(In our issue of December 1939 we reprinted an article by the Rev. Thomas McCullagh bearing the above title, which originally appeared in 1902. Dr. F. Platt has contributed the following, which he entitles A REJOINDER.)

We are particularly pleased to have this contribution, not merely for its intrinsic value but also as helping us to maintain the character of our *Proceedings* as indicated in the name. Dr. Platt thinks some difficulties still remain; he also suggests that some younger worker might take up the task of setting out in full the evidence he has himself condensed for the purposes of the present article.

As Bristol is so greatly involved in this discussion of Methodist origins, Dr. Platt's long residence in the area, and his skilled and loving care of the New Room, have given him special facilities for dealing with it.)

During the interval of nearly forty years since Mr. McCullagh's article was written much intensive research has been devoted to Methodist origins and particularly to the period with which the article is concerned. The gains of these enquiries presented, for instance, in Dr. J. S. Simon's scholarly volumes—*John Wesley and the Religious Societies* and *John Wesley and the Methodist Societies*—suggest that the permanent value of the positive answers given to the interesting questions with which the article deals may well be reconsidered.

Mr. McCullagh's answer to the question when did "the Earliest Ancestral Society" find its origin is—the first United Society held its first meeting on the evening of December 27th, 1739. In response to this same interrogation, Dr. Simon brings forward evidence from the *Journal*, overlooked by Mr. McCullagh, that the precise date should be December 24th. This difference in detail is of little account, especially as both replies depend upon inferential evidence which appears precarious.

In answer to the further question—where did this parent Society hold its first meeting? Mr. McCullagh replies, "I answer without a doubt, in the Foundery." Dr. Simon's reply is, "As to the place of the first meeting, it can only be conjectured." This difference may at least tend to disturb the confidence Mr. McCullagh expresses in the finality of his conclusion.

Mr. McCullagh, however, himself calls attention to a perplexity he feels, which might appear to hide a misgiving regarding his categorical replies. He refers to "some persons" who are

"no doubt somewhat puzzled" when they read what look like inconsistent passages in Wesley's own references to the questions under discussion. One, a classical passage in Methodist history, attributes "the rise of the United Society to the latter end of the year 1739, first in London, and then in other places." The other passage, or rather others, for they are numerous, and crystal clear in their meaning and sense of historic reality, describe how in a "New Room" in Bristol erected by Wesley himself, in May and June 1739, he ministered to Society Meetings before "the latter end of 1739." These statements present the core of the problem with which this article deals. It is still a puzzle. The solution "respectfully offered" by Mr. McCullagh will not stand the acid test which the historic situation presents. Mr. McCullagh's statement is this: "the Societies at Bristol ministered to by the Wesleys in 1739, and sometime after, belonged to the old historic "Religious Societies" of which Dr. Woodward wrote an account; and the "New Room" was built by Wesley for the better accommodation of two of those Societies." It is the main object of the present article to challenge this solution and to indicate a line of historical and constitutional development which presents a more adequate interpretation of the facts of the situation.

The fundamental weakness of the solution Mr. McCullagh proposes is a misunderstanding and a misinterpretation of the actual condition of the Religious Societies in Bristol, as elsewhere, at the period of the Evangelical Revival. They were not such in function, aim or discipline as those of which Dr. Horne in 1678, and Dr. Woodward some years later, had written. In estimating the significance of the relation to the Methodist Societies to which they were antecedent, it is of primary importance to discriminate between what they had been in character and what they had become; between what they were in tradition and what they were becoming in tendency. Here results of more recent research are of value.

Contemporary historians of Wesley's period agree that the earlier type of Religious Society had become decadent. One of these writes that they "had so settled down into lifelessness, that the majority of their members were altogether slumbering or dead souls, who cared for nothing but their comfort in this world, and as they had once joined this connection, they were willing to continue in this respectable pastime on Sunday Evenings, by which at small expense, they could enjoy pleasure, and fancy themselves better than the rest of the world who did not do the like." (*Benham's Life of James Hutton*, p.9.)

