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A table of contents for the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_whs_01.php

Proceedings OF THE Wesley Historical Society

Editor: E. ALAN ROSE, B.A.

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EDITORIAL

This special issue of *Proceedings* has been prepared to mark the eightieth birthday of the Rev Dr Frank Baker. His membership of our Society extends over half a century, during which he has served as Registrar (1943-49) and General Secretary (1949-60) before becoming our Correspondent in the United States. Since 1938 few volumes of *Proceedings* have lacked articles from his pen (or, more lately, his word-processor). Twice he has delivered the annual Conference Wesley Historical Society Lecture. During this period he has become established as the leading figure in Wesley Studies with an international reputation. It is fitting that we should honour the achievements of our most distinguished member.

This greatly enlarged issue has been made possible by the generosity of more than a hundred of our members who have collectively subscribed more than £1,000 towards its cost, a response which in itself is a tribute to the respect and affection in which Frank Baker is held. The Society is extremely grateful to all the Branches and individual members who have contributed so readily to the appeal for this tribute.

It is possible that this is the largest single issue we have ever published. The essays it contains reflect the range of Frank's scholarly interests over the years and take note of the fact that he is a product of Hull Primitive Methodism. Certainly members concerned by recent subscription rises may take comfort in the reflection that with the concluding issue in October, this volume of *Proceedings* will have reached at least 256 pages - a size not exceeded since the palmy days of 1906!

To Frank the Society sends its greetings in the form of this *festschrift*, extending to him our thanks for his work over the decades, and our good wishes for the future.

FRANK BAKER : AN APPRECIATION

Having known a person, intimately or casually, for over fifty years, one is qualified to have the privilege of paying a tribute to his character and achievements. Hence, I suppose, came the editor's invitation to contribute this tribute to Frank Baker on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

Frank and I were contemporaries in Hartley Victoria College for the year 1933-34, when he was an exalted third or fourth year graduate (a rare bird in those days), regarded with some awe by lesser minions of the first year. After college came my years on Probation and where should I be posted but to Frank's home circuit Hull, St. George's Road, where I came to know his family.

Years passed by, and from time to time the name "Frank Baker" kept cropping up in odd corners. There were the Eayrs Essay Prizes on Wesley studies, articles in the *Methodist Recorder*, the *London Quarterly & Holborn Review* and other periodicals. The *Methodist Recorder* also carried his replies to correspondents with queries relating to Methodism. I still have many of them in a well-thumbed scrap book - so numerous that I defy any Baker Bibliographer to list them all. But Frank was always a willing helper to those who, myself one of them, sought his guidance. In fact, his generous replies recall the words of Xenophon about Socrates, "He gave to all men freely of the treasures of his mind".

So "F.B." of later years was emerging, steadily but inexorably moving to the heights he has since reached - and, let us remember, at the same time a faithful circuit minister, never neglecting the opportunity when it came his way, to write up a local history - e.g. Cleethorpes and Newlands (Hull).

At the same time, he was increasingly involved in the work of our Society, the W.H.S., eventually becoming secretary in succession to the Rev. F.F. Bretherton - a noble succession! - over the years enriching it with articles and a couple of Conference Lectures. The first was delivered in 1948 at Bristol on "Charles Wesley as revealed in his Letters"; the second, more recently in 1984 at Wolverhampton on "John Wesley and America". His name still appears on the inside cover of our *Proceedings* as "Correspondent in the United States of America". In 1957 the library of the Rev. F.F. Bretherton was bequeathed to the Society and Frank, along with Wesley Swift sorted and arranged for the installation of the books in the crypt of Wesley's Chapel, City Road, London. The Library was formally opened on 3rd April, 1959.

Meanwhile, his stock of references, his famous slips of paper, was building up. The Book Room in City Road was coming to know him as a regular visitor as he assiduously listed its manuscripts and documents which became the foundation of his later researches which were to find fruition in the volumes listed in the Bibliography on p.232. Many of them are now standard works of reference. *The Representative Verse of Charles Wesley*, for instance, displays detailed knowledge of the 'mechan-

ics' of poetry. The Introduction deals with (to quote some sectional headings) Charles Wesley's "Literary Output", his "Classical Training", his "Vocabulary", his "Literary Allusions" and a general treatment of "The Art of Rhetoric". Then follows the body of the book - a study, with MS sources indicated, of over 300 pieces, not all of them hymns, by Charles Wesley. It has always been Frank's ambition to edit a collection of the letters of Charles Wesley and had it been humanly possible for him to do so, he would no doubt have done it, but with his commitments stretched to the limit, this has not been possible and we have to be content with his WHS Lecture which shows what we might have had, had Frank been able to deal with all Charles's correspondence. In his lecture, however, he has been able to give us, among other topics, glimpses of Charles's "Oxford Days", "Sally Gwynne" and the vexed question, "Ordination is Separation". We could only wish for more of "Charles Wesley as Revealed in His Letters". Then there is that large work *John Wesley and the Church of England* which surely forms the groundwork for anyone wishing to understand the relationship between John Wesley and his mother Church. Here Frank deals with such delicate topics as "Methodism and the Bishops", "Wesley's Changing Churchmanship", "Separation" and an especially useful chapter on "The Prayer Book Revised". On a different line is *William Grimshaw*, which reveals Frank as a local historian par excellence. This was Frank's Ph.D. thesis for Nottingham University and the preface gives some idea of the research it involved - in archives, libraries, museums, antiquarian societies and so on; in the end giving an intimate picture of that turbulent priest, Grimshaw, "A Puritan on the Warpath" and loyal supporter of Wesley and early Methodism.

Then came the call to America where his life-work, centred on Duke University, Durham, N.C., on the authentic text of Wesley's works, was to take shape. It is impossible to describe the skill and meticulous labour which has gone into this monumental task. It has involved not only a thorough knowledge of the works themselves, but also a business acumen in dealing with experts in their own spheres - publishers, printers, accountants and the like. We are happy to know that the fruits of Frank's labours are now being gleaned.

Yet, when all is said and done about Frank's life-work, mention has not been made of his work on the relationship between British and American Methodism; of the generous hospitality dispensed by himself and Nellie (let us not forget Nellie) at 1505 Pinecrest Road; of his extensive travels as he has been called upon to address conferences and seminars the world over. In fact, time fails me to tell of the industry and erudition of this man, Frank Baker, friendly and basically modest, to whom as a Society we owe so much and whom we congratulate on this happy occasion. We greet him as one who knows more about John Wesley than John Wesley knew about himself!

JOHN C. BOWMER

(John Bowmer was formerly Methodist Connexional Archivist)

THE FETTER LANE SOCIETY, 1739 — 1740

John Wesley's heartwarming experience on 24th May 1738 was a turning point in his own life, but it was in 1739 that Methodism was effectively born as a movement, when Wesley first preached in the open air and founded his first societies in Bristol and London. By preaching without a licence in another clergyman's parish, Wesley for the first time breached the discipline of the Church of England. The 1739 societies, unlike the Fetter Lane Society, were Wesleyan in origin and allegiance, the first constituents of an organisation whose direct continuation is the Methodist Church of to-day. This was properly recognised when the centenary of the beginning of Methodism was celebrated not in 1838, but in 1839.¹ Some might even place the starting-point of Methodism as late as 1740, when Wesley broke with the Moravians by withdrawing from the Fetter Lane Society, but the decisive separation was made when he initiated his rival London society in December 1739, in preparation for the ultimate division which he already envisaged, as this article will show.

1739, however, has an even wider significance. It was the *annus mirabilis* of the Evangelical Revival, the year in which it overflowed the confines of the Fetter Lane Society and spread throughout England. Nevertheless, the society remained for some time the hub of the Revival, and even the Wesleys accepted its authority over their activities in the provinces, so that J. E. Hutton's claim that it was for two years 'nothing less than the headquarters of the growing evangelical revival' was not exaggerated.² We shall look at the relationship of the early evangelists in other parts of the country with the Fetter Lane Society and see how the latter continued to develop in their absence. An examination of its continuing history, largely ignored by previous writers, for whom London was no longer in the limelight when the evangelists moved out into the country, is vital for an understanding of why Methodists and Moravians parted company in 1740.

This account will focus on three themes: the growing crisis which from April 1739 threatened the society's continuance, until in June John Wesley had to return to London to resolve the situation; the continuing and increasing Moravian influence on the society, at a time when it has generally been assumed that there were no Moravians in London; and the developments which culminated in Wesley's withdrawal in 1740. In each case neglected Moravian sources will provide an account fuller than those available hitherto, and as a result the picture

This article concludes the account begun by the present author in *Proceedings*, xlv, pp.125-153 (hereinafter cited as '1738'). In the text dates are given old style, except that years are counted as beginning on 1 January.

¹ cf. for example A.R. George, review in *Proceedings*, xlv, p.160.

² J.E. Hutton, *History of the Moravian Church* (London, 1909), p.293.

created by Wesley in his *Journal* of a society founded by himself but taken from him by Moravian intruders in the autumn of 1739 will require some correction.³

The Revival in the Country

The turning point when the Revival burst out from its London cradle occurred at the turn of the year itself. The inspiration of the lovefeast held in Fetter Lane on New Year's Day 1739 had its sequel in a deliberate attempt to spread the new insights to friends elsewhere, and even to preach the Gospel in new places. This course of events matched that in Herrnhut twelve years before, when the unity and inspiration experienced at a Communion service had similarly been followed by the despatch of ambassadors to communicate the news of what had happened there.⁴

The Fetter Lane Society had drawn on the old religious societies in London, on newer ones founded there by James Hutton and on former Holy Club members who had moved to the capital.⁵ Similarly, the growth of the movement outside the metropolis was not quite a mission to *terra incognita*, for a network of like-minded friends already existed in the country, waiting to be subsumed into the new movement; indeed the revival had already begun in some places. John Walsh has told the story of the 'Cambridge Methodists', counterparts there of the Holy Club,⁶ and in Bedford a society was formed under the leadership of Jacob Rogers, curate of St. Paul's parish, and Francis Okely, a native of Bedford and a student member of the Cambridge group. It was Benjamin Ingham who in December 1738, after visiting the Cambridge Methodists, went on to kindle the revival in Bedford,⁷ and William Delamotte, a student whose family was already closely involved at Fetter Lane, who provided a more regular link between Bedford, Cambridge and the London centre.⁸

In Oxford the legacy of the Holy Club was still in evidence. Former members met with current students, and a society of townspeople was led by Mr and Mrs Fox. Understandably, these groups were more directly dependent on the Fetter Lane Society than those in Cambridge and Bedford, John Wesley acting as intermediary. Another leading Fetter Lane member John Thorold had begun a society in Windsor, and

³ For abbreviations and location of sources, see Appendix. Wesley's interpretation has been followed by historians, most recently by E.G. Rupp, *Religion in England, 1688-1791* (Oxford, 1986), p.365: John Wesley 'was facing a takeover bid from the Moravians which had every chance of being successful'.

⁴ For these events see '1738', p.151.

⁵ cf. '1738', pp.131-4.

⁶ J.D. Walsh, 'The Cambridge Methodists' in P. Brooks (ed.), *Christian Spirituality. Essays in Honour of Gordon Rupp* (London, 1975), pp.251-283.

⁷ R13.A17.27: Ingham to R. Viney, 22 Jan. 1739.

⁸ M0.606: M. Ann Okely.

here too the connection with London was close.⁹

On the Friday after New Year's Day 1739 seven clerical members of the Fetter Lane Society - the Wesleys, George Whitefield, Ingham, Charles Kinchin, John Hutchings and Westley Hall - together with the layman William Seward, met in conference at Islington to decide where each should go and to plan the spread of the revival. Hopes were high, and Ingham was inspired to write: 'I believe that this year there will be a great Work done in England.'¹⁰

Charles Wesley resisted a decision that he should go to Oxford to co-ordinate activities there, and although he seems to have changed his mind later in the month, nothing came of the plan.¹¹ After his ordination to the priesthood in Oxford, Whitefield made his way to Bristol, accompanied by William Seward and, for part of the journey, Westley Hall and John Brown.¹² On the way they visited Windsor, Kinchin's parish of Dummer (where Hutchings was curate), and Basingstoke, where Hutchings was to carry on work with members of the religious society.¹³ In England's second city Whitefield consolidated his following in the societies and began preaching in the open air.¹⁴ Hutchings and John Syms were among those who went to assist him,¹⁵ but soon it was time for him to prepare to depart for Georgia again, so John Wesley went to take over his work.

Reading was another town where the influence of Fetter Lane was felt. John Cennick, who lived there, had approached Kinchin, who introduced him into the Fetter Lane circle, but the society he founded in March 1739 was very short-lived.¹⁶ Cennick and his sister Sally went to London in May and were received into the Fetter Lane Society; in June he too moved to Bristol to teach at the school being built at Kingswood.¹⁷

But it was in West Yorkshire that the largest group of societies was to spring up. Benjamin Ingham had begun a society in his mother's house at Ossett (near Wakefield) before he went to Georgia, and by April 1738

⁹ *Letters*, i, 579ff: JW to Ingham and Hutton, 16 Nov. 1738; AB104.A3.11.11: Thorold to Hutton, 27 Oct. 1738; R13.A17.25: Ingham to J.Töltzschig, 17 Nov. 1738. For Thorold, see '1738' p.133 and *passim*.

¹⁰ *JWJ*; *CWJ*; *GWJ*: 5 Jan. 1739; R13.A17.27: Ingham to Töltzschig, 22 Jan.

¹¹ *CWJ*: 5, 17 Jan.; R13.A17.27.

¹² For Brown, Wesley's companion on his journey to Herrnhut, see '1738', pp.140, 142, 145.

¹³ *GWJ*: 7-12 Feb.; AB110 .C18: T. Coombs to Hutton, 9 Feb. 1738/9; AB101.A3.4.2: Seward to Hutton, 12 Feb. 1738/9.

¹⁴ *GWJ*.

¹⁵ AB106.A3.14.33: Whitefield to F.L.S., 14 Mar. For Syms, see '1738', p.144.

¹⁶ J.Cennick, *The Life of John Cennick* (4th ed., London, 1789), pp.21-24; *JWJ*: 8-11 Mar.; *Letters*, i, 605ff: JW to Whitefield, 16 Mar.; 617f: Cennick to JW, 29 Mar.; AB45.A3.Y: M: Sally Cennick.

¹⁷ J.Cennick, 'An Account of the Most Remarkable Occurrences in the Awakenings at Bristol and Kingswood till the Brethren's Labours began there in 1746', *Proceedings*, vi, p.105; Cennick, *Life*, pp.25f.

some of its members had begun similar societies in their own villages.¹⁸ To assist him in the work with these societies Ingham twice asked the Moravian Church to allow Johann Töltschig, his friend from their time in Georgia, to accompany him back from Germany, but although willing, he was appointed instead to superintend the building work at Herrnhaag.¹⁹ Returning to Yorkshire in February 1739, Ingham began to preach, first in the churches, then in houses and barns, yards and open fields. Soon he won a considerable following, and by mid-August his societies numbered about forty.²⁰ He was assisted by John Brown, and in July Jacob Rogers visited and preached. The following month Ingham could report that Rogers' preaching at the market cross in Nottingham had led to the founding of a society there.²¹

The Authority of the Fetter Lane Society

The clergymen who had thus been sent out to these different areas of the country corresponded very frequently with the Fetter Lane Society in London, and not merely to report on their progress. It is clear that all those who were out of London had agreed to be bound by the Society's decisions on certain very important matters. When Wesley rebuked Whitefield for inviting two London members to assist him in Bristol, despite the London society's opposition, he asked, 'Is it well for you or me to give the least hint of setting up our will or judgment against that of our whole society?'²² Whitefield replied, 'I thank you most heartily for your kind rebuke. I can only say it was too tender.' Nonetheless he had 'a word or two to offer in defence of my behaviour'. In the same letter his request for Wesley to succeed him in Bristol also acknowledged that it was for the society to decide, but in this case he had anticipated its decision by advertising Wesley's arrival in the press. He did, however, ask for advice in another matter, as did his companion Seward on other occasions.²³ As mother society, the Fetter Lane Society responded in May to a request from Dummer for a ruling on the case of a man who had married his deceased wife's sister.²⁴

¹⁸. AB44.A3: (W.Holland?), 'Characteristics of the Yorkshire Societies', c.1744; R13.A17.22: Ingham to J. Thorold, 28 Apr. 1738.

¹⁹. R13.A17.23: Ingham to Thorold, 13 Aug. 1738; R13.A17.24: Ingham to Z, etc., 29 Sept. 1738.

²⁰. AB88.A3.14.6: Ingham to Hutton, 9 Feb.; Fu.376-381,384: Memoirs; AB101.A3.4.13: Seward to Hutton, 11 Mar.; AB88.A3.14.10: Ingham to Hutton, 17 Apr. *sub* 3 Apr; AB88.A3.14.12: Ingham to Hutton, 15 May; Eng.MSS.1062: W.Batty, 'An Account of Benjamin Ingham and his Work'; G.Whitefield, *Letters*, i (Edinburgh, 1976), pp.62f: lxx, 14 Aug.

²¹. Eng.MSS.1076.21: T.Moore, 'Beginnings of the Revival in Yorkshire'; Eng.MSS.1062: *ut supra*; AB88.A3.14.16: Ingham to Hutton, 19 Aug.; Fu.377: M. E.Hemingway (d.1777).

²². *Letters*, i, 610f: JW to Whitefield, 20 Mar.

²³. *ibid.*, 611f: Whitefield to JW, 22 Mar.; AB101.A3.4.5: Seward to Hutton, 22 Feb.

²⁴. *HH44*: 16 May.

Meanwhile in London the society continued to grow. By the end of January eighty men and a number of women were organised in bands, and the society's influence spread much more widely. Those who sometimes attended the meetings included Selina, Countess of Huntingdon.²⁵ John Wesley still spoke in many religious societies, addressing fifteen different groups each week by late February.²⁶ At least six of these were run by members of the Fetter Lane group. These dependent societies, of which some were already in existence before May 1738 and others were first mentioned during the summer, did not demand the same level of commitment as that required at Fetter Lane. They were therefore much more open in membership and frequently far larger than the Fetter Lane Society. Even allowing for Wesley's exaggerations, it can be accepted that several hundred were often present at some of their meetings. Charles Wesley continued to spend a good deal of time in Islington, where another dependent society had been formed, meeting in a room set aside in Stonehouse's vicarage.²⁷

Moravian Influence increases

Many members of the Society were increasingly eager for Moravian guidance, including John Thorold, who had resumed his leading role now that he was living in London again.²⁸ It was he who visited the Moravians Richter and Piesch and told them that he wished they could speak English well enough to work with the bands. Richter offered his services, but it is not clear how much he was able to do.²⁹ The growing Moravian influence was further strengthened when a third Moravian, Henry Cossart, arrived in London on 20th January on his way to visit Bishop Wilson on the Isle of Man.³⁰ Although he could speak English fluently, during his twelve days in London he displayed the typical Moravian reluctance to become involved in the English religious scene. Nonetheless he was once induced to accompany Richter to an English men's band as his interpreter, and managed to converse during his stay with all the leading figures of the society.³¹ In his published *Journal* John Wesley made no reference to Cossart's presence in London, as he had mentioned neither Richter nor Piesch. His diary records that he was with Cossart on the days of his arrival and departure, but does not make it clear that he was not only one of the eight who went to see the Moravian visitor off, but actually accompanied him on the first five miles of the journey.³²

²⁵ R13.A14.3: Cossart to Moravian Church, 6 Feb., *sub* 4 Feb. (N.S.); (A.C.H.Seymour), *Selina Countess of Huntingdon*, i (London, 1839), p.19.