Within two, in particular, of the Religious Societies in Bristol—one meeting in Baldwin Street and the other in Nicholas Street—Whitefield's preaching had already awakened concern when Wesley joined him in Bristol on March 31st, 1739. Wesley's prolonged contact with them resulted in definite re-actions. Traditions were modified, antipathies softened, theological antitheses tolerated or partially reconciled, and above all, vitalizing and transforming energies of grace experienced.

Some aspects of these transitional processes must be briefly indicated. The Religious Societies from the beginning had lacked distinctively evangelical experience and evangelistic zeal. In this they preserved affinities with the Established Church of the period to which their membership was exclusively attached. Whitefield had won their interest in the Evangelical Movement. Wesley deepened this to the point of almost revolutionary change. The new meaning he put into the words *sin, faith, conscious salvation, holiness*, awakened their consciences as no ethical ideals had done. It is significant that it was in the meeting rooms of these two Religious Societies, rather than in his own "New Room" subsequently that the scenes of violent physical agonies occurred. They were professedly religious persons who "cried aloud" and "suddenly fell to the floor as if thunderstruck." Such experiences indicate radical changes un contemplated in the communities of which Dr. Woodward had written. Moreover, Wesley's surprising declaration that "God willeth all men to be saved" and the fact that outcasts and sinners were receiving freely and surely salvation by simple faith challenged the dominant Calvinistic view of the extent of the redeeming work of Christ which was prevalent in the Religious Societies. Whilst at this stage he appears to have avoided controversy, his teaching, particularly on the assurance of personal salvation, led to changes in ways of thinking. They "were startled by the free grace of God, and gloried in it."

Further witness to Wesley's transforming influence is seen in the natural ease and authority with which in the Religious Societies he grafted upon their historic stock social means of grace fashioned and appointed in forms strange to their habit and tradition. Almost at the beginning of his association with them he introduced the "Bands" as an inner circle within their organisation. The aim of the new order was obviously in close spiritual affinity with the object he later defined as the purpose and condition of membership, in the rules of a more fully

organised "United Society." A further antecedent and distinctive feature of early Methodism soon followed. On Sunday, April 29th, 1739, the *Journal* records, "Our first Lovefeast in Baldwin Street." Both these initial forms of fellowship identify themselves directly with cherished means of grace in historic Methodist communities.

Another evangelical impulse touched the devotional life and its expression amongst the members of the Religious Societies when Wesley appears to have provided for their use copies of the 1739 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. The presumptive evidence for this is that it is known that James Hutton, the bookseller, sent a supply of this book to Bristol at this time. Nothing could have been more effective in transforming the inherited traditions of these Societies than the hymns which Charles Wesley inspired by the first rapture of his conversion, was writing at this period.

A fundamental change in these two Societies is seen also in the surrender, or at least, the suspension, of their ecclesiastical exclusiveness. Their membership was limited to members of the Church of England. This test had been closely observed. Whilst it is evident that in principle Wesley's affinities and ecclesiastical loyalties lingered on, men and women without this status, who had received the grace of God as he had "offered Christ" in the open air were as members of the Bands welcomed to the meetings of the Societies for prayer and fellowship. The conditions of membership were such as, from this beginning, the people called Methodists have never ceased to recognise—"a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." One of the results of this change in terms of membership soon became obvious in ecclesiastical circles in the city. The clergy of most of the Bristol Churches now refused to admit to the Lord's Table members of the Religious Societies, who, as regular communicants, were previously regarded as most exemplary members of the Church. This action soon stimulated a further break in ecclesiastical discipline. Administration of the Sacrament in private houses was tolerated and steadily grew. Dr. Simon comments, "Wesley must have been aware of the stream of tendency that was carrying away the Societies from the Established Church and imperilling his own connection with it." (*Wesley and the Religious Societies*, p. 311.) Societies functioning in such forms of evangelical fellowship as have been indicated, could not even if still retaining the title "Religious Societies"

be adequately or even appropriately described as "belonging to the old historic Religious Societies of which Dr. Woodward wrote an account," as Mr. McCullagh claims.