²⁶ *Letters*, i, 601ff: JW to Whitefield and Seward, 26 Feb.

²⁷ *Byrom*, p.215; *CWJ*: 11 Feb.

²⁸ R13.A17.27: Ingham to Töltshig, 22 Jan.

²⁹ RD: 23 Jan.

³⁰ R13.A14.3: *ut supra*, *sub* 31 Jan. (N.S.).

³¹ R13.A14.1: Cossart to ?, 9 Feb. (N.S.).

³² *JWJ*: 20 Jan., 1 Feb.; R13.A14.8: Cossart to Moravian Church, 17 July, *sub* 12 Feb. *cf.* '1738', p.150f.

An important feature of Moravian life was living in community. This also the Fetter Lane Society was eager to imitate, and a plan was made at the beginning of March to take a house in Islington where members could experiment with community life. Whitefield opposed the plan, arguing that it would encourage servants to leave their employment and would grow into a new congregation separate from the established church.³³ Nevertheless a house in the Cambridge road was taken, and named 'Shiloh'.³⁴ It was first mentioned by John Wesley in his diary for 22nd March, and on the same day Whitefield, having heard that the house had been taken, wrote accepting the decision and wishing the project well.³⁵

The next Moravian visitor was Zinzendorf himself. Returning from his visit to the West Indies, he arrived in Dover on 9th April and departed for Amsterdam a fortnight later.³⁶ In London he had discussions with the leaders of the Fetter Lane Society, visiting the meeting room itself on Monday 16th April for a question-and-answer session with the members.³⁷ His contacts were not confined to the Fetter Lane circle, however, for the non-juror John Byrom was taken to see him by a friend who was among the count's Quaker acquaintances, and was impressed.³⁸

Crisis

It was at this time that troubles began to surface which were to bring the society, not yet quite a year old, to its first crisis. Some of the members began to express views which would inevitably lead to separation from the Church of England. Already at the end of February Charles Wesley had 'cautioned (the bands) against schism', a line endorsed by Whitefield, who urged a friend a month later to 'keep close to Mr Wesley, Bray, etc.', since 'they are in the right'.³⁹ In mid-April we find Charles Wesley attempting to combat the views of John Shaw, a founder member, who rejected Christian priesthood, arguing that 'he himself could baptise and administer the other sacrament as well as any man.' These radical views were contagious, and on Good Friday Charles Wesley recorded, 'John Bray himself, that pillar of our Church, begins to shake.'⁴⁰

Rejection of the Church of England and its priesthood had already spread beyond London and affected an important personality in the

³³. AB106.A3.14.33: Whitefield to F.L.S., 14 Mar.; cf. AB101.A3.4.13: Seward to Hutton, 11 Mar.

³⁴. Esther Hopson, later married to John West, was one of the first residents: *M*. E.S. West (d.31.12.94).

³⁵. AB101.A3.4.17: Whitefield to F.L.S., 22 Mar.

³⁶. A.G.Spangenberg, *Zinzendorf* (Barby, 1773-5), p.1186; *Byrom*, p.242.

³⁷. *CWJ*: 15,21,22, 16 Apr.

³⁸. *Byrom*, *loc.cit.*

³⁹. *CWJ*: 28 Feb.; AB105.A3.14.30: Whitefield to J.Husbands, 22 Mar.

⁴⁰. Charles Metcalf was also temporarily influenced by such views: *CWJ*: 18,20,21 Apr.

movement. Arriving in Oxford the next day, Whitefield was shocked to hear that 'three of our Christian brethren' had been driven to 'deny Christ's visible Church on earth', and that under their influence Charles Kinchin had resigned his fellowship at Corpus Christi and intended also to relinquish the living of Dummer.⁴¹ Both Whitefield and a fellow Holy Club member, James Hervey, wrote to dissuade him, their letters indicating that they shared the widespread but unfounded fear that he was intending not just to resign his living, but to separate from the Established Church.⁴² In fact Zinzendorf, who had met Kinchin in Oxford a few days before, had already removed his scruples, which concerned ecclesiastical robes and what he later recognised as similar trifles. On the count's advice he had returned to his parish and soon repented of having resigned his fellowship.⁴³ On Wednesday 25th April Whitefield and Howel Harris reached London in time for the weekly conference at Fetter Lane, where they advocated the expulsion of Shaw from the Society.⁴⁴ A week later Whitefield could record after the Wednesday meeting, 'Our brethren who have fallen into errors have left us voluntarily.'⁴⁵

It was on 27th April, however, that Whitefield himself began to breach the order of the Church of England in London as he already had in Bristol, by preaching in the open air without a licence.⁴⁶ On the Saturday he did so again, but this time when he had finished, a member of the Society named Bowers got up to speak. Charles Wesley tried to dissuade him, because he was a layman, and when he failed, led many of the crowd away with him in disgust.⁴⁷ The issue of lay preaching came up in the Fetter Lane conference on 16th May, when Whitefield supported Charles Wesley in his opposition to its espousal by Shaw and William Fish.⁴⁸ To demonstrate their allegiance to the Church of England, Wesley and Whitefield led 'the best part of our Society' in receiving communion at St.Paul's the following Sunday.⁴⁹

⁴¹. *GWJ*: 21 Apr.

⁴². *GWJ*: 22 Apr.: Whitefield to Kinchin. L.Tyerman, *The Oxford Methodists* (London, 1873), pp.220ff; J.Hervey to C.Kinchin, 18 Apr.

⁴³. R13.A18.4: C.Kinchin to Z, 7 Aug. 1739. Whitefield heard on 30 April 'that Mr Kinchin had got over his scruples' (*GWJ*).

⁴⁴. *GWJ*, *CWJ*: 25 Apr.

⁴⁵. *GWJ*: 2 May.

⁴⁶. *ibid.*: 27 Apr.

⁴⁷. *CWJ*: 28 Apr. A.Dallimore, *George Whitefield*, i (London, 1970), p.287, cites no reference for his statement that some Fetter Lane brethren had already attempted to preach at Moorfields in imitation of Whitefield's action at Bristol. The location and the broken table resemble the account of Whitefield's own first preaching at Moorfields, while *Holland* ascribes an attempt to preach there to the summer. Curnock (*JWJ*: index) was surely right to identify Bowers with George Bowes, later a leading member of the London Moravian congregation.

⁴⁸. *CWJ*: 16 May.

⁴⁹. *CWJ*, *GWJ*: 20 May.

It would be quite wrong to suppose that this rejection of the Church of England on the part of a section of the Society resulted from the growing Moravian influence.⁵⁰ Zinzendorf had been shocked by what he had found when he visited London, and impressed his opposition to any separation from the Established Church upon Charles Wesley.⁵¹ It cannot be a coincidence that Richard Viney's *Letter from an English Brother of the Moravian Persuasion in Holland to the Methodists in England, lamenting the Irregularity of their Proceedings*, published in London in September, was dated at Heerendyk on the day after Zinzendorf's two week stay there came to an end.⁵² The count's share in the preparation of the letter was probably considerable; he certainly inspired it and shared its sentiments. Its main thrust was that it was wrong 'to persuade People to separate from the Churches they are brought up in, and begin new sects.'⁵³ That the author was the first Englishman to have been received into the Moravian Church was no paradox,⁵⁴ for Zinzendorf saw his *Brüdergemeine* as a fellowship of members of the various churches and abhorred the suggestion that it should itself become a new sect.

Moravian opposition to 'disorders' was also expressed in the letter. Here the Wesleys and Whitefield were under attack as much as their opponents, since Viney's complaints against their 'preaching at Times and Places to which ye are not called' and raising 'a Mob in Moorfields' imply opposition to field preaching in general, not merely when undertaken by laymen.⁵⁵ It was to remain an important difference between Moravians and Methodists that Moravians did not typically preach in the fields. Zinzendorf was certainly against the practice, and Wesley attributed Archbishop Potter's dissatisfaction with the Methodists particularly to Molther's having, 'in the name of the Moravian Church, told his grace their disapprobation... in particular of their field preaching.' When the Moravian Church was established in England, its 'labourers' were generally forbidden to do so.⁵⁶

The French Prophets

It was indeed to another movement, that of the French Prophets, and not to the Moravians, that the troublesome section of the society was

⁵⁰ As implied by G.A.Wauer, *Die Anfänge der Brüderkirche in England* (Leipzig, 1900), p.104: 'Aber bald bekam die Gegenpartei Verstärkung durch Brüder, die aus Herrnhut nach London kamen.' (But soon the opposing party was strengthened by brethren who came from Herrnhut to London.)

⁵¹ *CWJ*, 21 Apr.

⁵² *op. cit.*, p.16.

⁵³ *ibid.*, p.4.

⁵⁴ Eng.MS5.1063.1: Libbey's notes on Viney, referring to a Synod report of 1744.

⁵⁵ Viney, *op. cit.*, pp.12,4.

⁵⁶ *Letters*, ii, 49ff: JW to J.A.Steinmetz, (? 7 Jan. 1741); J. Orcibal, 'The Theological Originality of John Wesley' in Davies and Rupp (eds.), *History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, i (London, 1965), p.98 incorrectly supposed that Wesley 'adopted from Zinzendorf's followers ... their "apostolic practices", in particular open-air preaching'.

drawn, but ironically it may have been through the Moravians, either directly or indirectly, that Fetter Lane members were introduced to these spiritual descendants of the Camisards of the Cevennes.⁵⁷ Isaac Hollis, a gentleman with mercantile interests, had visited Herrnhut in September 1723, when the settlement was only one year old, and in 1728 the first Moravians to come to England returned the visit.⁵⁸ In October 1732 Hollis became a French Prophet.⁵⁹ When August Gottlieb Spangenberg came to England two years later he made contact with Hollis, who had by now moved out of the capital to High Wycombe, and Hollis was very generous to the party of Moravians travelling to Georgia.⁶⁰ In Rotterdam an English merchant Benjohan Furly, whose father had been a French Prophet, gave Spangenberg a recommendation to his brother John, a merchant in London.⁶¹ John Furly introduced Spangenberg to Francis Wynantz, a Danzig-born merchant who had become a French Prophet a few months before Hollis.⁶² Wynantz gave hospitality and assistance to Spangenberg and to the first party of Moravian colonists, and acted as the Moravian agent in England after their departure.⁶³ His friend William Weintraub, who had become a French Prophet in 1730,⁶⁴ was another of the Moravians' London friends, and his wife showed great kindness to their second party of colonists while visiting her father in Hamburg.⁶⁵

Both Wynantz and the Weintraubs met Zinzendorf when he came to London in 1737.⁶⁶ It was therefore natural that they and Hollis should meet the Moravian visitors the following year, Böhler and Neißer visiting Hollis on their way back from Oxford to London.⁶⁷ Weintraub and Hollis at least continued to frequent the German meetings held by Richter during the autumn.⁶⁸ It may have been the close contacts between the Fetter Lane Society and the German group, with these

⁵⁷. See H.Schwartz, *The French Prophets* (London, 1980).

⁵⁸. *JHD*: 25 Feb. 1750; R13.A1.10: F.M.Ziegenhagen to Z, 31 July 1728.

⁵⁹. Schwartz, *op. cit.*, Appendix I, no.510; *cf.* *A Letter from the Revd. Mr.Sergeant* (Boston, 1743).

⁶⁰. R14.A2.36: *ut supra*; MAFSt.5A3.19: F.M.Ziegenhagen to G.A.Francke, 17 June 1736; R14.A2.49: I.Hollis to D.Nitschmann, 1 Feb. 1734/5.

⁶¹. Schwartz, *loc. cit.* no.220; *cf.* J.F.Sachse, *Benjamin Furly* (Philadelphia, 1895); A.L.Fries, *The Moravians in Georgia* (Raleigh, N.C., 1905), p.42; R14.A2.36: Spangenberg to Z, 31 Dec. 1734/10 Jan. 1735. *cf.* '1738', p.126.

⁶². R14.A6a.4: Spangenberg's Diary: 18/29 Dec. 1734; Schwarz, *op. cit.*, p.198; Appendix I, no.508.

⁶³. R14.A2.49: *ut supra*; R14.A2.55-58, R14.A3c.29-36: F.Wynantz to Z, Mar.-Apr. 1735, July 1735-Feb. 1737.

⁶⁴. Schwartz, *op. cit.*, Appendix I, no.503.

⁶⁵. A.L.Fries, *op. cit.*, p.92; *cf.* R14.A6c.1: Bishop D.Nitschmann's Diary: 26 Aug. (N.S.) 1735, R14.A6d.17: J.A. Dober's Diary.

⁶⁶. R14.A3c.36: Wynantz to Z, 25 Feb. 1736/7.

⁶⁷. *BD*: 4 Apr.; R13.A4.5: W.Neißer to Z, 18 Apr. 1738, *sub* 4 Apr.

⁶⁸. R14.A4.55: Richter to Watteville, 20 Sept. 1738, *sub* 14,15 Sept; *RD*: 19 Aug, 30 Sept., etc. Hollis remained in contact with the revival, subscribing one guinea to the building of Cennick's house at Tytherton in May 1743: AB131.8.1: Lamb's Acre Account.

three French Prophets on its fringe, which brought the Fetter Lane members into contact with the Prophets.

Even more ironically, Moravian responsibility for the acquaintance may on the other hand have been indirect, occurring through John Wesley himself. It was probably the Moravians who recommended Wesley to become acquainted with Hollis, since Wesley's first recorded visit to Hollis took place only six days after his return from Germany. The next month he visited Hollis twice in High Wycombe, and in January the two met twice in London.⁶⁹ Charles Wesley had also stayed with Hollis in December, but his experience disinclined him to further meetings:

(Mr Hollis) entertained me with his French Prophets... While we were undressing, he fell into violent agitations, and gobbled like a turkey-cock. I was frightened, and began exorcising him... He soon recovered out of his fit of inspiration. I prayed, and went to bed, not half liking my bedfellow. I did not sleep very sound with Satan so near me.⁷⁰

John Wesley remained more open-minded. It is not clear whether it was Hollis or fellow Fetter Lane members who pressed him to visit a French Prophetess, as he did on 28th January in the company of six of the Society, including Bray and Mrs Lydia Sellers, an adherent. Wesley was not convinced by the prophetess' convulsions and claims to speak by direct inspiration, but two or three of his friends were.⁷¹

Things came to a head at the beginning of June. Charles Wesley thought Bowers and Bray 'drunk with the spirit of delusion'. At the conference on Wednesday 6th June Shaw 'pleaded for his spirit of prophecy'; he and Fish 'declared themselves no longer members of the church of England'. Visiting Bray the next day, Charles Wesley found 'the Prophetess Lavington' and 'the Prophet Wise', the former sitting between Bowers and Mrs Sellers. The others knelt when she prayed 'addressing to Bray with particular encomiums', but Wesley's reaction was to spend the next two days finding out about her 'lewd life and conversation' and warning members of the society against her. When he read the society the facts about the prophetess, Bray spoke for her; two days later he even defended her when Wise admitted cohabiting with her, but Bowers admitted that he had been mistaken.⁷²

A letter asking John Wesley to return to London and sort out the confusion reached him on 11th June, and he set out for the capital, arriving in time for the Wednesday conference.⁷³ Bray now joined Bowers in repenting of his attachment to the prophetess, but Shaw and Shepherd Wolf, another founder member of the Society, evidently did

⁶⁹ *JWJ*: 22 Sept., 9,17 Oct. 1738; 12,17 Jan.1739.

⁷⁰ *CWJ*: 11 Dec. 1738.

⁷¹ *JWJ*: 28 Jan; 8,10,19,22 Jan.

⁷² *CWJ*: 5-12 June.

⁷³ The letter was the latest of a series, and came possibly from John Edmunds or else from Lady Huntingdon: *JWJ*: 11, 13 June; *cf.* 16 July 1740; (A.C.H.Seymour), *op. cit.* n.25, i, 36.

not. Hall proposed their expulsion, which was agreed *nem. con.* on the grounds that 'they disowned themselves members of the Church of England'.⁷⁴ Whitefield wrote to the society at this time warning against the teachings of those who had come under the influence of the French Prophets.⁷⁵

Mrs Sellers returned to Fetter Lane as a Prophetess in 1744, but there is no evidence that any other member of the Society actually joined the French Prophet movement, however much they may have been influenced by them during this brief period.⁷⁶ In fact, as we have seen, Bray and Bowers soon repented of their attachment to them, although Bowers continued to preach in the open air; Wolf also came to believe that he had been led astray by Shaw.⁷⁷

Another Moravian Visit

Moravian influence on developments in London was again strengthened when Henry Cossart arrived back in London on 29th June after his visit to the Isle of Man.⁷⁸ Both Wesley brothers were out of town,⁷⁹ so that in the confused situation it was naturally to Cossart that members of the society turned. Initially he thought that the English had 'excluded two of the best of their society for not wishing to submit themselves to the clergy of the Anglican Church', and reported that both Bray and Wolf wanted to go to the Moravian Church on the Continent. Cossart felt obliged to stay longer than planned in order to help overcome the confusion, but obviously knew that Zinzendorf might not approve: he wrote that he had not felt able to refuse requests for advice, and would be careful not to increase the divisions in the society.⁸⁰

⁷⁴. *CWJ*: 13 June.

⁷⁵. G. Whitefield, *Letters*, i, pp.50ff: xlvi, 12 June.

⁷⁶. *MCH*: F.L.Daily Helpers' Conference, 25 June, 3 July 1744. This was strongly implied by Schwartz, *op. cit.* Appendix I, a 'Chronological Profile of All French Prophets', gives each member a serial number and a date in a column headed 'Entry'. For the earlier years these dates appear to be derived from membership lists, but for 1739 that cannot be the case. Between 1736 (four entries) and 1746 (one) there are just ten entries, all for 1739; some - Plewit, Lavington and Wise - were certainly French prophets, but a closer examination of their 'entry' dates reveals that these are in fact the dates when they first met Charles or John Wesley, as recorded in their *Journals*. Sellers, Shaw, Bray, Bowers, Fish and Wolf are also listed as members, but their 'entry' dates also derive from passages in the *Journals*, some of which may suggest contact with the French Prophets, but certainly do not indicate membership. Sellers (but not Bray or any of the others present) is listed as entering the movement on the day she went with John Wesley to visit the prophetess, Shaw on the day of his 'wild rambling talk against the Christian priesthood'; Bray on the day when he 'began to shake', Bowers when he preached in Islington churchyard, Fish when he and Bowers espoused lay preaching in the Society conference and Wolf when he was expelled from Fetter Lane (*JWJ*: 28 Jan., *CWJ*: 17,20,28 Apr., 16 May, 13 June). There is in fact no evidence that any but Sellers joined the French prophets, and all the dates given by Schwartz are quite irrelevant in this context.

⁷⁷. R13.A14.12: Cossart to Moravian Church, 8 Sept., *sub* 31 July (N.S.).

⁷⁸. R13.A14.8: Cossart to Moravian Church, 17 July. (R13.A14.12 gives 30 June/11 July.)

⁷⁹. Charles had left that day for a week in Oxford, John having returned to Bristol on 18 June: *CWJ*, *JWJ*.

⁸⁰. R13.A14.9: Cossart to Z, 17 July.

Zinzendorf, who still regarded himself as a Lutheran, was much less well-disposed to the 'separatists' than the Reformed Cossart, as his reply made clear.⁸¹ Having been in London at the time when the troubles first surfaced, Zinzendorf was more aware of their true nature than Cossart, who needed two weeks in London to appreciate that 'the French Prophets and other enthusiasts' had been interfering with the English brethren.⁸² As we have seen, Zinzendorf had not been at all pleased with developments in London, including open-air preaching; this explains his instruction to his agent not to stay in London, and his comment 'Je crois qu'il faut laisser faire les Anglais.'⁸³

Cossart and Piesch were also consulted by Bowers. He had been pelted with rotten eggs for preaching in the market place at High Wycombe, and asked whether he should continue.⁸⁴ Whitefield had declared that he rejoiced in Bowers' treatment, hoping that all 'who run before they are called' would be similarly treated,⁸⁵ but Piesch, who was still in London, gave a more equivocal answer.⁸⁶

Cossart's contacts extended beyond the Fetter Lane Society: he met Byrom no fewer than five times, persuading him to write to Zinzendorf, and was introduced by Charles Wesley to William Law.⁸⁷ He was, of course, in demand to address the meetings and bands of the Fetter Lane society and its dependents, such as that at Islington, but was also invited to expound in the religious society which met in the vestry of the Savoy Church.⁸⁸ As Moravian influence continued to be strong, so also the desire to visit the Continental congregations arose repeatedly; Cossart noted that the number in the German Society (which still existed) was diminishing since members were continually crossing to the Continent.⁸⁹ On 11th July a Moravian returning from Georgia took Bowers and another London member across with him.⁹⁰ During his first week in London, Cossart confirmed one young man in his desire to visit Zinzendorf, but on 10th July Charles Wesley 'stopped Okely, just going to Germany; and brought him quite off his design'.⁹¹

⁸¹. R13.A14.10: Z to Cossart, 7 Aug.

⁸². R13.A14.12: *ut supra*, sub 25 July (N.S.).

⁸³. R13.A14.10.

⁸⁴. R13.A14.12: sub 25 July (N.S.).

⁸⁵. ABIOL.A3.4.33: Whitefield to Hutton, 7 July.

⁸⁶. Richter had presumably returned with Zinzendorf.

⁸⁷. R13.A14.12: sub 21, 27, 29 July, 7, 24, 25 Aug (N.S.), *cf. Byrom*, pp. 253f, 265f, 268; *CWJ*: 14 Aug., *cf. Byrom*, sub 26/28 Aug.

⁸⁸. R13.A14.12: sub 20 Aug. (N.S.).

⁸⁹. R13.A14.11: Cossart to Z, 21 Aug. *cf. '1738'*, pp. 127ff., 142, 150f.

⁹⁰. R13.A14.12 sub 22 July (N.S.). For Nowers, who returned from Herrnhag as an opponent of the Moravians in 1740, see R13.A9.25: Hutton to Z, 14 Mar. 1740 (*Benham*, pp. 45ff.), *JWJ*: 19 June 1740 (and n.1).

⁹¹. R13.A14.9: *ut supra*; *CWJ*: 10 July. Here, and in *JWJ* and *CWJ* in the spring and autumn of 1739, the 'Okely' mentioned is probably John; Holland stated that he left for the Continent with Cossart. The letters identifiable from the copy of F. Okely, *Dawnings of the Everlasting Gospel Light* (Northampton, 1775) in Bedford C.R.O. as written by John Okely indicate that in 1741 he returned from Germany and lived as a Moravian in London.

Another of those who consulted Cossart was James Hutton, who wanted a wife 'for good reasons concerning his present state' and had been advised by friends in the society to marry. Cossart advised him not to, and thereupon Hutton suggested that he should go to the Moravian congregations on the Continent, arguing that he needed to get away for a time from his parents, shop and friends. As usual, Cossart 'made it difficult for him', but soon became convinced that this was the right course.⁹² Whitefield, William Seward and Wesley wrote urging him to do nothing in haste and to obtain the consent of the society, their letters indicating strong reservations about the idea, but on 25th July Hutton's parents gave their consent, and he left immediately, accompanied by Seward's brother Edmund.⁹³

Three weeks later Cossart himself set out for Germany, having received his instructions not to delay any longer in England.⁹⁴ He took with him the Wesleys' friend Charles Metcalf, Bernard Hartley, who had been involved in the Society since its early days, Matthew Malkin, a barber, and Conrad Kilian and Conrad Weidling, two members of the German Society, as well as Margaret Groom, the 15 or 16 year-old daughter of a bookbinder who thought that the Moravians would give her a good upbringing. As had previously happened to Böhler and Schullius, Cossart was 'given a present of' a boy (probably a twelve year old) the son of a London wigmaker.⁹⁵

Moravian Intruders?

Charles Wesley himself left London for Bristol the next day.⁹⁶ Both Wesley brothers now had commitments elsewhere: John spent September in London, but neither brother was there during August or October. In their absence the society was to develop still further.

In the Preface to the *Second Extract* of his *Journal*, dated 29th September 1740, John Wesley wrote,

God... was pleased by me to open the intercourse between the English and the Moravian Church... But about September 1739, while my brother and I were absent, certain men crept in among them (his followers in London) unawares, greatly troubling and subverting their souls... And this doctrine (of stillness) ... has been taught as the doctrine of the Moravian Church... it is my bounden duty to clear the Moravians from this aspersion.

This polemical purpose underlay Wesley's publication of this second part of his *Journal* only two months after his withdrawal from the Fetter

⁹² R13.A14.9, R13.A14.12 *sub* 15 July (N.S.).

⁹³ *ibid.*, *sub* 5 Aug., (N.S.); AB101.A3.4.34: Seward & JW to Hutton, 9 July. AB106.A3.14.39: Whitefield to Hutton, 9 July. *cf.* AB101.A3.4.38: W.Seward to Hutton, 18 July; not Benjamin, *pace* Byrom, p.255, n.3; MCH: F.L. Daily Helpers' Conf., 24 July 1742; AB101.A3.3: E.Seward to J.Hutton, 29 Mar. 1739. *Benham's* date (p.42) of 15 Apr. for Hutton's departure is thus incorrect.

⁹⁴ R13.A14.12: *sub* 26 Aug. (N.S.).

⁹⁵ *ibid.*: *sub* 27 Aug. (N.S.); *cf.* 21 Aug. (N.S.); R13.A14.11: *ut supra*.

⁹⁶ *CWJ*: 16 Aug.

Lane Society. The assertions and implications of his preface can be summarised as follows:

1. that the Moravians who arrived in the autumn of 1739 represented a new element, Moravian influence having previously been negligible and mediated through John Wesley himself;
2. that the doctrine of stillness was a novelty introduced into London by these Moravians at that time;
3. that stillness was not a doctrine of the Moravian Church (Wesley may have made this last assertion only for the purpose of polemic, but it has been taken literally by most subsequent English writers);

but these assertions and implications, made in a publication whose contents and timing were determined by its polemical purpose, are not historically accurate.⁹⁷

In answer to the first point, it has been shown elsewhere that Wesley's presence in the inaugural meeting of the Fetter Lane Society was fortuitous and that, contrary to what has been thought previously, there had been a continuous Moravian presence in London from February 1738 onwards.⁹⁸ This article has demonstrated how Moravian influence grew during the first three quarters of 1739, and that Wesley excluded from the *Third Extract* of his *Journal* references to the Moravian residents in London and those who visited in 1739.⁹⁹ Wesley had spent only three of the society's first eight months in London and was present for only three of the next eight. From the outset Moravian influence on the society had been independent of Wesley, continuous and growing, so that the Moravians who arrived in the autumn of 1739 were no intruders.

Töltshig and Viney

A new stage in the development of Moravian involvement in England did indeed commence in October 1739. The Conference in Marienborn had decided in September, a year after Ingham's original request, that Töltshig's journey to England could be considered,¹⁰⁰ and on 24th October he arrived in London with Hutton. Soon he left for Yorkshire with William Delamotte and Joseph Verding, arriving there on 4th

⁹⁷. When challenged about the preface by Spangenberg, Charles Wesley said that his brother had been speaking of some English people who had misunderstood Molther and had said such things ('von einigen Engelländern redte, die unsern Bruder Molther unrecht verstanden und dergleichen Dinge gesagt hätten') - R13.Cl.I: London diary extract, 12 Apr. 1741 (N.S.). The mention of the date and of persons coming from outside make this interpretation unlikely, however. *The Fourth Extract* was also dominated by Wesley's concern to justify his position *vis à vis* the Moravians. The breach was its explicit theme, it covered the period from November 1739, began with a letter to the Moravian Church (dated 24 June 1744) and ended with the report of Wesley's conversation with Zinzendorf on 3 Sept. 1741, followed by two critical letters written earlier and a concluding summary of his criticisms.

⁹⁸. '1738', pp.137, 127, 144f., 147, 150f.

⁹⁹. Contrast this interpretation with that of E.Langton, *History of the Moravian Church* (London, 1956), pp.119f.

¹⁰⁰. R2.A2.2b: Conference of the *Pilgergemeinde*, 17 Sept. 1739; cf. n.19.

November.¹⁰¹ Töltzschig had not been sent to join Piesch in working with the remnant of the German society (which probably numbered few more than the sixteen Cossart had found in Richter's care at the beginning of 1739¹⁰²) but was the first Moravian with a commission to work with English people in England, although as yet only as assistant to Ingham, a clergyman of the established church. On 18th November a second member of the Moravian Church arrived in London - Richard Viney, the first Englishman to be received. Like Töltzschig, he had a commission to preach to Englishmen: he was the response to Böhler's suggestion that a brother be sent to Oxford.¹⁰³

Molther and Spangenberg

Töltzschig and Viney were the first Moravians to be sent to England to work with Englishmen, but once again chance was to be most important in determining how Moravian involvement in England would develop. It was *en route* for Pennsylvania that Philipp Heinrich Molther arrived in London on 18th October,¹⁰⁴ a week before Töltzschig and Hutton, but his ministry while he was in England was to have much more dramatic results than that of Töltzschig. Molther quickly discovered that no ship would be sailing for Pennsylvania until at least the middle of January, and at the end of the year the Thames froze up, the ice only clearing in March; these circumstances allowed Molther to become involved in the life of the Fetter Lane Society.¹⁰⁵

Likewise passing through, but in the other direction, Spangenberg arrived in London on the same day as Töltzschig and Hutton.¹⁰⁶ There he met Molther for the first time and discovered he was out of favour: the twenty-four year old was to replace him as Moravian leader in America. Spangenberg's biographer Gerhard Reichel thought that it was probably this shock that caused him to fall ill within the next couple of days.¹⁰⁷ Although he was well enough by 4th November to preach at Fetter Lane, this chance meeting and his ensuing illness probably contributed to his delay in setting out for Marienborn, which he reached on 9th December.¹⁰⁸ During his brief stay of perhaps five or six weeks, Spangenberg was also to contribute to the important developments which took

¹⁰¹. Eng.MSS.1062: W.Batty, 'Benjamin Ingham'; *Holland, Hutton I*. For Verding, see '1738', pp.140,142.

¹⁰². R13.A14.3: Cossart to Moravian Church, 6 Feb. 1739, *sub* 1 Feb. (N.S.).

¹⁰³. R13.A9.26b: R.Viney, diary; cf. n.54; *BD*: 14 Mar. This was anticipated in the dedication of the *Losungen* (watchwords) for 1739: D.Cranz, *Ancient and Modern History of the Brethren* (Eng.tr: B.La Trobe, London, 1780), p.237.

¹⁰⁴. He arrived with Hagen, travelling to Georgia, and Joseph Verding, who had left for the Continent with Wesley in 1738. *M*: Molther: *Nachrichten aus der Brüdergemeine*, iv (1873), 603ff.; (cf. *Benham*, pp.53f.); *Holland*; H.-W.Erbe, 'Philipp Heinrich Molther', *Unitas Fratrum*, xi (1982).

¹⁰⁵. R21.A106.42b: Molther to Herrnhag Single Brethren, 28 Oct. 1739; *M*: Molther.

¹⁰⁶. R13.A3.21: Hutton to Z, 27 Oct. 1739 (*Benham*, pp.44f.).

¹⁰⁷. *ibid.*; G.Reichel, *Spangenberg* (Tübingen, 1906), pp.116ff.

¹⁰⁸. *JWf*. Reichel (*loc.cit.*).

place. Three days after meeting Spangenberg, Hutton wrote to Zinzendorf, asking that Spangenberg be allowed to remain and preach in London; his ability to speak English (demonstrated at an English lovefeast the day after his arrival) and the fact that his future was uncertain were probably the reasons for Hutton choosing him rather than Molther.¹⁰⁹ Zinzendorf's reply did not rule out the possibility that Spangenberg might be sent to England, but said that he should first return to Germany.¹¹⁰

Just as the impression given by Wesley that with these Moravian arrivals a Moravian influence was introduced into the society for the first time since 1738 is misleading, so any suggestion that they represented an attempted Moravian 'takeover' of the society must also be resisted. Viney and Töltzschig were not intended to stay in London, while Spangenberg and Molther had planned only to pass through, their longer stays being the result of chance circumstances.¹¹¹

Stillness

Molther was shocked by what he found at Fetter Lane: the groaning, crying, contortions and strange gestures at the meeting were, he remarked in a letter written ten days after his arrival, 'enough to bring one out in a cold sweat.'¹¹² The first time he attended he had been 'alarmed and frightened' when he heard 'their sighing, groaning, whimpering and howling', which they called 'proof of the Spirit and power of God'.¹¹³ The Moravian stress on 'stillness' should be seen as a response to this disorderly situation. According to this doctrine those who did not yet have faith should 'be still', that is, abstain from communion and even from excessive prayer, reading of scripture and attendance at church. Wesley's dissension from it was to be the occasion of his withdrawal from the society nine months later.¹¹⁴

Molther has usually been credited with the introduction of the doctrine, but it was Spangenberg who spoke, the first time he attended a lovefeast in London, 'of the deep repose to be found in the blood of Christ'.¹¹⁵ It was Spangenberg again who spoke at Fetter Lane on 4th November, Wesley's first Sunday back in London, exhorting his hearers 'to lie still in His hand', and Spangenberg with whom Wesley had a long conference about the doctrine the following Wednesday. Only after

¹⁰⁹ R13.A3.21: *ut supra*.

¹¹⁰ R13.A17.14d: Z to Hutton, (Dec. 1739?) (*Benham*, pp.45f.).

¹¹¹ *pace* E.G.Rupp, *loc. cit.* n.3.

¹¹² R21.A106.42b: *ut supra*: 'daß einem der kalte Schweiß ausbrechen möchte'.

¹¹³ *M. Molther*.

¹¹⁴ The debate has been examined, sometimes in considerable depth, by: G.A.Wauer, *op.cit.* n.50, pp.104ff.; J.E.Hutton, *op.cit.* n.2, pp.296ff.; C.W.Towilson, *Moravian and Methodist* (London, 1957), ch.5; M.Schmidt, *John Wesley*, ii (1) (Eng. tr. N.P.Goldhawk, London, 1971), pp.40ff.; H.-W.Erbe, *op.cit.* n.105. This article will confine itself to considering some of the questions which arise.

¹¹⁵ e.g. Schmidt, *op.cit.*, p.40; R13.A3.21: *ut supra*.

four weeks did Molther, who as yet spoke little English, address a meeting.¹¹⁶

The second claim which can be identified in Wesley's preface is that the doctrine of stillness was a novelty introduced into London by the Moravians who arrived in the autumn of 1739. In the paper which he read to the Fetter Lane Society on the evening of his withdrawal (20th July 1740) he asserted, 'About nine months ago certain of you began to speak contrary to the doctrine we had till then received.'¹¹⁷ The concentration on stillness may indeed have begun with Spangenberg's response to the scenes at Fetter Lane, but the theme was by no means new. As early as the spring of 1738 the four Moravian visitors had told first their German, then their English hearers that they should not try to achieve salvation by their own efforts, by 'works', but simply wait for the gift of faith.¹¹⁸

By April 1739 the ideas for which Wesley later attacked Molther and the others were already current in London. In its most extreme form, the doctrine of stillness could lead those who regarded themselves as not yet saved to neglect prayer and Bible reading. These could be seen as 'works' and some preferred to abandon them rather than run the risk that they might be using them for the wrong reasons, that is, in the hope of achieving saving faith by means of such activity. It is significant that on 17th April Benjamin Ingham wrote to James Hutton, 'You too much neglect Private Prayer; and reading the Scriptures by yourself.'¹¹⁹

Howel Harris

It was the following week that the leading Welsh revivalist Howel Harris arrived in London on his first visit. For the next six weeks he lived with Hutton at the Bible and Sun and, like all members of the revival movement who came to London, attended the meetings in Fetter Lane. His diary records how on 30th April he met an unnamed brother in the street, whose conversation showed him 'how working and striving and doing keep us from Christ, showing how Childlike, as having nothing and quite as fools, we must come to Christ.' This brother too was 'against praying and against communicating', 'for fear of its being in ye End like working'.¹²⁰

Harris, always somewhat suggestible to new influences, was thrown into confusion for several days by his encounter with 'stillness', writing in his diary,

¹¹⁶. *JWJ*: 4, 7 Nov.; *M*: Molther. Wesley's references to 'stillness' begin with Molther because Molther had spoken of it to Mrs Turner, the first person Wesley met on his return to London on 3 Nov. (*JWJ*).

¹¹⁷. *JWJ*.

¹¹⁸. *cf.* '1738', p.128.

¹¹⁹. AB88.A3.14.10: B.Ingham to (J.Hutton), 17 Apr. 1739.

¹²⁰. *HHD*4: 30 Apr. 1739. I am indebted to the Revd. Geraint Tudur for drawing my attention to this entry.

I was afraid to write these convictions down least it was working - I was afraid to pray tho' I had desires put in me least it was doing and (I) should think that I expected God to have Mercy for this act of desire.¹²¹

The next day he wrote, 'I fear I do wrong now, I fear I work when I seek for Thee and look to Thee'.¹²² The following Sunday he 'fear'd to go to ye Sacrament seeing Christ is not in me', though this scruple was overcome by the desire for his weekly communion:

I am more convinc'd of ye absolute impossibility of doing any thing... till Christ comes in - tho' I am not convinced but we ought to use ye means (i.e. communion).¹²³

On the Monday he could summarise his position thus:

Blessed be ye time ye Lord brought me up to London to bring me firstly from striving to believing and second from believing and working to use Duties (i.e. communion) by way of waiting.

His waiting was rewarded with an experience of faith the following day.¹²⁴ Harris had this encounter and the thoughts to which it gave rise over ten days while living in James Hutton's house and attending the Fetter Lane meetings, so it can be assumed that these ideas were already current in the society at that time, six months before Molther and Spangenberg arrived in London. Therefore they should not be credited with their introduction.¹²⁵

The origin of these ideas cannot be ascertained for certain. Harris' experiences fell within the period of the French Prophet crisis, so the Prophets may have been the source. The volatility of several leading members at that time also makes it quite conceivable that they worked out these developments of the theory of stillness for themselves. Nevertheless, although there is no evidence that the unnamed brother mentioned by Harris was a Moravian, several seem to have been in England in May,¹²⁶ and there is good reason to think that Moravians were indeed the source of the doctrine of stillness current in London at this time. This doctrine was neither peculiar to Molther nor even untypical of the Moravian Church. Harris' reference to being 'childlike', and 'quite as fools' is strongly reminiscent of Moravian language, and furthermore, it was 'in seeing some Moravian Letters' that he could 'feel in my soul Desires to be made just such as He would have me be - childlike and

¹²¹ *HHD44*: 30 Apr.

¹²² *ibid.*: 1 May.

¹²³ *ibid.*: 6 May.