The question remains, what then was the character of these two Societies at the time when Wesley, on his own initiative and at his own expense, made provision for their accommodation in the "New Room in the Horsefair," in May and June 1739.

The answer to this question may come with greater clarity and persuasiveness, if it proceeds on two lines, separable but cumulative, viz., historical and what we may term constitutional.

Historically—Under the enfranchised conditions referred to the two Societies rapidly increased in numbers. The rooms in which they met were inconveniently crowded and the tenancy of them uncertain. Aware of the new characteristics the historical Societies had so strangely and swiftly assumed under his teaching and influence, Wesley interpreted these changes as the call of God to leadership. He must link personal responsibility with the gift and authority of this spiritual leadership. By whatever name they might be called these Societies were now dependent upon his evangelical teaching, his pastoral care and his organizing direction.

Three laconic entries in the *Journal* record the swift sequences which registered this deep conviction—May 9th, 1739, he bought the land; May 12th, he laid the first stone; three weeks later, June 3rd, he preached at the opening of the New Room.

A month later the transition warranted by the spiritual transformation experienced was made. On July 11th, 1739, Wesley and Whitefield united "the two leading Societies together and transferred them to the New Room in the Horsefair." That Wesley regarded this transfer as much more than a convenient removal from a temporary to a permanent meeting place for his Bands and for the converts the Revival had added to them, is clear from an entry in his *Diary* indicating that two days prior to this union, he was busy writing out "Orders," and thus preparing for the constitution and direction of the new born "Society"—the first that had come to be solely under his personal control. This union was a fresh departure, connoting not a simple continuity, but a form of emergent evolution, and for Wesley himself an indication of the creative will and work of the Spirit of God. In a Religious Society of the old type the "director" was chosen by the members, and might be dismissed at their will. Here and now, Wesley's position was different. He resided in the New Room, which was

his own property. When he had to be absent, he was careful to arrange for his brother Charles to take his place. Jointly and severally they devoted much attention to the pastoral care of the Society. They consistently spoke of it as 'Our Society.' With closer definition Wesley writes of it in the *Journal* as "the little flock committed to my care." There is definite evidence that this New Room Society had not superseded the meetings of other Religious Societies in Bristol. These continued to meet as before, and Wesley had occasional friendly intercourse with them. But the New Room Society was separate, and his own. It developed features of its own also which had not characterised the Religious Societies. The differences extended to the fellowship, the discipline and the teaching. Social and philanthropic service increased. A school for poor children was carried on in the New Room for which Wesley employed two masters and a mistress. In the winter of 1739-40, "we were enabled to feed a hundred, sometimes a hundred and fifty of those whom we found in need."

The association of Whitefield with Wesley in this union is significant also. No theological test conditioned membership in the new Society. The union was the act and deed of the Calvinistic and Arminian leaders of the Revival as already Churchmen and non-Churchmen had become eligible.

A much more revealing feature is that noted in the *Journal* on March 5th, 1740. This indicates a distinctive quality discernible in the work of God. Comparing it with the swift movements and emotional awakening of the previous months, Wesley writes, "Now convictions sink deeper and deeper. Love and joy are more calm, even and steady," many "have no rest in their spirits until they are fully renewed in the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness." Here and at this date we may discern the "earliest ancestry" in his Society of his specific teaching on "Scriptural Holiness" which the Religious Societies frankly opposed, but he himself regarded as "the grand *depositum* God had lodged with the people called Methodists,"

A point has now been reached without any sign of arrested development, and without any new departure in principle or in relation to antecedent Religious Societies, when the Society at the New Room has pursued an orderly progress from the transition marked by July 11th, 1739, to the status and character of the "United Society in Bristol" described by Wesley in the *Journal*, February 24th, 1741. This is the momentous meeting to which Mr. McCullagh calls impressive attention at the close of his

article. He recognises that it is of great importance in considering satisfactory answers to the questions he asks.