¹²⁴ *ibid.*: 7, 8 May.

¹²⁵ *pace* M.Schmidt, *op.cit.*, p.40. Schmidt's derivation of the London stillness from French Quietism on the grounds that 'Molther came from Alsace, which belonged to France' (n.79) also seems improbable. Charles Wesley's comment (*CWF*: 10 Aug. 1739), 'I am continually tempted to leave off preaching, and hide myself like J.Hutchins. I should then be freer from temptation, and at leisure to attend my own improvement', may be another indication of the currency of 'stillness' in Fetter Lane circles before November 1739.

¹²⁶ Whitefield dined on 18 May with 'Several of the Moravian Church' (*GW*) who cannot be identified, and Piesch was still in London. Harris refers to another German on 27 May.

simple'.¹²⁷ Harris later rejoiced 'at the success of the Moravian Church (hearing of it)', prayed for it and wrote approvingly of 'ye German that is in ye Isle of Wight... because he is so full of God'.¹²⁸

To suggest that the origin of this teaching was Moravian is not, however, to imply that its development and expression in London at a time of little direct Moravian supervision accurately reflected the Moravian view. Though the assertion found in Wesley's preface (perhaps meant ironically by him) that stillness was not the doctrine of the Moravian Church is clearly erroneous, it seems likely that the English members of the society went beyond the Moravian position in their development of it.

The Teaching of Spangenberg and Molther

There is in fact little evidence for the content of Spangenberg's and Molther's own teaching. John Wesley's *Journal* records the details of just one conversation with Spangenberg on 7th November and two with Molther, on 31st December and 25th April, while Charles Wesley records a conversation on 22th April, as well as that of 25th April. The only independent report is that of Howel Harris, of a conversation between himself, the Wesleys, Molther and one J. Purdy on 6th June 1740.

According to John Wesley, both Moravians denied that there were degrees of faith, and Molther held that many members of the society had not possessed saving faith when he met them. Both believed that those who did not have faith should 'wait for Christ, and be still'. This matched what Böhler and Neißer had said in 1738.¹²⁹ The difference was on Wesley's part, for at that time he had been ready to accept that he did not have faith, whereas now he refused to accept that this was true of some of his fellow society members. Wesley claimed that Molther had convinced them that they had never had faith, whereas Molther asserted that when speaking to the society members individually he had found that, despite the groanings seen as a proof of the Spirit, most were privately in doubt about their salvation.¹³⁰ It is no longer possible to decide whether Molther had disturbed those who were suggestible, or responded as he felt appropriate to the situation he found.

For Molther and Spangenberg 'being still' meant in particular not receiving the Sacrament. In their second conversation Molther apparently told the Wesleys that 'those who have not a clean heart ought not...

¹²⁷ *HHD*44: 1 May.

¹²⁸ *HHD*45: 27 May.

¹²⁹ Wesley, it is true, had been told to preach faith until he had it, but this may have been a tactical decision reflecting his importance. In any case, preaching, unlike prayer, fasting, Bible reading or communicating, could not be regarded as a means of achieving faith.

¹³⁰ *JWJ*: 3 Nov.; *M*: Molther.

to communicate' and that for those who did, the sacraments were optional, rather than a matter of duty.¹³¹ For such sacramentarians as the Wesleys, the idea of abstention from the Sacrament was foreign, but the views of Molther and Spangenberg in this matter did not in any way go beyond those of the Moravian Church. It must be remembered that the dispute only concerned the use of the sacraments *before* someone had received faith. In excluding such people from communion, the Moravians did not display a low view of the Sacrament; rather, in reserving the communion for those who had achieved a full relationship with God, and furthermore, in barring those who were temporarily in a state of sin, the Moravians rather exhibited a high view of the Eucharist. C.W. Towlson's statement that 'there is no suggestion that the Brethren continued to neglect the means of grace in their general work'¹³² does not go far enough. Neither the Moravians in general nor Molther in particular ever neglected the sacraments, and Molther himself naturally celebrated the Lord's Supper while in London, but only for members of the Moravian Church.¹³³

Wesley regarded the Holy Communion as a 'converting ordinance', pointing as evidence to 'one that had not faith' who 'received it in the Lord's Supper',¹³⁴ but this was a departure from Anglican and primitive catholic tradition. In the Prayer Book Communion service, people were exhorted only to receive communion if they had 'a lively faith' and were warned of the perils of unworthy reception; they were to 'draw near with faith'. The Prayer Book further provided for suspension from communion for grave and open sin without repentance.¹³⁵

If Wesley differed from Anglican formularies on this point, then the Moravian understanding was very comparable with it. Both saw admission to communion as the fruit of a full relationship with God, rather than as a means of initiating that relationship. Just as the early Church did not permit catechumens to be present at the Eucharist, so the Prayer Book reserved communion for those who, being regenerate in Baptism, had received the seal of the Spirit sacramentally in Confirmation, or at least were ready and desirous to be confirmed. Although the Moravians reserved communion for those who had had an experience of faith, both systems are clearly parallel, displaying an underlying

¹³¹. *JWf*: 25 Apr. 1740.

¹³². C.W. Towlson, *op. cit.*, p.90.

¹³³. MCH: Letters from *Unitätsarchiv*, iii: Molther to ?, 8 Jan. 1740; R13.A18.5b: J. Verding to Z, 15 Feb, 1740.

¹³⁴. *JWf*: 10 Nov. 1739.

¹³⁵. *Book of Common Prayer*: Holy Communion: Exhortation and Invitation.

similarity.¹³⁶ Anglicans and Moravians also agreed that there were circumstances which would constitute a disturbance in the relationship with God sufficient to disqualify someone from receiving the Sacrament, although the Moravians' criteria extended to the state of the person's feelings towards God or his fellow-Christians, while the Prayer Book rubric confined itself to serious and flagrant sin.

Martin Schmidt believed that Wesley was defending orthodox views on justification, shared by Zinzendorf and Böhler, against 'a Herrnhuter of the younger generation', but that Spangenberg agreed with Molther because Molther's views were closer to Lutheran orthodoxy than those of the separatist groups Spangenberg had experienced in Pennsylvania.¹³⁷ In fact the two Moravians agreed because there was nothing unusual or extreme in Molther's teaching. Spangenberg was always much less adventurous than Zinzendorf, much less 'advanced' than his fellow Moravians; this was precisely why he had been replaced as leader in America, as he was to be again for the same reason in 1749. After Zinzendorf's death it was he who presided over a period, dubbed the 'Spangenberg Era',¹³⁸ in which the doctrines of the Moravian Church were restated in conservative, orthodox terms, and after writing his biography of Zinzendorf he ordered the destruction of documents which might present the count in a more controversial light.¹³⁹ Spangenberg presided over the synods of 1764-1782 and wrote the *Idea Fidei Fratrum* (1779), both used anachronistically by modern English writers to indicate the supposedly uncontroversial nature of Moravian doctrine in the early period.¹⁴⁰ Spangenberg's support for, indeed initiation of Molther's teaching on stillness indicates its centrality to Moravian

¹³⁶ E.P.Crow, 'John Wesley's conflict with Antinomianism in relation to the Moravians and Calvinists' (Manchester University Ph.D. thesis, 1964), p.93: 'The Moravian Brethren... like the Church of England, regarded (the Lord's Supper) as a sacrament of confirmation rather than a sacrament of conversion.' Dr Bowmer points out that Wesley's view in 1740 'cut across the accepted opinions of both High Churchman and Pietist. The former demanded that none should communicate who had not been confirmed at the hands of a bishop. The latter held that none should communicate without a full assurance of the forgiveness of sins.' (J.C.Bowmer, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism* (London, 1951), p.112, cf. pp.107f.). See also H.D.Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast* (London, 1989), pp.405ff. The classic example of the Moravian requirement of faith as a condition for communion is Wesley's own repulsion at Marienborn as '*homo perturbatus*' (cf. Bowmer, *op.cit.*, p.38). For eighteenth-century Anglican practice, which fell short of the ideal set by the rubric, see Bowmer, *op.cit.*, pp.10f., 104f. Dr Bowmer shows that even in Georgia, where Wesley's rigid enforcement of the rubrics led to a 'fencing of the table' comparable to that of the Moravians, he regarded baptism by an episcopally ordained minister, rather than confirmation, as the qualification for communion (*op.cit.*, p.103ff.).

¹³⁷ M.Schmidt, *op.cit.*, pp.42, 40.

¹³⁸ Reichel, *op.cit.* n.107, p.205.

¹³⁹ G.Meyer, Preface to A.G.Spangenberg, *Zinzendorf* (Hildesheim, 1971), p.vi.

¹⁴⁰ e.g. C.W.Towlson, *op.cit.*, p.79; E.P.Crow, *op.cit.*, p.92; J.Pinnington, 'Moravian and Anglican', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, lii (1969-70), 208-213.

thought at the time.¹⁴¹

Wesley was outraged that Molther had told him in December,

That we may, on some accounts, use guile: By saying what we know we will deceive the hearers, or leave them to think the thing which is not. By describing things a little beyond the truth, in order to their coming up to it. By speaking as if we meant what we do not.¹⁴²

Although Zinzendorf himself was later to be attacked frequently, and not entirely unjustly, for using guile, this was not a principle of the Moravian Church.

Wauer suggested that Molther might have been applying his idea in this very conversation,¹⁴³ but going further, this statement can be used as a key to his approach. Molther clearly believed that many of the Fetter Lane members were still trying to achieve justification by performing religious acts, such as attending church, fasting, praying and reading the Bible. Having witnessed scenes of religious excess, he probably feared that many were torturing themselves in their attempt to pray and read themselves into a state of grace. If he told those he believed were struggling too much 'not to use so much private prayer' and 'not to read the Scripture' in the belief that in their present state they were only harming themselves by their manner of doing so, and in the hope that an extreme statement might at least achieve a reduction in their efforts, this would have accorded with his view about going beyond the truth in order to bring people up to it.

It must again be stressed that Molther was only talking about those who had not yet reached faith. Nowhere is he reported as having said that those who had passed into normal Christian life should neglect prayer or the Bible. The allegation that the Moravians discouraged the reading of scripture was also frequently made in later years and vigorously denied by them.

Moravian Influence Grows

John Wesley was in London for twelve days at the beginning of November, but was called away by news of his brother Samuel's death. He returned on 19th December, having received a letter in which the unnamed writer said, 'I believe Brother Hutton, Clarke, Edmonds and Bray are determined to go on according to Mr Molther's directions, and to "raise a church", as they term it.'¹⁴⁴ This statement caused Schmidt to

¹⁴¹ H.-W.Erbe, *op.cit.*, p.71, rightly asserts that Molther embodied the spirit of the Moravian *Gemeine*. J.E.Hutton, *op. cit.*, p.296, was unfair in writing that Molther 'had picked up only the weak side of the Brethren's teaching'. G.A.Wauer, *op. cit.*, p.104, was also unduly critical of Molther, exaggerating the idiosyncrasy of his teaching, but he was correct in pointing out that Molther had gone beyond the position of the Moravian Church (in some points, although, as we have seen, not in the question of the sacrament).

¹⁴² *JWJ*, 31 Dec.

¹⁴³ G.A.Wauer, *op.cit.*, p.106.

¹⁴⁴ *JWJ*, ii, 327.

assert that 'the majority... with Molther, Spangenberg and even Zinzendorf himself in the background, aimed at the establishment of a genuine Herrnhut church on English soil'.¹⁴⁵ That may have been the aim of the society members, but this reported opinion of one other member is the only evidence that Molther had this purpose in view, and Zinzendorf would certainly not have approved. Another letter mentioned that most of the society members came to the Wednesday evening meeting only to sign in before leaving again; a group was meeting with Molther at Clarke's house.¹⁴⁶

There was little development in the dispute in January 1740, when Wesley was out of London, or February, which he spent in the capital, but during a longer absence from 3rd March until 19th April Molther's influence grew. By the middle of March Hutton could write,

Molther preaches four times a week in English to great numbers, and from morning till night he is engaged in conversing with the souls and labouring to bring them into better order; they get a great confidence towards him and began to be in great sorrow, many of them, when they expected him to be going away.¹⁴⁷

Molther's converts included Johann Valentin Haidt. Having heard Cossart and Spangenberg in 1739, Haidt was visited by Hagen, who invited him to his farewell lovefeast at the end of December,

where I found a hearty welcome from those assembled. Br. Molther played and sang a beautiful hymn, 'The Saviour's blood and righteousness'... I was overcome with tears, and felt... the nearness of the Man of Sorrows.¹⁴⁸

Soon after, Haidt decided to go with his wife to the Continent and join a Moravian congregation, arriving at Herrnhag at the beginning of June. There he was to become the Moravians' leading painter, responsible for numerous paintings, such as the famous 'first fruits' picture for the hall of Zinzendorf's house in Herrnhag, and many portraits, including one of Molther.¹⁴⁹

Wesley prepares

Although his final breach with the Fetter Lane Society did not take place until July 1740, Wesley had begun to prepare for the eventuality before the end of 1739. In December he had formed a new group in London, which apparently met for the first time on Christmas Eve.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁵ M.Schmidt, *op. cit.*, p.41.

¹⁴⁶ *JWJ*, ii, 327.

¹⁴⁷ R13.A9.25: Hutton to Z, 14 Mar. (*Benham*, pp.45ff.).

¹⁴⁸ Hagen, who had arrived with Molther, was preparing to sail to Georgia. *M. J.V.Haidt* (d.18.1.1780): *Nachrichten aus der Brüdergemeine*, lxvii (1885), 816: abbreviated Eng. tr.: *Messenger* (1886), 163ff. The date is fixed by R13.A9.25.

¹⁴⁹ For Haidt, see: V.Nelson, *John Valentine Haidt* (Williamsburg, Virginia, 1966); V.H.Nelson, 'John Valentine Haidt's Theory of painting', *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society*, xxiii, iii/iv (1984), 71-77; J.Kerslake, *Early Georgian Portraits* (London, 1977), i, 343-6, ii, plates 952, 953.

¹⁵⁰ *JWJ*: 24 Dec.; (J.Wesley), *The Nature, Design and General Rules of the United Societies* (5th ed., Bristol, 1747), pp.3f.

The next day the *Rules of the Band Societies* - this one and that already existing in Bristol - were drawn up¹⁵¹. Having preached in the ruins of the old Foundry in Upper Moorfields on 11th November 1739, Wesley asked Hutton in January to facilitate its purchase by obtaining a list of the managers.¹⁵² The date on which Wesley took over the Foundry is not known; the first record of a meeting there is that in Charles Wesley's *Journal* for 3rd April 1740, when he preached to the 'infant society', but he had been absent from London until that day. In his *Journal*, John Wesley concealed the fact that he had formed a separate society and acquired premises for it months before the disruption of the Fetter Lane Society. His statement on 23rd July that 'Our little company met at *The Foundry*, instead of Fetter Lane' merely marked the first meeting to be held in the Foundry at the same time as the Wednesday evening meeting of the Fetter Lane Society. It is noticeable that he still avoided the use of the term 'society'.

Wesley had not, however, rejected the Moravian Church completely. In January 1740 he took his old friend Töltschig with him to Bristol, and later that month sent Molther his translation of a hymn by Rothe, the minister of Berthelsdorf, for criticism. In April he sent Hutton a hymn translated from four Moravian hymns.¹⁵³

The Leaders withdraw

In March the Thames unfroze, but Molther's preparations to leave for America were halted by a letter from Marienborn.¹⁵⁴ The plan of sending him to Pennsylvania, confirmed afresh only three weeks before, had been revoked, and since that day the Conference had been considering other possible postings.¹⁵⁵ Now he was told that after his long stay in London there was no longer any point in him proceeding to Pennsylvania: he should remain in London for the time being.¹⁵⁶ He

¹⁵¹ *ibid.*, *Rules of the Band Societies*. The date 25 Dec. 1738 is clearly a mistake for 1739.

¹⁵² *Letters*, i, 699f: JW to Hutton (7), 14 Nov. (?) 1739; *Letters*, ii, 4: Hutton to JW, 25 Jan. 1740.

¹⁵³ *Letters*, ii, 3ff: Molther to JW, 25 Jan.; *ibid.*, 11f: JW to Hutton, 12 Apr. His comment in the latter that he had 'not had time to read the Count's sermons yet' casts doubt on Ziegenhagen's statement (R18.C2.III.9: Ziegenhagen to C.E. zu Stolberg-Wernigerode, 8 May 1740) that the *Berlin Discourses* recently published by Hutton had been translated by his verger Jacobi and John Wesley. Thorold had requested a copy of the discourses from Germany (*loc.cit.* n.134). Authorship of the translation by Wesley might have helped to explain his publication of extracts from the discourses in 1744, when he also published the *Fourth Extract* of his *Journal*, focussing on the disruption of the Fetter Lane Society.

¹⁵⁴ *M*: Molther.

¹⁵⁵ Erbe, *op.cit.*, p.69. This had occurred, unbeknown to Molther, by 25 Feb.

¹⁵⁶ *M*: Molther; this was not a response to Hutton's plea of 14 March to that effect, since a decision had already been made by 26 Feb. that Marschall should replace Molther there: R13.A9.25: Hutton to Z, 14 Mar. (*Benham*, pp.45ff.); R2.A2.2a: Conference of the Pilgergemeinde, 26 Feb. 1740; confirmed by the Synod of Gotha, 12-19 June 1740 (R2.A3.A1, p.227).

had clearly fallen out of favour, and it seems to have been the shock of this realisation which caused the sensitive Molther to fall ill on 23rd April and remain so for almost four months.¹⁵⁷ Stonehouse and his wife took him into Islington vicarage, where he was tended by their maid Esther Hopson.¹⁵⁸ He was thus prevented from participating fully in the events which ended in the disruption of the Fetter Lane Society.

Although James Hutton was present for longer, he too was not involved in the last stages of the dispute. On 15th May he wrote to Töltzschig that his father had that day consented to a second visit to Germany, and he probably left soon afterwards.¹⁵⁹ By the end of the following month he was one of fifteen people from England, such as Charles Kinchin and Joseph Verding, who were being accommodated in Wetteravia.¹⁶⁰ Georg Piesch had also returned to the Continent and was present at the General Synod in Gotha.¹⁶¹ While Hutton was in Marienborn it was decided that he should marry, and the Swiss Louise Brandt was invited to be his bride; they were married by Zinzendorf on 3rd July and returned to London the following month.¹⁶²

Separation approaches

Charles Wesley returned to London at the beginning of April, his brother at the beginning of June, Charles leaving for Bristol two weeks later; their *Journals* are the major source for the events which led to the division of the society in July. Within two days of his arrival Charles Wesley had concluded that a separation was unavoidable. On Easter Sunday he was excluded from the meeting of the bands, and threatened with expulsion from his own band if he did not attend its meeting the following evening.¹⁶³

As we have seen, Molther was unable to participate in events at Fetter Lane from late April, and on 23rd April Wesley noted that John Bray seemed to be taking the leading part. Without Molther's supervision, the society was left in the hands of a man who only the previous year had fallen prey to the French Prophets. Bray had been an advocate of stillness from the first, and he had been joined by John Simpson, a clergyman, and William Oxley, both returned from a visit to the Nottingham group,¹⁶⁴ as well as Bell, Charles Delamotte and George Stonehouse.

Even the extremists did not all reject the sacraments completely. Charles Delamotte was still communicating, Bray affirmed, 'I grant them to be great privileges', and Bell and Simpson joined Wesley in

¹⁵⁷. *JWJ*; *M*: Molther; Erbe, *op. cit.*, pp.69f. (*cf.* p.62).

¹⁵⁸. *M*: E.S.west, (d.31.12.94).

¹⁵⁹. Fu.82.i.1: Hutton to Töltzschig, 15 May.

¹⁶⁰. R2.A3.B1: *Helper-Conferenz*, Marlenborn, 27 June 1740.

¹⁶¹. R2.A3.A1: Synod of Gotha, 12-19 June 1740, p.1.

¹⁶². R2.A3.B1: *ut supra*; *Benham*, p.56.

¹⁶³. *CWJ* 5, 6 Apr.

¹⁶⁴. *Letters*, ii, 3ff: Hutton to *JW*, 25 Jan. 1740.

going to church on Easter Sunday.¹⁶⁵ Nevertheless the dispute escalated, so that by 8th May the Fetter Lane leaders were making every effort to prevent members from hearing Wesley preach; he soon discovered that meetings were being held on Sundays and Thursdays at the times when he was preaching at the Foundery.¹⁶⁶ Simpson had already claimed that 'there are only two such Ministers (in whom Christ is fully formed) in London', and on 30th May asserted that there were only four Christians in London - 'Molther, M.Eusters, Wheeler's maid, and Bell'.¹⁶⁷ At the end of May Ingham came to London for three weeks and spoke in support of Wesley, but he was unable to re-unite the society.¹⁶⁸

Simpson and others clearly believed that John Wesley had agreed not to preach about the sacraments, and that Charles Wesley was causing division by constantly emphasising them.¹⁶⁹ Hence it was Simpson and Oxley who wrote to John Wesley, hoping that he would return to London and solve the problem by instructing his brother not to precipitate a separation by 'preaching up the ordinances',¹⁷⁰ with the result that John Wesley came to London on 22nd April for an inconclusive stay of ten days. He returned on 5th June, and on 18th June Charles Wesley left for Bristol.¹⁷¹ It would appear that, while loyal to the Moravians, James Hutton was hesitant about opposing the Wesleys; he certainly sought to prevent other members making inflammatory statements.¹⁷² However, as we have seen, he also left the scene in mid-May.

The English Extremists

Even before Molther's withdrawal at the end of April from active participation in events, the statements of some of the English leaders of the society, such as Bray, Bell and Simpson, had been much more extreme than any attributed by the Wesleys to Molther himself. No doubt he and the Moravians would have rejected completely views such as those expressed by Simpson in May. It has been suggested that Molther's poor English led Wesley to misunderstand him, and certainly many, including Böhler and Charles Wesley, later believed Molther to have been misrepresented.¹⁷³ It may be that language difficulties also prevented Molther from appreciating fully what was being said by the English leaders of the society, but in any case, it was the much more extreme statements of these figures after Molther's withdrawal from

¹⁶⁵. *CWJ*: 5, 6 Apr.

¹⁶⁶. *CWJ*: 13 May.

¹⁶⁷. *CWJ*: 9 Apr., 30 May.

¹⁶⁸. *CWJ*: 27, 31 May; *JWJ*: 11 June.

¹⁶⁹. *CWJ*: 3, 5, 8, 11 Apr.

¹⁷⁰. *JWJ*: 19, 23 Apr; *CWJ*: 9 Apr.

¹⁷¹. *JWJ*, *CWJ*.

¹⁷². *CWJ*: 14 May.

¹⁷³. E.P.Crow, *op.cit.* n.136, pp.86-94.

active participation which were the immediate cause of the division.¹⁷⁴

The Wesleys' last conversation with Molther took place on 6th June 1740, for when John Wesley went to talk to him the following week he was too ill to receive him.¹⁷⁵ No details of the conversation are given in either *Journal*, but Howel Harris wrote a very full account in his diary, having been taken along to testify 'how I was convinced of sin and set free from sin' at a Communion service.¹⁷⁶ Molther reasserted his views about who should receive the Sacrament, and then gave his definition of stillness:

1st to walk in ye sight of God. 2. waiting on him having ye Heart allways praying (which he said may be though wand'ring Thoughts may be in ye head). 3. Resignation to God's Will.

In conversation he said that he never heard voices (which he attributed to imagination), nor did he see visions; 'all Scriptures that came to our thought' did not come from God, '(though God uses our Imaginative Memories etc. sometimes...)'. These views seem moderate and sensible, in marked contrast to those expressed by some of the English leaders.

It was another, linked issue, that of degrees of faith, which produced Molther's hardest statements. Denying that faith and holiness could grow gradually, he said that 'when we are forgiven all sin (ye guilt and Power ... of Sin) is taken away and when sin abides there is no forgiveness'. Although the Moravians later objected strongly to Wesley's teaching on perfection, it would appear that perfection was not yet an issue between them. Harris' diary indicates that those who followed the Moravians could also speak in terms of perfection; the dispute was not at this time about perfection itself, but about whether it was immediate or gradual, the result of men's efforts or of God's grace alone. It was on perfection that Zinzendorf's conversation with Wesley in 1741 was to turn; by then there was also disagreement over whether sinless perfection is possible in this life.

Apart from his statements on degrees of faith, Molther's comments, as reported by Harris, were moderate, sober and sensible, and as we have seen, the Wesleys' *Journals* show that from the beginning his views had consistently been much more moderate than those of the extremists among the English leadership at Fetter Lane. The more extreme statements made during the conversation with Harris all came from another unnamed brother. It was with a volatile and extreme section of the English leadership of the society that much of the responsibility for

¹⁷⁴ Charles Wesley's statement to Spangenberg in 1741 blamed English members who misunderstood Molther (*cf.* n.97).

¹⁷⁵ *JWF* 11 June.

¹⁷⁶ *HHDS7*: 6 June.

the disruption rested.¹⁷⁷

The Disruption

The situation came to a head on 16th July, when Wesley provoked an acrimonious debate at the Wednesday evening meeting, after Bray had tried to smooth matters over. It was decided that Wesley would not be permitted to preach in the Fetter Lane Chapel, recently leased in place of the previous society room, because it had been 'taken for the Germans'. A lovefeast held by Wesley at his mother's house on the Friday was followed by a conference attended among others by the Countess of Huntingdon.¹⁷⁸ Those present resolved that it was time to leave the Fetter Lane Society. On the Sunday evening he read a statement at the Fetter Lane lovefeast and then withdrew, followed by eighteen or nineteen members.¹⁷⁹

The Future

The disruption of the Fetter Lane Society left it weaker than is often supposed. Those who walked out with Wesley were all men, joint meetings for both sexes having been discontinued some time before. By the following Wednesday about twenty-five of the male Fetter Lane members had joined Wesley's society.¹⁸⁰ Hutton later gave the figure as 'some 14', but admitted that 'during Br. Molther's illness our meeting became very small.'¹⁸¹ On that Wednesday Wesley recorded his expectation that forty-eight of the fifty women who had been in Fetter Lane bands would join his society, and Hutton agreed that 'he took away from us almost all the women folk.'¹⁸² Back in March he had warned Zinzendorf,

J.W. and C.W., both of them are dangerous snares to many young women; several are in love with them. I wish they were once married to some good sisters, but I would not give them one of my sisters if I had many.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁷ E.P.Crow (*op. cit.*, p.96) wrote that Gambold attributed distortions of doctrine not to Molther and the Germans, but to the English Brethren, citing an undated letter to Zinzendorf in MCH. The only such letter (AB87.A3.10) needs to be treated with caution. A committee of the General synod held at Herrnhag in May 1747 blamed the Brethren for the split with the Methodists, saying 'The German Brethren are not charged with this alone but the English Brethren in London joined with them.' It is clear that Zinzendorf angrily rejected the report, and a second committee was set up. It was in the light of Zinzendorf's response to the first report that Gambold wrote, '... So much I would say by way of general Apology. As to myself in particular, there are only two paragraphs... which I am properly answerable for... a Misunderstanding arose between (the Methodists and the Brethren); which however I ascribed to the English Brethren, & not (as it accidentally was set down) to the English as well as German.'

¹⁷⁸ (A.C.H.Seymour), *op. cit.*, i, 36.

¹⁷⁹ *JWf*, 20 July.

¹⁸⁰ *JWf*, 23 July.

¹⁸¹ *Hutton I*, p.188.

¹⁸² *ibid.*; *JWf*, 23 July.

¹⁸³ R13.A9.25: Hutton to Z, 14 Mar. (*Benham*, pp.45f.).

Holland wrote that Töltschig was present at the lovefeast on that fateful evening:

Some of the Society said they would be under the direction of the Moravian Brethren. Br. Töltschig being present said that the Brethren would not be their Directors, but would willingly be their servants.¹⁸⁴

In fact, however, the point had been reached where the Moravian Church would have to decide either to accept the leadership of the London society or abandon the connection with England which had grown up. Those who had not followed Wesley wished to follow the Moravians, and it was inevitable that capable Moravians in London would be given the leading role.

Hutton and his wife returned at the beginning of August with a party destined for Pennsylvania. John Balthasar Gussenbauer and his wife Ann (Viney's sister) were forced to remain in London because of her pregnancy,¹⁸⁵ but Molther was faced with the option of having the wife he had married six weeks before he left for London stay with him, or letting her proceed to America with her close friend Anna Nitschmann and Bishop David Nitschmann. He chose the latter, and the party left on 18th August.¹⁸⁶ The next month Molther himself left London, having been recalled to Marienborn.¹⁸⁷ Viney returned from Oxford to London, and it was decided that despite Ingham's request that Töltschig should return to Yorkshire to assist him, the Moravian would have to remain in London for the time being.¹⁸⁸

Hutton however considered neither Töltschig nor Viney suitable for work with the London society:

Töltschig is very well in bands and conferences, but he cannot preach; and Viney is not well adapted for it. For myself I think him able enough. I like him much in bands and conferences, but many souls are not edified by his sermons.¹⁸⁹

A conference composed of the Huttons, Gussenbauer, Viney and John Ockershausen, a German resident of London who had joined the society, therefore wrote to Zinzendorf requesting once again that Spangenberg be sent to England.¹⁹⁰ Perhaps unbeknown to them, Georg Adolph Marschall had already been chosen to go to London and in fact he arrived in October, but this would not resolve the question.¹⁹¹ The Moravian Church had to decide whether to send a full mission to England to take over the leadership of the Fetter Lane Society and its dependent societies in the country or to refuse to become fully involved.

¹⁸⁴. *Holland*.

¹⁸⁵. *Hutton I*, p.188.

¹⁸⁶. *Erbe, op.cit.*, pp.70,72.

¹⁸⁷. *M. Molther*.

¹⁸⁸. *Holland*; R13.A9.32: Hutton to Z, 13 Sept. (Eng. tr: *Benham*, pp.63f.).

¹⁸⁹. *ibid.*

¹⁹⁰. *ibid.*; cf. R13.A9.30: Hutton to Z, 1 Sept. (*Benham*, pp.65f.).

¹⁹¹. R2.A3.A1, G.S. Gotha, 12-19 June 1740, p.227; R2.A3.B1, Helpers' Conference, 27 June 1740, p.2; *Holland*.

Conclusions

The first of these options was eventually chosen, and in March 1741 Spangenberg arrived in London at the head of a large party. This came as the climax of a continuous and growing Moravian influence over the Fetter Lane Society since it began in May 1738. This article has both pointed to that influence and indicated how Wesley and subsequent writers failed to give credit to it; the picture of Molther and the others as 'certain men' who 'crept in among them unawares' has been found to be misleading.

Stillness has been shown to have been neither peculiar to Molther, nor introduced by him. The conservative, orthodox Spangenberg began the concentration on it, but it was both standard Moravian teaching and current in London well before Molther and Spangenberg arrived. Molther's poor command of English did not help matters, but his withdrawal from affairs because of illness, together with Hutton's departure for the Continent, left the society under the sway of English leaders whose statements had already been far more extreme than those of Molther. It was with them, and not yet definitively with the Moravians, that Wesley broke when he withdrew from Fetter Lane.

The Fetter Lane Society had given birth to Methodism, but its separation from Methodism's father was to be permanent. Its growth into union with the Moravian Church prevented a reconciliation with Wesley's movement, and instead, this society, begun by Böhler with Wesley as a founder-member, became the Moravian Church's London congregation.

C.J.PODMORE

(C.J.Podmore, M.A. is Assistant Secretary to the Board for Mission and Unity of the General Synod of the Church of England.)

APPENDIX

Abbreviations and Location

R	(= Rubrik) <i>Unitätsarchiv</i> , Herrnhut, G.D.R.
MCH, AB	(= Archive Book) Moravian Church House, London.
Eng.MSS.	John Rylands University Library, Manchester.
Fu.	Fulneck Moravian Church, Yorks.
MO.	Bedford C.R.O.
MAFSt.	<i>Missionsarchiv der Francheschen Stiftungen</i> , Halle, G.D.R.
<i>JWJ</i>	John Wesley's <i>Journal</i> , ed. N.Curnock (London, 1938).
<i>CWJ</i>	Charles Wesley's <i>Journal</i> , ed. T.Jackson (London, 1849).
<i>GWJ</i>	George Whitefield's <i>Journals</i> (Edinburgh, 1985).
<i>Letters</i> , i,ii	of John Wesley, ed. F.Baker (Works, xxv, xxvi, 1980, 1982. (<i>Oxford/Bicentennial ed</i>))
<i>Byrom</i>	<i>The Private Journal and Literary Remains of John Byrom</i> , ed. R.Parkinson, ii.i (Chetham Society, Manchester, xl, 1856).

- Benham* D. Benham, *Memoirs of James Hutton* (London, 1856).
Holland William Holland's *Account* (MS in MCH).
Hutton I, II James Hutton's *Accounts* (R13.A2a.1,2; transcripts of these and Holland: Eng.MSS.1076.2,6), tr. J.N. Libbey, *Proceedings*, xv, pp.178-189, 206-214; xvi, pp.10-14.
BD Böhler's diary (R13.A4.1; transcript: Eng.MSS.1061.1);
RDE Richter's diary (R13.A4.63). All dates new style.
HHD Diaries of Howel Harris, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. Abbreviations expanded.
JHD *Jungerhausdiarium* (ms. headquarters diary), in British Library, John Rylands Library and Moravian archives.
M Memoir, recorded in the Diary of the Fetter Lane Congregation and/or in the volume *Extracts from the London Archive* (both in MCH), unless otherwise stated.

I wish to thank all who have given me assistance or hospitality in connection with my research in the libraries and archives mentioned above. I am particularly indebted to *Unitätsarchivarin* I. Baldauf and Mrs J. Halton, Provincial Librarian, to Dr J.D. Walsh for his careful supervision, and to my father for considerable help with word processing.

It has been decided to compile a volume of omissions from the *Dictionary of National Biography* up to 1985. Readers may like to send suggestions for inclusion (? Joseph Rank, ? William P. Hartley) to the Editor, Dr C.S. Nicholls, Clarendon Building, Broad Street, Oxford, OX1 3BG.

'Always Your Friend' is an attractive appreciation of Cecil Pawson (1897-1978) based on his entry in the 1978 *Who's Who*. It is a useful pendant to Pawson's autobiography *Hand to the Plough* (1973) and costs £1.25 post free from the author, Rev Edwin Thompson, 13 Ross Way, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 2BL.

The publication of the individual returns from the 1851 Ecclesiastical Census continues apace. Mr. Michael J. L. Wickes proposes to publish the Devon returns on a limited subscription basis for £20 post free. Further details from Mr Wickes at 30 One End Street, Appledore, Bideford, EX39 1PN.

Exploring Scotland with Wesley, 1989, pp.28; published by the Synod of the Methodist Church in Scotland; available from the Methodist Church, Nicolson Square, Edinburgh EH8 9BX, £1.00 plus 24p postage.

This very attractive booklet does not set out to replace Wesley Swift's *Methodism in Scotland*, but admirably serves its more limited purpose of providing a useful guide to 'those who explore Scotland in the footsteps of John Wesley', and does so without losing sight of Methodism's continuing presence there. It is well illustrated in black and white, with a full-colour cover. The only regret is that so few of the scenes depicted have a Methodist significance - to the exclusion even of the well-known picture of Wesley walking in an Edinburgh street.

PORTRAITS OF JOHN FLETCHER OF MADELEY AND THEIR ARTISTS

(Numbers in the text in [square brackets] refer to the Appendix)

Once upon a time there were four Johns, or very nearly: Rev John Fletcher, the Vicar of Madeley; then Jonathan Spilsbury (who confusingly had a brother John); John Russell R.A.; and John Jackson, also R.A.. All were early Methodists; and John Fletcher, the great saint of the Evangelical Revival, was portrayed by the others. That is to state simply a complex area of study which started for me many years ago with the question 'What did Fletcher of Madeley really look like?'; and has been sharpened more recently with the emergence of Spilsbury's original portrait of Fletcher.¹

John Fletcher (1729-1785) is reckoned as one of the holiest of Christians the church has ever seen. His characteristic humility led to an extreme reticence for self-promotion of any kind, and it was with considerable reluctance that he agreed to have his portrait painted, probably in early 1777. The painter was Jonathan Spilsbury.

The resulting picture is of "a ghostly figure in clerical dress"²! The natural reaction is that Fletcher was so spiritual as to be hardly human, so it is worth recalling the circumstances in which the portrait was made. Fletcher was in an advanced state of consumption, with "one foot in heaven"; and was staying at Stoke Newington (then just outside London) with his friends Mr and Mrs Charles Greenwood. There he could have total rest and constant care, yet still be within reach of the best doctors available. With every sign that he was "ripening fast for glory"³, his close friend James Ireland "at length prevailed upon him to sit for his picture".⁴

But Fletcher did not always look like this. In his early years various escapades indicate that he was a fit and adventurous young man; a strong swimmer, and an able fencer. It was not until the early 1770s that the strain of the Calvinistic controversy, coupled with his ascetic lifestyle, broke his health - from which he never totally recovered. In December 1775 he wrote to his brothers "to know if I am not fifty-six instead of forty-six".⁵

¹ B. Williamson, 'The Spilsbury Portrait of John Fletcher' *Proceedings*, xlvii pp44 ff.

² *Ibid* p45

³ Letter from Lady Huntingdon, quoted in *Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon* vol ii, p71.

⁴ J Benson *Life of the Rev John de la Flechere* (1806) p. 197.

⁵ John Fletcher to Charles Wesley 4th December 1775, in Methodist Archives, Fletcher Folio p. 90.

Only one description of his appearance has come down to us; and though not from a first-hand source, it sounds plausible:

In person Mr. Fletcher was above the middle stature. He had a pleasing face, a penetrating eye, and a slightly aquiline nose. His manners were courteous and graceful, and he displayed a dignity and humility of character rarely associated in the same person.⁶

Portraits depend much on the artist's assessment of the personality they depict; before the invention of the camera the portrait artist's work needed to be as much an accurate record of basic appearance as an expression of personality. A miniature portrait of Fletcher we know Spilsbury painted was said to be "a striking likeness"⁷ - it is fair to assume that also of the larger paintings.

Jonathan Spilsbury

Little is known of Jonathan Spilsbury (1737-1812) and his family. Born in Worcester, and apprenticed as a japanner in Birmingham, he settled in London in about 1757 and began to paint: in 1759 he painted the Prince of Wales (soon to become George III). Before long he was also producing mezzotint engravings of portraits, and his career consisted of both making portraits and producing engravings. Confusion has arisen between the two brothers Jonathan and the younger John Spilsbury - however, John died before he was thirty, and was "no engraver of heads, but of maps, plans, writings, ornaments, etc."⁸ As well as royalty and nobility, Jonathan Spilsbury painted nonconformist and Methodist clerics. He probably came into an evangelical faith soon after coming to London, and associated particularly with Moravians - eventually joining them in 1781; though he never fulfilled his long held ambition to be a Moravian minister.