Here is found the earliest reference in Wesley's writings to a cluster of original features in fellowship and discipline which became cardinal elements in the Methodist Connexion, as this emerged from the embryonic stage of Bands and Societies. The calling of names in order "to give tickets," ("society" not yet "class" tickets); the withholding of tickets as the sign of exclusion and the initiation of the system of membership "on trial" make their first appearance. For the first time also Wesley uses the term "United Society" to denote the community under his personal control. It is not used of the Society of the Foundery until three months later. (*Journal* April 7th, 1741). Mr. McCullagh's reference, (*Proceedings* xxii, 80) to the use of the term by Charles Wesley as applying to the Foundery on April 9th, 1740 is inaccurate. (See Charles Wesley's *Journal* for that date.)

Historically, therefore, it may be claimed that there is authentic evidence that the New Room Society at this time was "an independent and distinctively Methodist Society." With this judgment Mr. McCullagh entirely agrees. But having to make this admission perplexes him. It seems to involve an implicit challenge to his reasoned conclusions. He makes no attempt to account for it as an issue which must have had adequate and organic antecedents in a history of preceding developments. He leaves it an event suspended in mid air. As the questions involved in this discussion have obviously a constitutional as truly as an historical aspect the present writer ventures to suggest a further line of approach to them which takes this aspect more directly into consideration.

Constitutionally. It is essential in any authentic interpretation of the rise of Methodism, with its unique characteristics of membership, to keep steadfastly in mind that its *fons et origo*, historically and constitutionally, is fellowship. This was its creative principle; fellowship, rather than field-preaching in which he was preceded by Whitefield, was Wesley's original contribution to the Evangelical Revival. It was the creative force that gave permanence to the Movement and sublimated the "Evangelical" into the "Methodist" Revival.

Fundamentally, the germ-cell of Methodism was the "Band." Whitefield had no gift for conserving the spiritual fruits of his ministry. He knew Wesley had, on April 2nd, 1739, the day after that on which Wesley took over his work in Bristol, Whitefield

told him that the movement was ripe for the introduction of the "Bands." On April 3rd, Wesley wrote out "Orders" for constituting these in a form appropriate to the fresh evangelical experience that the Revival was creating. These would properly differ from a draft he had prepared on May 1st, 1738, previous to his own Aldersgate Street experience. On the following day he actually began the formation of the Bands. He writes (*Journal*. April 4th, 1739). "In the evening three women agreed to meet together weekly with the same intent as those at London, viz; 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." "As those at London" doubtless refers to members of the Bands meeting at Fetter Lane Religious Society which was at that time dominated by Moravian influence and methods, and resentful of Wesley's teaching and direction. Bristol now afforded him opportunity of initiative and freedom of action. His selective judgment took hold of the Band method of fellowship as a basis. In its spiritual experience at its varied stages was nourished and conserved. It harmonised with its deepening conviction that "the Bible knows nothing of a solitary religion," and his frequent aphorism, "You cannot go to heaven alone." No opportunity was found for it in the Established Church or amongst the Dissenters. Wherever souls were awakened under his preaching he sought to establish the Bands. A persistent difficulty was to secure suitable meeting-places for them. In some cases where Religious Societies already existed, these afforded hospitality to the newer form of fellowship. But this was an accidental, not an essential or organic association. Close inspection of the *Journal* and the *Diary* shows that it was within such outward setting provided by the Baldwin Street and Nicholas Street Religious Societies that the Bands at Bristol passed their earliest infancy. There is an unfounded tradition that these Religious Societies absorbed the Bands. The truth is, as we have seen, that they themselves are transformed by the Bands, as these latter enshrined the power of a new Evangel and witnessed to the realities of an evangelical experience.

Collateral evidence has already been offered in support of this assertion. It now remains to present a line of documentary evidence in support of it.