In 1775 he married Rebecca Chapman, daughter of a prebend of Bristol Cathedral. In 1777 twins were born; the boy died immediately, but the daughter, Maria (1777-1820) became a talented and successful painter, first exhibiting at the Royal Academy when aged 16. She married another painter, John Taylor. Her picture of John Wesley preaching out of doors at Rossanna, County Wicklow, hung in Wesley's house, City Road, London. Jonathan and Rebecca Spilsbury were close friends of Charles and Sarah Wesley: they are buried in the Bunhill Fields graveyard.⁹

⁶ John Randall; *History of Madeley* (1880, repr. 1975) p. 144.

⁷ James Ireland to Mrs Mary Fletcher 3rd October 1786; in Methodist Archives (MAM F1-4:1).

⁸ J. Herbert Slater *Engravings and their value* (6th ed London, n.d.), art. on Spilsburys. For general information on Spilsbury see Ruth Young *Father and Daughter* (1952).

⁹ Ruth Young, *op. cit.*

In 1780, Jonathan Spilsbury exhibited a portrait “of a clergyman” at the Royal Academy¹⁰: it is quite feasible that it was that of Fletcher of Madeley. The Spilsbury portraits of John Fletcher have had varied histories. That of the Bristol portrait [1:i] has already been described¹¹: there are at least three other ‘Spilsbury’ portraits extant, and one other (the cased miniature we know was painted for Mary Fletcher) [1:v] now lost.

The use of the *memento mori* (the hand on the skull) is a curiosity to say the least. Generally a seventeenth-century feature, this gives the whole portrait, with its upturned gaze, something of the look of an earlier age; and the tradition of mystic saints. It may be significant that in time, the image developed into that of the great preacher - which suggests changing perceptions of Fletcher.

The Cheshunt Foundation, associated now with Westminster College, Cambridge, is the lineal descendant of the Countess of Huntingdon’s college at Trevecca, of which Fletcher was the first President. It has a portrait [1:ii] almost identical to the Bristol Spilsbury - there is a slight variation in the wording on the open Bible. This portrait was found in a Canterbury antique shop in 1945, and was then acquired by Cheshunt College in 1951.¹² It was authenticated as by Spilsbury; possibly a studio copy from which the artist could make engravings and other copies if need be.

There is a further copy of Spilsbury’s portrait at Wesley House, Cambridge [1:iii]; though the age and history of this is unknown.

Most curious is a mirror-image (i.e. the sitter is facing his right), head and shoulders version in the Methodist Archives and History Center at Drew University, U.S.A. [1:iv]. It was a bequest of Drew Professor and Methodist Bishop, John Fletcher Hurst (1834-1903), who “traced his family back to the Fletchers of Madeley in the eighteenth century”¹³ (though this is questionable). However, it does provide a pedigree for the portrait’s history over a century or so; and the picture is thought to be from the late eighteenth century. It was not then unknown for a portrait copy to be about-faced, but for the time being this picture remains an enigma.

It is quite possible, of course, that if John Jackson R.A., with his acknowledged skills as a copyist (see below), had access to an original, the proliferation of ‘authentic’ Spilsbury portraits of Fletcher might readily be explained.

¹⁰ Catalogue of Exhibitors at the Royal Academy, 1780. Exhibit 193.

¹¹ B. Williamson, *op. cit.*

¹² For information on the Cheshunt Foundation and the Cambridge Spilsbury portrait I am grateful to Rev Dr S.H. Mayor, Director of the Cheshunt Foundation and Principal of Westminster College, Cambridge; and also to Rev. Dr. Frank Baker.

¹³ Catalogue of paintings, Methodist Archives & History Center, Drew University.

John Russell R.A

John Russell (1745-1806), the early Methodist Royal Academician may or may not have painted John Fletcher. Russell was born in Guildford, Surrey, where the family had lived since 1509. His father was a book and print dealer, and also five times mayor. Russell went to Guildford Grammar School, and very early on showed an aptitude for drawing; he was sent to London to study art. On 30th September 1764 "at 7.30 in the evening" he was converted, under Martin Madan's preaching¹⁴: he kept a detailed journal for some parts of his life. In 1768, the Countess of Huntingdon urged Russell to study at the newly opened Trevecca College, (of which Fletcher was President) but to no avail.¹⁵

In 1770 Russell married Hannah Faden, daughter of the keeper of a map and print shop in Charing Cross who later became 'Geographer to the King'. Russell's uncertain finances gave him considerable anxiety, until in 1780 he inherited a small estate in Sussex; with demand also growing for his portraits such worries largely left him. It becomes evident that he was what we might call a 'drawing-room Methodist': he moved easily among the privileged classes whom he also painted.

He portrayed George Whitefield in 1768, Lady Huntingdon in 1772 and John Wesley in 1773. William Wilberforce sat to him as a youth in 1770; and again in 1801. John Russell was both talented and prolific, and exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1769 - including in 1771 a small, full length pastel of Charles Wesley, and in 1776 a full length oils of Master Samuel Wesley (born 1766, and John Fletcher's godson). He is known also to have painted Sarah Wesley and Charles Wesley junior - Russell was also a personal friend of Charles Wesley's family. Many of Russell's earlier sitters were gentry and evangelical clergy; but as his reputation increased his clientele broadened; in 1790 he became 'painter to the King and Prince of Wales'. His most characteristic portraits were in crayons.

Russell's biographer, George C. Williamson, recorded that Russell painted Fletcher.¹⁶ However, such a portrait is not known, nor an engraving taken from it; and there is no mention in any papers associated with Fletcher. Russell did visit Shropshire, travelling close to Madeley and stayed at Hawkstone with Sir Richard Hill, who knew Fletcher well. Whether or not Russell painted Fletcher - and it could well be - it provides an interesting sidelight on this pictorial aspect of early Methodism.

It is worth remarking how both Spilsbury and Russell were part of Charles Wesley's circle of artistic and musical friends. Real links into the world of the arts become evident, and the cultural prohibition some-

¹⁴ Not Charles Wesley; see *Proceedings*, xxv pp. 52ff.

¹⁵ George C Williamson, *John Russell, R.A.* (1894); see also *Proceedings*, xxv, p. 53.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* p. 24.

times alleged of evangelical Christianity is an ill-founded charge. Doreen Rosman has commented that:

the evidence seems to suggest that save within the context of worship evangelicals welcomed the fine arts, regarding them as pleasurable and civilizing facts of life.¹⁷

This was probably more true of the earlier part of the period she has studied (1790-1833): there was considerable variation between different individuals and groups and over the years; evangelical philistinism seems to have become more prevalent as the Victorian age approached.

John Jackson R. A.

There is no doubt about John Jackson (1778-1831) having painted Fletcher: but this portrait was made posthumously. Jackson was born in Lastingham, North Yorkshire, and his father was the village tailor. He had left home by 1797; but some time prior to that had been converted and become a Methodist. He worked under Sir Joshua Reynolds at Castle Howard; then was a painter of miniature portraits in York (apparently with no great success); and by 1804 was in London - in that year he first hung at the Royal Academy.

He painted widely, often of the rich and famous: his exhibits at the R.A. are a catalogue of titles and position. He also possessed great skill as a slick copyist. In 1813, Sir Charles Bell wrote to his brother:

I have got a beautiful copy of Sir Joshua Reynolds' finest portrait - John Hunter, namely. It is admitted to be nearly as fine as the admired original. There is a man, Jackson, who has a wonderful talent for copying the old masters. He charges more for a copy than Raeburn does for painting a portrait.¹⁸

A great deal of Jackson's own work, though, lacks that 'star quality': it tends to flatter but fails to fulfill its promise. He had a marked lazy streak and seems rarely to have achieved what was well within his ability. Much of his better work (and probably the majority of his output) was in watercolours.

In 1813, Jackson started to provide portraits of eminent Methodists to be engraved as frontispieces for the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*. By 1820 many issues had an engraving after him, and such was his output that they continued to appear for some time after his death.

In 1827 his portrait of John Wesley appeared, a synthesised likeness "adapted to convey to posterity a more vivid impression of the mind and heart, as well as the features"¹⁹ of the 'founder of Methodism'. Jackson

¹⁷ Doreen Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture* (1984) p. 153.

¹⁸ Art. by Hugh Honour, 'John Jackson R.A.' in *The Connoisseurs' Year Book* 1957, pp. 91-95.

¹⁹ *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* 1828, p700. For a comments this, see Richard P. Heitzenrater, *The Elusive Mr. Wesley* (1984), vol ii p. 180.

was in the image-building business: his portrait of John Fletcher [2:i] painted about 1815) falls into the same category. What portrayals of Fletcher he culled to feed his imagination is open to speculation: what is not is the result. The Jackson portrait of Fletcher is a splendid picture; the master-preacher in full spate - but such buoyant confidence and suavity was quite foreign to the humble and diffident servant of Christ that Fletcher was (although the original looks more true to life than the resultant engravings). Let us say that Fletcher of Madeley was hardly like this - yet this is the face the Victorians knew, and whose image persists still.

John Jackson died on 1st June 1831 from catching a chill, either at the funeral of Lord Mulgrave, or from being forced to travel between London and the north of England atop a coach. He lived in style, but died insolvent. His contemporary, John Constable (1776-1837), wrote of him:

He is a great loss to the Academy and the public. By his friends he will be forever missed, and he had no enemies. He did a great deal of good, much more, I believe, than is generally known, and he never did harm to any living creature. My sincere belief is that he is at this moment in heaven.²⁰

Maybe his best likeness of Fletcher was depicted in his own life.

PRINTS

For the vast majority, Fletcher's face was known through the prints of engravings which proliferated for many years after his death. It is evident that James Ireland was desperately anxious that no-one should have the faintest opportunity to "copy" his (Spilsbury) portrait, and similarly the miniature painted later²¹. Yet it was inevitable that as soon as Spilsbury's engravings appeared, others less talented would plagiarise the picture and some results proved horrendous.

The mezzotint was the aristocrat of prints: a long and painstaking process which could produce a superb result, with subtle shadings; though its delicacy meant a limited print run. Spilsbury's mezzotint [A:i] appeared just over a year after Fletcher's death; followed by an odd looking variant [A:ii] 1802. Perhaps the *memento mori* (which was stylistically anachronistic anyway)- had become quite unacceptable. In September 1802 Jonathan Spilsbury added a note to the bottom of his sister's letter to Mary Fletcher; that he has sent her one of the last remaining good prints from the plate he made of the picture of her husband. He mentions that there are large plates and small.²² Evidently the originals were at an end, and maybe there was growing demand (competition?) for smaller prints. Perhaps, also, this was the origin of

²⁰ H. Honour, op. cit.

²¹ B. Williamson, op. cit.

²² Letter from Mrs Mary Henshaw and Jonathan Spilsbury to Mrs Mary Fletcher, 6th September 1802 in Methodist Archives (MAM Fl 3:8).

the 'preaching' pose. We do know that Joseph Benson "ordered a Print of Mr Fletcher to be engraven immediately" for the initial edition of his 'Life' of Fletcher, which eventually appeared in 1806.²³

Those who imitated Spilsbury range from acceptable to brutally crude. I have identified a total of eight differing depictions [B:i-viii], mostly wood engravings: there may be more. "The production of engravings of Fletcher, his church, his vicarage, his bedroom, and of the vicarage barn, became something of a cottage industry", suggests Barrie Trinder.²⁴

Jackson's portrait was engraved by the ubiquitous T.A. Dean [C:i]; and also by E. Mackenzie [C:ii] (presumably for America). There are very slight detail differences between the two: Mackenzie's eyes seem more open; Dean's mouth finer. Dean's engraving has been the most widely used likeness of Fletcher; the frontispiece to Benson's *Life of Fletcher* (later editions), and vol v of *The Letters of John Wesley* (ed. Telford), to name but two. A fine, larger engraving of Jackson's portrait was made by J. Thomson [C:iii]: all these engravings were on metal.²⁵

OTHER ENGRAVINGS

We have by no means exhausted the supply of representations of John Fletcher that have circulated in the two centuries since his death. All those I have traced, with the portraits and prints already covered, are detailed in the Appendix to this article.

Perhaps most noteworthy is that produced as a frontispiece to Cox's biography in 1822, and engraved by W.J. White. [D:i]. The Bristol Spilsbury portrait, as Barry Williamson has already written, was hijacked by the eminent nineteenth-century Methodist, Joseph Butterworth and the heirs of James Ireland had to resort to law to recover it. White's sketchy impression of Fletcher preaching also proclaims "Pub'd by Josh Butterworth & Son Jany 1822". We may draw our own conclusions as to its provenance, and to the wheeler-dealing background. W.J. White was chiefly an aquatinter and line engraver, and is known to have practised in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.²⁶

Side views of head and shoulders, generally in an oval frame, (such as was published as the frontispiece to the *Arminian Magazine* for 1788) [D:iv] seem to have enjoyed a run of popularity. Only one lays claim to real originality: that by Daniel Orme produced March 1810 "From an original Drawing taken on his last visit to Bristol" [D:v]. Orme was born in Manchester in 1765, and produced from around 1790 to his death in

²³ Joseph Benson to Mrs Mary Fletcher, 6th November 1804, in Methodist Archives (PLP 7.10.3).

²⁴ B. Trinder, *Industrial Revolution in Shropshire*, (1973) p. 271.

²⁵ For a general treatment of engravings and prints, see Bamber Gascoigne, *How to identify prints*, (1986).

²⁶ Slater, op. cit..

1832. He engraved in stipple, and worked with his brothers William and Edward.²⁷ He also produced an engraving of Mrs Mary Fletcher "From an original Picture Painted by Danl. Orme" - thereby suggesting that Orme had not himself made the drawing for his engraving of John Fletcher. An (unsigned) portrait of Mrs Fletcher in the Clive House Museum, Shrewsbury, may well be that by Orme. Mary Fletcher, incidentally, was also painted by Spilsbury.

One engraving stands out; a three-quarter view of head and shoulders from the left [D:vii]. With no name and no date, it would seem to be derived from an original of some quality. It is not unlike Jackson's portrait, yet in style it would seem to be earlier.

But most intriguing is a full-length wood engraving of Fletcher [E:i], in tricorn hat and clerical dress, his left hand Napoleon-like inside his coat. The dress suggests a date of the early 1770's; but that is very approximate.²⁸ It is anonymous, and the only faint clue lies in a similar engraving of John Wesley, in the company of Dr Hamilton and Joseph Cole, in Edinburgh in 1790. Nonetheless, it has a feel of homespun authenticity about it; though its origins and artist are unknown.

Although not strictly within the scope of this article; a very few pottery figures of Fletcher are known, all nineteenth century. These seem mostly to have been copied from the Spilsbury portrait or its derivations and are not modelled (as Enoch Wood's bust of John Wesley) from life. Pictures on decorated plates, also a Wedgwood plaque, and metal medallions are again derived from engravings.²⁹

Conclusion

It is not so simple a task to discover what John Fletcher of Madeley looked like; though Spilsbury's painting gives us the best idea. What we can begin to understand is the effect Fletcher had on others; for the veneration in which the late Vicar of Madeley was held for several generations after his death was enormous. "I barely avoid the absurdities of some of the Roman Catholics"³⁰, confessed one Victorian Methodist. So the man who had said "I desire to be forgotten, God is all", came to be the subject of myriad representations for an eager public.

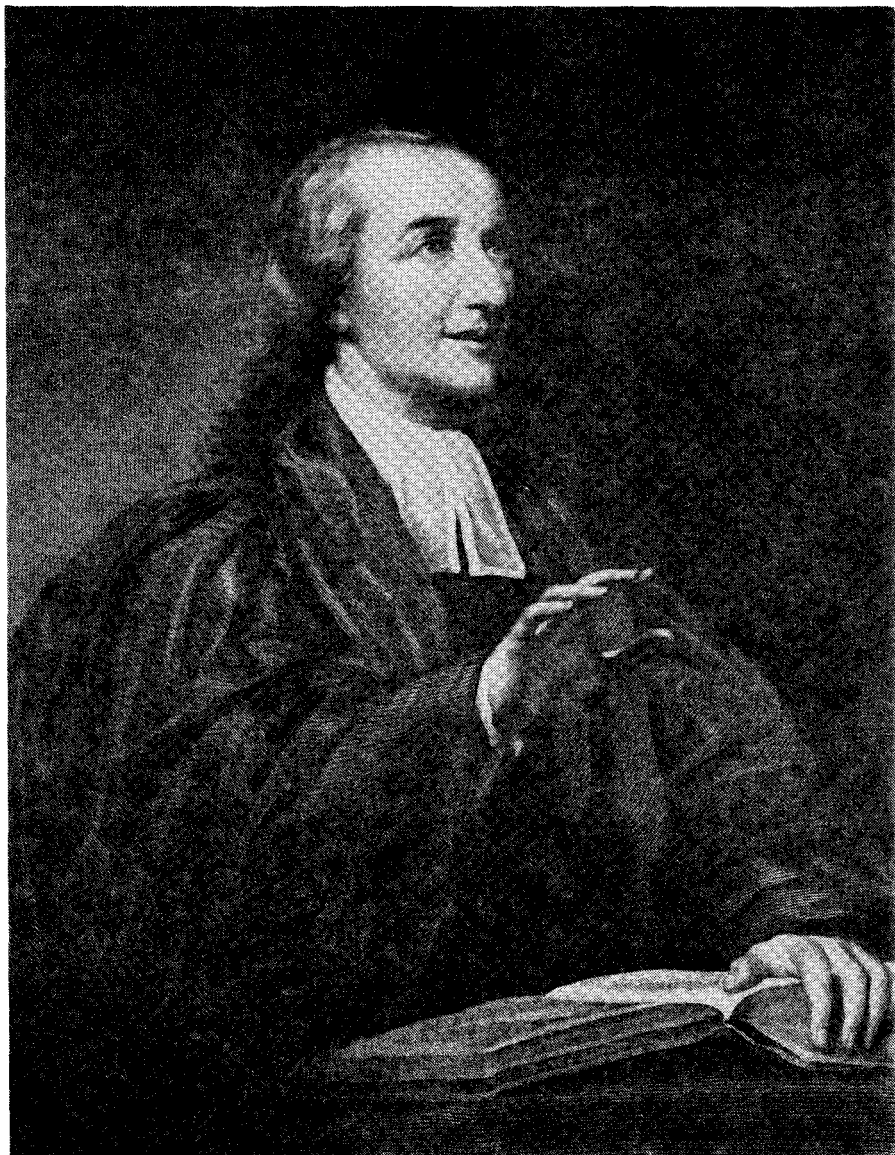
It is imperative to distinguish between portraiture and hagiography; what could hardly be captured on canvas was the elusive quality of saintliness conveyed by the Vicar of Madeley - as if the physical appearance was veiled by the spiritual. Many tried: again, only Spilsbury (in my view) came close to it. For all sorts of people to look on John Fletcher was to look on Christ Jesus, or at the very least one of his angels. "We went

²⁷ Slater, op. cit.

²⁸ See Anne Buck, *Dress in Eighteenth-Century England*, (1979).

²⁹ For all information on figures, plates and plaques of Fletcher, I am grateful to Rev Donald Ryan.

³⁰ B. Trinder, op.cit. p. 271.



C:iii.



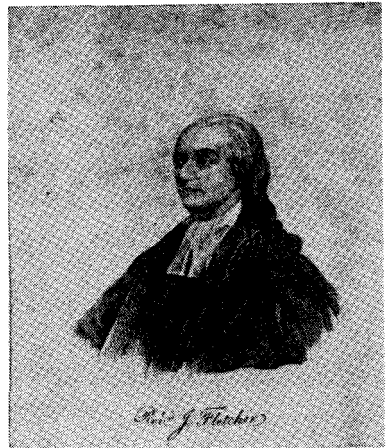
D:i.



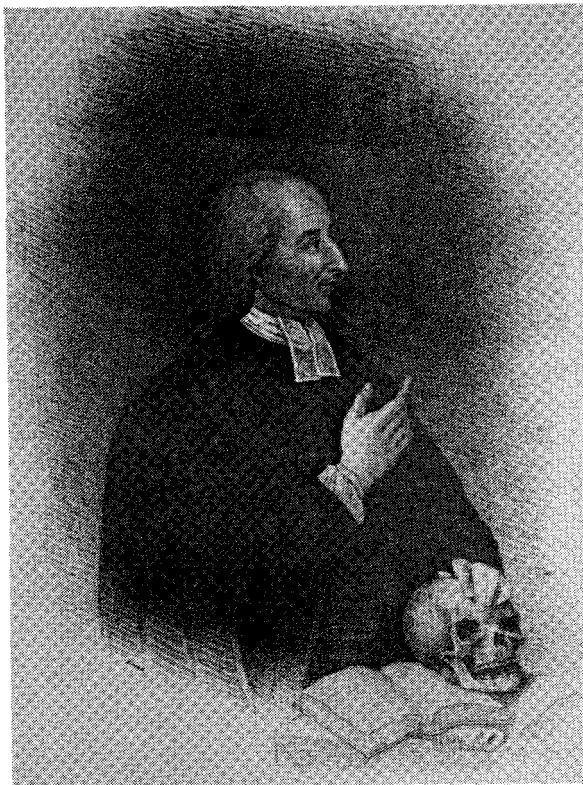
B:v.



D:iv.



D:vii.



B:iii.



D:v.



E:i.

to look at him, for heaven seemed to beam from his countenance".³¹ James Ireland, to whose magnanimity we owe the Spilsbury portrait, was no sentimental hero-worshipper, but an astute businessman and an art connoisseur to boot. He was also a profoundly spiritual and sane Christian: as we seek to appreciate the portraitist's art, to disentangle myth from reality, and ourselves tread the Christian way, I at least am thankful for the initiative of this "son of peace, whose heart, hand and house are open ..."³² for a "striking likeness" of a man who himself sought to be a likeness of his Lord.

PETER S. FORSAITH

(Peter Forsaith is a local preacher in the Leeds Richmond Hill circuit. He has studied Fletcher of Madeley over a number of years, and has produced several papers on aspects of his life and ministry. He has also researched the history of early Methodism in the Leeds area, and produced a booklet on this subject entitled 'A Kindled Fire').

APPENDIX : EXTANT PORTRAITS AND PRINTS OF JOHN W. FLETCHER

PORTRAITS

- 1 *by Jonathan Spilsbury, 1777*
 - i in John Wesley's Chapel, The Horsefair, Bristol.u/s
Size - 995mm x 760mm.Oil on canvas.
 - ii in Westminster College, Madingley Road, Cambridge.u/s
Size - apparently the same as the Bristol portrait. Oil on canvas.
The property of The Cheshunt Foundation
 - iii in Wesley House, Cambridge, a copy. Size - approx 39" x 30" (990mm x 760mm). Oil on canvas, glazed.
 - iv in Methodist Archives and History Center, Drew University, Madison, New Jersey, U.S.A.. This is of head and shoulders only - but portrays the sitter facing to his right; opposite to the authentic Spilsbury pose. It was bequeathed by Bishop John Fletcher Hurst (1834-1903).u/s Size 29" x 24" (unframed) (737mm x 610mm). Oil on canvas.
 - v Cased miniature painted 1786 for Mrs. Mary Fletcher (see ref 6). Now lost.

- 2 *by John Jackson R.A., c 1805*
 - i in Wesley's Chapel, City Road, London.u/s
Size - 34 3/4" x 27 1/2" (878mm x 684mm)
Oil on canvas, glazed.
 - ii in Methodist Archives and History Center, Drew University, Madison, New Jersey, U.S.A.. 'A fine early twentieth century copy' (c. 1925).
Oil on canvas.
 - iii there is one copy known to be privately owned in the U.K.

³¹ Henry Moore *The Life of Mrs Mary Fletcher* (London 1875) p. 159n.

³² Dedication, John Fletcher *Plan of Reconciliation* (London 1777).

PRINTS**A Spilsbury** tql.

- i 13" x 9 1/4" (330 x 235 mm) (approximate) "Publish'd Sepr 20 1786 by J Spilsbury Nr 10. St Geo's Row, Oxford Turnpike, LONDON". A fine mezzotint of the portrait.
- ii 5 1/2" x 4 1/2" (140 x 114 mm) "J. Spilsbury, Pinxr (?) et Sculpt ... Publish'd August 1st 1802 by J Spilsbury, St George's Row, Oxford Turnpike, LONDON". A much less realistic appearance: no skull, and the bible is now almost upright.

B after Spilsbury; of varying quality.

- i tql 116 x 94 mm; head looking left; framed, dark background.
- ii tql 155 x 115 mm; similar to B/i; unframed, shaded background.
- iii tql 155 x 115 mm; as B/ii; but inscr. (?) "Blood fe" An engraving in the *Evangelical Magazine*, October 1811 carries the inscription "Blood Sculpt. Successor to Mr. Ridley." (see engraving D/ii below).
- iv tql 85 x 66 mm; cruder; framed, dark ground; inscr. "W.T. Fry, Sculpt" and "London, published by J. Kershaw, 14 City Road".
- v tql 69 x 55 mm; inscr. "J.S. Stott Engr Halx" (frntpsce to *The Life of Mrs John Fletcher* by the Revd. J. Burns; Halifax nd); possibly other sizes also.
- vi tql ; virtually indistinguishable from B/v, but with - rounder nose and fuller face. No inscr.
- vii as B/iv; but without skull and Bible. framed, 77 x 63 mm
- viii hand painted dust pressed tile panel, from Jackfield, Shropshire. 235 x 195 mm.

C after Jackson

- i hl 109 x 84 mm (though sizes do vary); inscr "Painted by J. Jackson Esqr R.A." and "Engraved by T.A. Dean". Framed, dark ground.
- ii hl 106 x 83 mm; Almost indistinguishable from C/i; inscr. "Painted by J. Jackson Esqr R.A." and "Engraved by E. Mackenzie". Framed, dark ground.
- iii hl 238 x 181 mm, as C/i, inscr. 'Engraved by J. Thomson'; a very fine steel engraving.

D other engravings

- i hl 103 x 80 mm; preaching, loosely after Jackson; inscr. "W.J. White" and "Pub'd by Josh Butterworth & Son Jany 1822". Framed. Probably made as a frontispiece for Cox's biography.
- ii hs(l) 88 x 69 mm, in oval frame, inscr. "Ridley sc".
- iii hs(l) 84 x 68 mm, oval; similar to D/ii; inscr. "Prud'homme sct" and "Pubd by N. BANGS & T. MASON, N York for the Methodist Episcopal Church".
- iv hs(l) 82 x 74 mm; similar to D/ii and D/iii, but cruder. Frame is more round.
- v hs(r) 108 x 86 mm; in oval frame, looking upwards. Inscr "From an original Drawing taken on his last visit to Bristol" and "Published March 1810 by Danl Orme 308 Oxford Street, London".
- vi hs(r) 82 x 65 mm; similar to D/v, but cruder. No frame.
- vi hs(13/4) 45 x 48 mm; slight similarity to Jackson, but would appear to be earlier. A picture of quality.
- viii hs(r) oval frame; engraving apparently based on Wedgwood plaque.

E *Woodcut*

E/i fl(r) 114 x 55 (at base) mm. Tricorn hat; preaching bands; clerical coat; breeches and hose; shoes long and pointed, buckled; cane in right hand; left hand inside coat. No background.

F *Plaques, statues, plates etc.* Those known to the author are:-

- i** Wedgwood plaque; bust in oval frame. (see D/viii)
- ii** Impressed round brass plaque, diam 2 1/4". Profile bust, looking right, c 1830.
- iii** Standing figure. 260mm (10 1/4"), Parian, made by Minton from c 1847 (marked example 1850).
- iv** Standing figure, 7 1/4", glazed earthenware & hand coloured. Staffordshire, c 1800.
- v** As F/iv, but holding skull; 172 mm (6 3/4") c 1850. After Spilsbury portrait.
- vi** Octagonal earthenware plate, possibly Swansea c 1840. Transfer of "Fletcher looking left with his left hand on an open book and the right hand in the attitude of preaching" (18) After Jackson portrait.
- vii** A 160mm (6 1/4") round earthenware plate, with transfer of John Fletcher in black, 3/4 left - after engraving D/ii. Impressed mark 'Dillwyn Swansea' c 1825.

Abbreviations

fl - full length; tq1 - threequarter length; hl - half length; hs - head and shoulders; (r) - right side; (l) - left side; 3/4 - angled view; u/s - unsigned.

(on prints)

fe. - 'fecit' ('made'); pinxr. - 'painted'; sc./sct./sculpt. - carved (generally indicating a wood engraving).

A quality colour postcard taken from the Spilsbury portrait in Bristol is available from the author of this article, at:- 21, Wakefield Road; Garforth; Leeds LS25 1AN. Price: individually 10p; 90p for 10; £8.00 per 100 (all plus postage)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For information on known portraits and engravings I am much indebted to the research staff of the National Portrait Gallery, who have been most helpful over several years. My resources were much expanded by the assistance I received from Dr Kenneth E. Rowe, Professor of Church History and Librarian of the Methodist Archives and History Center, Drew University; and from Rev. Dr. Frank Baker of Duke Divinity School who kindly let me have material he had accumulated on this subject.

The resources of the library of the City of Leeds Art Gallery have been invaluable; thanks also to Rev. Jack Cawthorne, for reading the typescript and offering valuable comments from an art history viewpoint.

CHARLES WESLEY IN THE RUDE POPULOUS NORTH

The Newcastle Journal,
23rd September to 3rd October 1742

Introduction

There is a chasm in Mr Charles Wesley's journal from this time [22nd September 1741] till the 1st of January 1743' wrote Thomas Jackson, the early Victorian biographer of Charles Wesley and editor of his journal¹. His somewhat dramatic expression reflects not only an editor's natural frustration at lost evidence but some deeper concerns also, as his following words make clear. 'This [chasm] is the more to be regretted because it would appear that, during this interval, he entered upon service which was somewhat new to him. As a field-preacher he had not led the way, but followed in the path of his brother and of their mutual friend Mr Whitefield But in the course of this year 1742 there is a reason to believe that he carried the truth into extensive districts where they had never been, and that at the hazard of his life.'

This is a perceptive comment, and its significance is well borne out by the fortunate survival of one item from the missing parts of Charles Wesley's journal, written from Newcastle during his first visit to Tyneside in the early autumn of 1742². The heading of the manuscript, (Newcastle) 5th Journal', makes it clear that what survives is only a portion (the final portion in fact) of what had presumably been a much longer account of Charles' work on Tyneside. Yet this portion is by any standards a most interesting and important source for the light it throws on Charles Wesley's genuinely pioneering role in the early period of the revival, and also on the origins of Methodism on Tyneside, with people, places, methods of work, and circumstances all highlighted in strong and vivid relief.

¹ Thomas Jackson *The Life of the Revd Charles Wesley M.A.* 2 vols. 1841, i, p305. See also *The Journal of the Revd Charles Wesley* ed. Thomas Jackson, 2 vols., (1849), i, p. 302. [hereafter CWJ]

² The manuscript is in *Charles Wesley Folio IV (MAM P11)*, at the Methodist Archives and Research Centre, John Rylands University Library of Manchester to which acknowledgement is due. It was printed in the American journal *Methodist History* XXV, 1, October 1986, pp. 41-60, edited by John R. Tyson, to whom acknowledgement is also made for making the document known. John Tyson's version however is regrettably marred by a great many mis-readings of the original. The version printed below is an entirely fresh transcription, newly edited and annotated. I would like to acknowledge the help of Alison Peacock, Alan Rose, Hilda Guy, Frank Manders, Ann Lindsay, Audrey Bland, Geoffrey Nicholson and especially my wife Mary who shared in the work of transcribing the journal and typed this piece for publication.

John Wesley first visited Newcastle upon Tyne for one weekend at the end of May 1742, made a considerable stir by two open air sermons in the poor and crowded Sandgate area of the town, and then departed not to return again until 13th November that same year³. In between these two visits Charles came, probably in late August or early September, and stayed several weeks, the last ten days of which are covered by this surviving part of his Newcastle journal⁴. It was under his direction that a Methodist society was founded in the town, that evangelistic forays were made for the first time into the coal-mining and iron-making communities along the valleys of the rivers Tyne and Derwent to the west of Newcastle, that a society meeting place was appointed in Newcastle, that Methodist patterns of work, doctrine, and behaviour were made clear, that the parameters of Methodism in relation to other religious bodies were defined, and that Methodism's close relationship with the working classes of Tyneside was established. As Thomas Jackson had perceived, Charles Wesley here was without doubt carrying the revival into districts where neither his brother nor Whitefield nor any other Methodist pioneer had been before him and moreover he was doing this at a good deal of personal risk. It is quite justifiable to regard him as the founder of Tyneside Methodism, though the long term, patient work of consolidation was undoubtedly done by John Wesley, and other preachers.

Charles Wesley paid only seven visits to Tyneside (compared with John's forty nine) and the last two of these were not evangelistic in character⁵. Indeed on the very last (in 1751) he bemoaned his feebleness in the pulpit: 'Preaching, I perceive, is not now my principal business'⁶. How striking is the contrast with the ardent evangelist of only nine years before. The journal for 1742 might indeed be seen as Charles' 'first, fine, careless rapture' in his Tyneside work. He revels in the work, in the excitement of opening new area, in confrontations with the enemy (variously identified as sin, the mob, polite indifference, the pride of the rich, Pharisaism, Calvinism, Stillness, Antinomianism, and smuggling),

³ *The Journal of the Revd John Wesley*, ed Nehemiah Curnock, 8 vols. 1909-1916 (reprint 1938), iii, pp. 3-15, pp. 50-60 [hereafter *JWJ*]. For an account of John and Charles Wesley's work in Newcastle upon Tyne and the north east in general see G.E. Milburn *The Travelling Preacher: John Wesley in the North East 1742-1790*, Wesley Historical Society (North East Branch) 1987.

⁴ Despite the loss of parts of Charles Wesley's journal his first Tyneside visit was known from other sources, and was partially reconstructed by some writers. See for instance, W.W. Stamp, *The Orphan House of Wesley, with Notices of Early Methodism in Newcastle upon Tyne and its vicinity*, (1863) pp. 4-10. Stamp supplied information not contained in the extract printed below.

⁵ The dates of Charles Wesley's north eastern visits are: Autumn 1742 (to 3 October), 30 May to 21 June 1743, 17 February to 8 March 1744, 31 October to 14 December 1744, 25 October to 31 December 1746, 24 September to 4 October 1749 (not in his *Journal*), and 8 August to 26 August 1751.

⁶ *CWJ*, ii, p. 91.

in the warmth of the ordinary Tyneside folk, in being hailed as the 'Keelmen's chaplain,' in finding allies in unexpected places (even among the dissenting ministers), and above all in an intoxicating sense of being a captain of God's troops on the evangelical battlefield. Perhaps he was carried away by his enthusiasm. Certainly the entries in his published journal relating to his later visits to Tyneside reveal a growing sense of the need for retrenchment, discipline, and control, as though he was sadly learning the lesson that the early excitement had not been a guarantee of genuine holiness and Christian behaviour⁷. He ought to have known this, and no doubt he was reminded of it by his brother John. Certainly when John arrived in Newcastle the stamp of order and discipline becomes more obvious. Charles' dissenting friend George Bruce is now identified as an enemy of Methodism. Rules for the Methodists are published and indeed first printed in Newcastle. And the Newcastle society membership, most of which was the fruit of Charles' work, is sifted carefully though with many departures and evictions⁸.

But Charles was by no means a failure. His 'weaknesses' (if that is a fair name for his enthusiasm, impetuosity, and openness) were paradoxically the qualities needed for pioneering work at the stage when fire and energy rather than order and control were the essentials. His 1742 journal shows without doubt that he launched Newcastle Methodism with the powerful impulse that was needed for its later growth and development, even though this later work was carried on by different hands than his own.

The details of Charles' first visit need no analysis here and are best read first hand in his own account. However one point deserves to be made, if only briefly. The more I worked through this document the more powerfully I became aware of the context (both human and physical) in which the work Charles describes was carried on⁹. Early eighteenth-century Newcastle rose up in my imagination - the ancient walled town still largely contained within its medieval boundaries; the river busy with trading vessels, colliers and keelboats; the great merchants' houses along the quayside, the Close, and Sandhill; the medieval bridge with its houses and shops; the Keelmen's Hospital; the old parish churches and the more recent dissenting meeting houses; and everywhere the narrow lanes, 'chares' and stairs leading up from the river to the centre of the town. I was moved also to follow Charles (both in imagination and by car) on his journeys to the former pit villages and industrial communities that lie west of Newcastle, on the south side of

⁷ Ibid i, pp. 314-315, 317, 386, 388.

⁸ JWJ, iii, p. 67n., pp. 70-73

⁹ The best general account of Newcastle's history is still Sydney Middlebrooke, *Newcastle upon Tyne: its growth and achievement* (1950, 1968), Of the older histories that by Henry Bourne (1736) is the nearest in time to the Wesleys' first visits. Much valuable material can be found in Eneas Mackenzie, *A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Town and County of Newcastle upon Tyne* (1827).

the Tyne out to Swalwell, Whickham, Ryton and Tanfield, old-style villages still in 1742, and bearing much of their rural character, yet increasingly encircled by the evidences of the industrial revolution¹⁰.

All this confirmed me in my belief that an essential dimension of Methodist history is to be found in local history, studied where possible not only in documents, maps and books but on foot, in the very places where the Methodist pioneers themselves trod. An account so richly detailed as Charles' 1742 journal, reveals its fullest interest when read with a close local knowledge of the places mentioned. I have tried to give some indication of the of background detail in the footnotes to the text.

Biographical details are also given in the footnotes where identification has been possible, which usually meals for gentlemen and clerics. Charles' account is full of the names of ordinary people, mainly early members of the Methodist Society, who unfortunately have left little or no record behind them. Of these 'Brother Wilkinson' appears to have been the very first Methodist on Tyneside. Members of the Wesley Historical Society will be pleased to observe that among these names is that of a certain John Bowmer.

Editorial Practice

The journal is printed here in a form which is as near as possible to the way in which Charles Wesley wrote it, including his wayward use of capital letters, and his constant abbreviations. The latter may at first cause some slight difficulty to the reader but the advantage is maintaining the sense of haste and excitement with which Charles, in rare periods of leisure, recounted the work in Newcastle for the benefit of his brother, to whom the document was to be sent.

Square brackets are used for editorial insertions; round brackets are Charles' own. In a piece of writing so impregnated with Scriptural language it is difficult (and indeed hardly necessary here) to identify all the references and allusions, but the major texts are indicated.