Neither in *Journal* nor *Diary* does Wesley give the names of the four young men who constituted his first Bristol Band. But

happily these are mentioned in a letter he wrote to Peter Bohler's Society at Fetter Lane dated April 9th, 1739. They are:—Samuel Wathen, surgeon; Richard Cross, upholsterer; Charles Bonner, distiller; Thomas Westal, carpenter.

By a rather remarkable coincidence there now lies before the present writer a valuable historic relic which has come into the possession of the Trustees of the New Room through the generous benefaction of Mr. James T. Lightwood, B.A. It is a portion of a list in John Wesley's handwriting with the heading, "The United Society in Bristol, Jan. 1st, 1741." The list has been cut in two; the other half is lost. This extant part contains sixty one names, all of men, classified as married and unmarried. Amongst these the names occur of two of the four members of Wesley's first Band, formed on April 4th, 1739,—Richard Cross and Thomas Westal. As this list is almost certainly that from which Wesley read out the names at the memorable meeting at the New Room of the United Society on Feb. 24th, 1739, we are justified in claiming a definite line of unbroken continuity between the nucleus registered in his first Bristol Band and that organized fellowship to which Wesley for the first time gives the comprehensive and official designation "The United Society." The line may seem thin, but it carries unquestionable authority. In following the clue afforded by this authentic fragment of documentary evidence we trace an organic development, true to evangelical type and to historical succession, which substantiates the claim for setting "the earliest ancestry" of the Methodist Connexion in closest relation, as to place and time, with Wesley's ministry at the New Room in the Horsefair from the summer of 1739, and onwards. This interpretation of events removes the origin for which Mr. McCullagh seeks some six months earlier than December 27th, 1739 for which he contends.

Such an interpretation also suggests that the gradual co-ordination of the "Band" as an inner circle, and the "Society" as a wider circle, of the Methodist fellowship which eventually became the norm of the "United Societies" had its rise at Bristol within the same period. The fact that Wesley himself spent during the 275 days from March 31st to December 31st, 1739, 195 days in Bristol affords presumptive evidence in support of this suggestion.

A further feature in the list before us confirms these conclusions. Inscribed upon it as members, with others of the United Society at Bristol, are the names of John Wesley, Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, John Cennick—here spelt Cenick, Joseph

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Humphreys. These are the well known names of the chief leaders of the Evangelical Revival at this period. Their appearance in this list indicates that these leaders regarded themselves personally as members of the United Society meeting at the New Room. This implies something more than a suggestion that they regarded this particular Society as the parent Society of the movement. This view is sustained by the fact that here the united leadership is presented as a unity for the last time before that unity was permanently broken by the Calvinistic controversy, the first schism that separated both leadership and membership. Within a few weeks this controversy had become active and aggressive. Whitefield, Cennick and Humphreys had ceased to be members of the United Society.

The view that priority and leadership were at this stage associated with the New Room Society is confirmed by the important fact that Wesley himself, after initiating the arresting procedure concerning conditions of membership in the United Society on February 24th, 1739, formally repeated this procedure for the direction of the Foundery Society on the evenings of April 8th and 9th following.

The significance of this order of succession is also increased by the fact that, a year later, a similar repetition occurred. Following the memorable meeting at the New Room on Feb. 15th, 1742, which resulted in the institution of "classes," Wesley two months later records (*Journal*) April 23rd, 1742, how he introduced this most characteristic feature of the Methodist fellowship into the London Societies.

FREDERIC PLATT.

WESLEY'S PRINTERS AND BOOKSELLERS. PART IV. AT BRISTOL (continued.)

THOMAS CADELL.

One of the earliest Bristol booksellers whose services Wesley utilised was Thomas Cadell, whose shop was in the well-known centre of the Bristol book-selling trade in the eighteenth century Wine Street. Wesley determined in 1745 to publish three volumes

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of sermons by subscriptions; he arranged for four agents in Bristol, P. Brown, Felix Farley, and "J. Wilson, and T. Cadell, Booksellers, in Wine-Street." Only one of these, Felix Farley, was to have any lasting and intimate connection with Wesley. The others were associated with him for a short time only.

The *Dictionary of Booksellers and Printers* briefly records that there was a Thomas Cadell, a bookseller and publisher in Wine Street, Bristol, from 1739 until 1775. Even these meagre details are mentioned chiefly because he was the father of the much better-known London bookseller of the same name, who later became an Alderman of London. Perhaps the obscurity which surrounds the Bristol bookseller is made darker by the fact that both his son and his grandson became prominent London publishers, even to the extent of securing mention in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

Of the son, Thomas Cadell (1742-1802), the *D.N.B.* says that he was "born of poor parents, in Wine Street, Bristol, in 1742." The fact is not even mentioned (probably because not known) that the father was a bookseller. The remark about "poor parents" is a little exaggerated. It seems fairly certain that the Wine Street bookshop was a small, conservative business, but sufficiently alive to keep Thomas Cadell and his wife Martha in fairly comfortable circumstances, so that in later years they were able to retire to a residential neighbourhood. It offered no alluring prospects for the son, however, and Thomas Cadell junior was sent to London at the age of sixteen, as apprentice to the well-known publisher Andrew Millar. His fine character and great industry promoted rapid success; in 1765 he became Millar's partner, and in 1767 succeeded to the business. This same Thomas Cadell was one of the coterie of publishers which issued such works as Johnson's *Poets*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, Cook's *Voyages*, and Blackstone's *Commentaries*. For a few years (1780-84) William Strahan was his partner, the same William Strahan whose name appears on the title-pages of many of Wesley's publications.

It is not so easy to sketch the life of the elder Thomas Cadell. In fact, details about him can only be obtained by arduous research into the *Poll Books* and *Directories* of Bristol. The first mention of Cadell is in the 1739 *Poll-Book*, published by Felix Farley. Here he is recorded as a voter in the Christ-Church parish, in which parish Wine Street was situated. He supported the unsuccessful parliamentary candidate, Henry

Combe, the election being won by the Hon. Edward Southwell. In 1754 Cadell was on the victorious side, voting for the Hon. Robert Nugent, who remained an M.P. for Bristol for twenty years, and who later changed his name to Cragge and was well-known as a poet politician. Two lists of the voters in this 1754 election appeared, one calling itself *The Bristol Poll-Book*, printed by Felix Farley's widow, the other entitled *A Genuine List of the Freeholders and Freemen who voted at the General Election*. . . . Printed for T. Cadell in Wine Street, and E. Ward on the Tolzey. The *Bristol Poll-Book* has the entry "Cadell, Thomas, Stationer, Fr' (eeholder) St. James." Cadell's own publication, however, shows that he was a freeholder of St. Peter's, not St. James' parish.

The description of Cadell as a "stationer" may be misleading to some modern readers. The word "stationer" is an interesting example of progressive limitation of meaning. Originally, in Mediaeval Latin, "Stationarius" referred to any man who had a "Statio," i.e. a permanent stall or shop. By the time the word came into middle English, however, as "stacyonere," it was being used for booksellers only. This meaning persisted until the 19th century, and even to our own days in the phrase "Stationers' Hall," the headquarters of the guild of booksellers or stationers, where until 1911 books were "entered" or registered for the purposes of copyright. During the last two centuries, however, from meaning a bookseller who *might* sell writing materials as a sideline, the word "stationer" came to be used only of those booksellers whose chief trade was in pens and paper, and it may now be applied even to shopkeepers who do not sell a single printed book. In the eighteenth century, however, it must be remembered that the words "stationer" and "bookseller" were interchangeable. In the *Poll-Books* Thomas Cadell is officially described as a "Bookseller" in 1739, a "Stationer" in 1754, and again as a "Bookseller" in 1784, whilst in *Sketchley's Bristol Directory*, of 1775, his official designation is "bookseller and stationer."

Sketchley's Bristol Directory adds an interesting detail to those given by the *Poll-Books*. In it Cadell's address is given as "8, Wine-Street." Sketchley's was the first thorough-going attempt at a real directory, assigning numbers to houses for the sake of convenience, although in actual practice they did not possess them. The system employed was that the Exchange was regarded as the

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centre of the city, and the house-numbers in a street began at the end nearest to the Exchange, running down the left-hand side of the street first, and then coming back down the right-hand side. Approaching Wine Street from the Bristol Bridge, therefore, Cadell's shop would be the eighth house on the left-hand side.

In 1776, Cadell, perhaps encouraged by his progressive sons already making a name for himself in London, joined in a new publishing venture. It was "The Bath and Bristol Magazine, For the Year 1776. Vol. I. . . . London: Printed for G. Kearsley, No. 46, Fleet Street; R. Cruttwell, in Bath: W. Cruttwell, in Sherborne; T. Cadell & T. Cocking, in Bristol." A copy of this may be seen in the Bristol Central Library. Cadell was probably regarded as one of the less important collaborators in this enterprise, which does not appear to have been very successful.

At some time between 1781 and 1785 Thomas Cadell of Bristol, retired. The 1781 *Poll-Book* shows that in that year he was still a voter in the Christ-Church parish, though his address is not mentioned, and that he was also a freeholder in St. Maryport parish. His name is absent from the 1784 *Poll-Book*, whilst the *Bristol Directory* for 1785 records him as living at Stoke's-croft, which at this time was a residential district planted with trees, showing that Cadell had arrived at a fairly prosperous retirement. The year of his death we have not discovered, but his name does not appear in the *New Bristol Directory* for 1792, whilst the entry "Cadell, Mrs. Martha, Stokes-croft" in a 1794 directory suggests that the old man must by that year, at any rate, have died, leaving behind him his widow. She lived until the end of the century, in the same neighbourhood, Matthews' 1799 directory giving her address as "21 Stokes-croft."

Although Thomas Cadell had agreed to sell Wesley's publications in 1745, when opposition against the Methodists was already quite strong, in later years he apparently lost sympathy with them, for in 1764 we find him publishing a pamphlet directed against Wesley. This was "Enthusiasm Delineated: or the absurd conduct of the Methodists displayed. In a letter to the Rev. Messieurs Whitefield and Wesley. By A Blacksmith. . . Bristol: Printed for the Author, and Sold by T. Cadell, Bookseller, in Wine-St." It is signed at the end by A. T. Blacksmith, of Paulton. Cadell's better-known son and grandson were also

associated with attacks on Methodism, as may be observed from a perusal of Green's *Anti-Methodist Publications*, Nos, 356, 526, 584, 586.

FRANK BAKER.

NOTES AND QUERIES

798. A SOCIETY OF MINISTERS. (See p. 52 of this volume.) The Editor of the *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*, in acknowledging the receipt of our *Proceedings* suggests that it would be well to consider not only the influence of Wesley's Conference and Rules of Society but also that of Richard Baxter and his famous "Association" in Worcestershire.

799. LORD ROCKSAVAGE. In reply to N. & Q. 764 relating to this nobleman I am now able to furnish one little piece of information which gives an indication of the nature of his association with the evangelical revival. In the financial report of various Funds gathered and administered within the Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion as printed in *The Evangelical Register, 1824-1825*, a donation of £3-3-0 and an annual subscription of £2-2-0 to the Fund for the Propagation of the Gospel are recorded to have been made by the Right Hon. the Earl of Rocksavage, per Rev. E. Lake.

F.F.B.

800. WESLEY AND à KEMPIS.—In addition to the editions noted in Green's *Ribliography* may be added, *An Extract from the Christian's Pattern, or a Tract on the Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis, abridged and published in English by the Rev. John Wesley.* Derby: Printed by and for Henry Mosley, Brook Street, 1815.

F.F.B.