(Newcastle) 5th Journal Sept. 23 1742

[Sept 22] Several of our dissenting Brethren "wd [would] needs speak with me after the Company was gone. Most of ym [them] were open hearted, & ready to part with their Idol Adherence¹² but one was much disturbed yt [that] I shd [should] differ from the Church of Scotland. This cursed Devilish Notional Faith! How inaccessible is a

¹⁰ Accounts of these villages can be found in William Hutchinson, *History and Antiquities of the County Palatine of Durham* 3 vols. (1787).

¹¹ There were at least four Scotch Presbyterian or Secessionist congregations in Newcastle in 1742, at Sandgate, Garth Heads (above Sandgate, near the Keelmen's Hospital), Groat Market and Castle Garth. Other dissenting meeting houses at that date included those of the Unitarians (Hanover Square), Baptists (Tuthill Stairs) and Quakers (Pilgrim Street). E. Mackenzie, *History of Newcastle* (1827), p. 367 ff.

¹² Adherence to Calvinistic beliefs, and especially to the doctrine of predestination.

man of Satan's *Election*' There is more Hope of a Deist than of Him.

Thurs. Sept. 23 Expd [Expounded] the Woman of Canaan to a vast multitude this morning. Glory be to GOD, who still ministers seed to the sower & Bread to the Eater. We had many women of Canaan among us, who, I trust, will never cease crying after Him, till Jesus answers Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt [Matt. 15, 22-29].

The morning wd not suffice to speak with those who came to me. By 12 I got to Swalwell¹³, a populous Town 3 miles from Newcastle. Found about 1000 people gathered in a meadow made almost for the purpose. I stood under a large tree, on ye Top of a Green Hill, of an easy ascent. I cd not help asking, as the People flocked from all sides 'Who are these that fly as a Cloud, & as Doves to their windows?' [Isa. 60, 8.]¹⁴ Before we had done the Hymn, I think there cd not be fewer than 8000 poured in upon us. I shew'd ym (GOD being my strong Helper) their damnable Estate, & the only Possible Salvation, from Hosea 13.9 'O Israel, thou hast destroy'd thyself, but in me is thy Help. 'I am sure it was glad Tidings to ye poor Colliers from wm [whom] the Word shall not return void. Promised to see ym again next Wedn, & rode back to N. [Newcastle].

Having sent away my Transcriber this morning, commended to ye Grace of GOD, I was employed all ye aftern in writing out my Journal myself Just call'd at Newgate¹⁵ whence the Prisoners had sent me a Petition to Visit ym & appointed Tuesday. Drank tea with our B. [Brother] Robinson's mother. Saw a Dancing-room¹⁶ wch [which] we have thoughts of taking for our Society; & met ym for to night at B. Jackson's.

¹³ Swalwell is on the south side of the Tyne, and on the eastern bank of the river Derwent not far from its junction with the Tyne. It was the site of one major part of the great iron-making complex established around 1690 on both sides of the Derwent by Sir Ambrose Crowley (d.1713). Coal mining was also carried on here. The 'green hill' referred to by Charles Wesley was presumably part of the slope to the south of Swalwell, where the ground rises some 300 feet towards Whickham. In this reference as elsewhere scepticism must be expressed as to Wesley's estimates of the size of his congregations. The total population of Swalwell in 1811 was 1,393, so that, even allowing for some possible diminution since 1742, his figure of 8,000 must be greatly exaggerated. The audience at Swalwell was 'near 2,000' on 29 September (see text), which is a more reasonable figure, though still possibly inflated.

¹⁴ John Tyson makes the interesting point that the imagery in this verse of scripture, and in that from Luke in the next paragraph, is used in two of Charles Wesley's hymns published in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1749), each headed 'After Preaching to the Newcastle Colliers'. The opening lines of the two hymns are 'Ye neighbours and friends of Jesus, draw near' and 'Who are these that come from afar?'. Tyson, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-59. It is hard not to conclude that the inspiration behind these hymns lay in Charles' work on Tyneside as recorded in this journal.

¹⁵ Newgate, the most ancient, and the strongest, of the medieval gates of Newcastle, had served as the town gaol for debtors and felons since 1400. The building, which stood close to St. Andrew's Church, was finally replaced by a new prison in Carliol Square in 1823.

¹⁶ The dancing room appears to have been on Lisle Street, opposite to the site where the Orphan House was built in 1743. Stamp, *op. cit.* p.10. This entry in the journal shows that the Newcastle Methodist society was already formed. It grew from less than 70 to 250 between 23rd and 29th September (see text).

It was a Meeting indeed! for our Lord was in the midst of us. Never have I felt stronger Faith for Others. My Tongue was loos'd to proclaim the Love of Xt Crucified. I called upon ye poor, & lame, ye halt, & the blind; & even compell'd ym to come in [Luke 14, 21-23.]. Every time we prayed, some or other rec'd [received] Forgiveness. Two of ym gave Glory to GOD before all. Two more declared to me yt they have found the Peace wch passeth Knowledge. All rejoiced in hope of ye Grace wch shall be brought unto ym at ye Revelation of Jesus Xt.

Fri. Sept. 24 Began our Lord's Discourse with ye Woman of Samaria [John. 4, 5-42] but cd not get half thro' it. Never have I seen a more deeply attentive audience! no not in Kingswood¹⁷. Breakd [Breakfasted] at Mrs R's, one of ye 99 righteous Persons, who, so they imagine, need no repentance. I [?related] ye experiences of myself, my Parents, & others, who have profited in the Jewish religion beyond our Equals, & she was, by a miracle of Grace, convinced. A y [?young] woman, who lay a dying at ye next door, but wd not hear of having me, was now overruled to send for me, & we all adjourned thither. She hoped to be saved (as they all tell me on their Death-beds) because she had done no Harm. GOD gave me convincing words (to strip her of her own Righteousness) wch struck ym at ye rebound. The mother & both her Daughters are now, I trust, poor Publicans¹⁸.

Confer'd with several others, who earnestly desired to be taken into our Society. I cd not reject ym, fer they see themselves fit for nothing but Hell.

Rode to Tanfield¹⁹, & preached the Gospel from that most comprehensive word It is finished! [John 19, 30] I trust some found it applied to their Hearts. Described his sufferings again at the publick House from Isa.63, Who is this that cometh from Eden in died [sic] garments from Bosrah! Slept in Peace at my Collier's.²⁰

Sat. 25 Expounded the Paralytic Healed, & spoke searching Words to ye unredeem'd. Accepted the repeated Invitation of a neighbouring

¹⁷ The colliery community near Bristol where the Wesley's open air work began in 1739.

¹⁸ The imagery of the Publican and the Pharisee was frequently on Charles Wesley's lips. See his sermon 'The Pharisee and the Publican' in T. R. Albin and O. A. Beckerlegge, *Charles Wesley's Earliest Evangelical Sermons*. (1987), pp. 87-93. The biblical reference is to Luke 18, 9-13.

¹⁹ Tanfield, about seven miles south west of Newcastle, was the centre of another early coal mining community. The mines in the early eighteenth century were owned by the Wortley Montague family - see note 20 below. Christopher Hopper (1722-1802), one of the first recruits from Tyneside into the ranks of the Methodist travelling preachers, had already heard Charles Wesley preach at Tanfield Cross on an earlier occasion. J. Telford (ed.) *Wesley's Veterans* (n.d) i, p. 114. It proved to be the beginning of Hopper's conversion, which was consummated the following year.

²⁰ Identity unknown, but it is obvious that Charles had struck up a warm relationship with this miner on an earlier visit to Tanfield.

Farmer²¹, & pass'd ye morning at his House. There were 3 or 4 families lived together in an old Country Seat. One of ye women had been a constant Hearer of us in Moorfields²², & tasted yt ye Lord is gracious. She rec'd us gladly, as they did all. An old Dissenter desired me to tell him the meaning of 1 John 3. 9, 'Whosoever is born of GOD doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him, & he cannot sin, because he is born of GOD'. I expounded the whole chapter, but gave not ye least License to Sin. He took it with marvellous patience. In discourse he brought ye Old Plea for Sin yt S. Paul was carnal, & sold under it [Rom. 7, 14.]. I shewed him yt ye Apostle cd not possibly speak of himself in that Chapter. He was convinced, & gave up that strong-hold likewise. I have not met with his Fellow among all ye Men of Adherence: He is a Prodigy of Tractableness; & surely not far from ye Kingdom of Heaven.

My Host made me promise to come to his House myself, & send my Bror. or whosoever of our Friends shd ever visit this Country. We took sweet Counsel together. After Dinner I visited a poor sick man, who hoped to be saved for his repentance, but gladly heard of a new & better way, even Faith in ye Blood of Jesus. At 2 met by appointm't an Horsman & waggon full of Colliers & others, & join'd in Prayer & singing till it was time to preach. There was a vast concourse of People whom I labour'd to convince of Sin & of Righteousness from 1 Cor. 5.9. Know ye not yt ye unrighteous shall not inherit ye Kingdom of GOD? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor adulterers, nor Thieves nor covetous, nor Drunkards shall inherit ye K. of GOD. And such were some of you. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in ye Name of ye L. Jesus. & by ye Spirit of our GOD. My mouth was opened to preach both Law & Gospel. 2 Ministers went to hear me at ye House where I lodg'd. Some in their room laugh'd & made great disturbance for a time. After preaching S. [Sister] Jackson spoke to ym very plainly & by her Rebuke stopt their mouths. — By 6 we got back to N.C. [Newcastle]

At 7 met the Society at my Lodgings (now increased to 70). The great Power of GOD was among us as I have seldom known. I had just rec'd strong Consolation from the Lr [letter] of a Friend, w^m I now commended to the Constant Prayers of our Infant Society. John Kitchin, just before we met had come desiring to be (as he said) with the Christians. I asked him concerning his state, & he only answered me 'I am a poor Sinner!' This he spake in great simplicity, without that Gross affectation

²¹ Possibly John Brown of Tanfield Lea, later of Low Spen. See *JWJ*iii, p.53 and note, p.54, p. 81, *et al.* Brown became an active local preacher and Methodist pioneer, and undertook some travelling preaching with Christopher Hopper. Charles Wesley was to describe him later as 'a simple man whom the Lord has wonderfully raised up for this work'. *CWJ*, i, p.388. John Wesley noted how, by Brown's 'rough and strong, though artless, words many of his neighbours had been much convinced and began to search the Scriptures as they had never done before'. *JWJ*iii, p. 81. See also Stamp, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

²² One of the great London preaching sites used by the Wesleys, George Whitefield et al.

of the Still Brethren²³. After ye Society, he came & told me he had been struck blind, as he exprest it, in the room, so yt for a quarter of an your he cd see nothing in it, when in a moment the Sun of Righteousness arose upon him with healing in his wings. His Gesture explain'd his words for he appear'd full of all Peace & Joy in Believing.

Sun. Sept. 26. Met a still larger Congregation, I think, than ever. Thousands and thousands listen'd to my exposition of Ezekiel's vision of dry bones. There were many in the Open Valley, & they were very dry; but the Breath of the Lord was present to quicken ym. Lord, open the Graves of all thy People & put thy spirit within us, & bring us into our own Land. — Visited 3 sick women wo [who] recd my saying; one of ym above 90 years old.

Recd ye Sacrt [Sacrament] at St. Andrews²⁴. Dined with our B. Wilkison, the First-fruits of Newcastle. His wife also grows in the Knowledge of our L. Jesus Xt. 'Tis very remarkable that in this place the Hsb'd & wife are generally called together.

Walked to San[d]gate²⁵; but such a sight mine eyes have never beheld. The usual congregation at Kennington²⁶ was an Handful in comparison. I stood on the highest point of the Hill so as to command the whole assembly, wch was extended in a semicircle on either hand; ye Hill²⁷ & ye area below was so thronged, yet so quiet, yt my soul was filled with awe at ye sight. The sun shone in all its Brightness, but without his strength & Fierceness. GOD opened my mouth so yt I verily believe the very most of ym heard. 'Tis hardly to be believed, but yt with GOD all things are possible. I preached the Law & Gospel, about half an hour each from I Cor. 6.9 &c. Know ye not yt ye unrighteous shall not inherit

²³ Those Moravians and others who believed true faith could only be found in 'stillness' rather than in my active pursuit of the means of grace, especially the Lord's Supper. Charles Wesley had been affected by stillness for a brief period early in 1741. *JWJ*, ii, p.418.

²⁴ St. Andrew's church, situated just within the town walls, at the head of Newgate Street, was one of the four medieval churches of Newcastle. Charles Wesley's lodging on this first visit was within St. Andrew's parish, as was the Orphan House of 1743, the first purpose-built Methodist centre in Newcastle. St. Andrew's came to have a special significance for the early Newcastle Methodists and both Wesleys worshipped there frequently on their visits to the town.

²⁵ A suburb (consisting of one long street) which had grown up on the banks of the Tyne, outside the medieval walls, and taking its name from Newcastle's south-easterly gate. 'This Street, has in it a vast number of narrow lanes on each side, which are crowded with houses. It is chiefly inhabited by people that work upon the water, particularly the keelmen. The number of souls in this street and the lanes belonging to it, is computed to several thousands. Henry Bourne, *The History of Newcastle upon Tyne* (1736), p. 154. John Wesley's first preaching place in Newcastle (30 May 1742) was near the eastern end of Sandgate and is marked by an obelisk erected in 1891.

²⁶ Kennington Common in London, which like Moorfields was a popular venue for open air preachers.

²⁷ The ground above Sandgate rises steeply towards the Keelmen's Hospital and what was to be the New Road (where the Wesleys built a chapel in 1813 to serve the Sandgate area). This hillside provided a natural amphitheatre for the Methodist preachers.

ye K. of GOD?, & such were some of you: but ye are washed &c. The word was as a Fire & as an Hammer. Ascribe unto the Lord Worship and Power. After speaking an hour to ye utmost extent of my voice, I felt no more pain or weariness than if I had said nothing; but walked or rather ran, quite round the Town as it was to Mr. J's. It is GOD yt girdeth me with strength of War. He maketh my feet as Hart's feet, & setteth me up on high. He maketh mine hands to fight & mine arms shall break even a Bow of Steel [Psa. 18, 32-34].

Went with my old Friend (who is become a little child) to his Society of Pharisees²⁸. Their spokesman, a Schoolmaster, made me a Bow & a speech, wherein he gave me to know, as soon as I came in, yt they were not unanimous about it, & therefore cd not receive me; so (in effect) I Might go about my business. I told ym I did not mean to obtrude myself upon ym but only came to join with ym in Prayer: but if they refused to let a Minister of ye Ch. of E. [Church of England] pray with ym I had no more to do but to take my leave. They answered I might pray, if I wd pray by a Form. I replied That was my design, for I know no Prayers & no Church like our own. That I was a True Son & Servt of ye Church, & such shd live & die. That I had baptis'd many into our Comunion, & 'twas my constant Business so to do, but yt I cd meet with exceeding few Ch. of E. men any where, most of her Children having forsaken their Mother, both in Principle & Practice, & turned back to Popery, even it's worst Error, Justification by Works: & refusing all obedience to her Injunctions. You who call yrselves of ye Church (I added), do you not hear the Church? She comands you to fast every Friday in ye year. Do you obey her? If not ye are no true members of ye Ch. of E. She teaches yt we are Justified by Faith only, without Works, yt we are to expect ye Inspiration of ye H. Ghost, yea & to be Filled with ye H.G. Do you agree to these Fundamental Doctrines? If not ye are no Ch. of E. men. Mr Steward answer'd He had heard & read our most famous Divines, & they never taught any other than I said. As to their Preaching, I answered, I myself since I came hither had heard one of their Preachers say We were saved by the Merit of our Repentance. And as to our Writers, I asked if he had ever heard of Archbishop T²⁹. 'Yes Sir, we have his Works. Then ye have never read ym; for he has Ten Sermons to prove the Popish Doctrine of Justification by Faith and Works & their Title is Regeneration the Condition of Justification. Our Church calls all that teach such Doctrine

²⁸ A reference to one of the pre-Wesleyan religious societies of Newcastle, whose members emphasised strict living and good works as the way to salvation. Charles Wesley refers to their leader, a schoolmaster, as Mr Steward; later he speaks of "the Steward of their Society" so Steward appears to be a title not a surname.

²⁹ John Tillotson (1630-1694). As Archbishop of Canterbury 1691-4, he pursued a policy of 'comprehension' to include Protestant dissenters (other than Unitarians) in the Church of England. A famous preacher, his *Sermons*, ed. R. Barker, were published in 14 volumes 1695-1706.

Antichrists, & enemies of Christ & his Gospel. Her Homilies³⁰ on Salvation are ye most excellent writings of any but ye Inspired: & I earnestly recomend ym to yr most serious Perusal. Her Definition of Faith is [left blank in the text].

Again Mr Steward interposed, to mend her Definition by taking in good works. I told him I found he had not so much as read our Homilies, & knew nothing of ye Doctrines of our Church, or he wd have remembered She had sufficiently guarded her meaning concerning ye Consequent Necessity of Good Works. Yes he had read ym, he said, for They had the very best Edition of ym, Mr Nurse's [sic]³¹. I ask'd him to show me these gd [Grand] Homilies on Salv'n by Faith. He brought ye Book but, to his great Surprise, found his Editor had clean lifted ym out; wch I knew, tho' he did not. Well, Sir, said I, you see yr famous Divines do not all preach Justification by Faith. No; they have no Occasion for Faith; they can build without a Foundation. When he had taken breath, he fell abruptly upon my holding Assemblies contrary to ye Church. I asked Why he fancied Religious Societies³² contrary to ye Ch, or how then he cd vindicate his own? 'O but', sd he, 'you do not use the Prayers of ye Church.' Sir, ye are mistaken; we *do* use some of ym. But why not ye whole Service? Because that wd be contrary to an Order of our Church, namely That this Service be only used in Consecrated Places. That wd be giving occasion to ym yt seek occasion, & wd imediately cry out yt we had set up a Separate Commnion. He then talked of some of ye Canons, wch he said I broke; but I cut him short by desiring him first to prove that those Canon bound *me*. Again he was struck on an heap hearing me deny First Principles. I beg'd him to tell me by what Act of Parliamt they were ratified; & yet, I added, Because they have the Show of Authority, my Bror & I have observed, & do observe, more of ym than any two Clergymen in England. I exhorted ym all to learn & practise ye Doctrines of their own Church, & parted civilly. Three or 4 of their Pillars came out from among ym, & desired to be admitted into Our Society, finding we are wt [what] their Brethren *pretend* to be, in a manner, the only True Church of England men.

While I rested at B. Jackson's, several came to speak with me about their Souls, some who have found Rest, & more who are sincerely seeking it. Of the former were Marg. Stirt (an Old Believer), John Bowmer (Mr J's Son in Law) W. Todd & Jane Dent. This last informs me

³⁰ *Books of Homilies*. published under Edward VI and Elizabeth I, were traditionally regarded as carrying a high degree of authority in their elucidation of Anglican doctrine. Homilies three, four and five on 'Salvation', 'Faith' and 'Good Works' written by Thomas Cranmer, define the justification by faith. Charles Wesley quotes generously from the *Homilies* in his sermon 'Justification by Faith', and his 'Oxford Sermon on Justification'. Albin and Beckerlegge, op. cit. p. 37 ff p. 50ff. See also p.1 on the *Homilies*.

³¹ Peter Nurse (1663-1723) *Practical Discourses on Several Subjects, being some Select Homilies of the Church of England put into a new method and modern stile* 2 vols., (London 1708)

³² A reference here to the Methodist societies, such as had been formed in Newcastle.

she has been seeking Christ above 30 years, being ye Strictest Professor, but never able to find Rest. GOD by his Word, wch I minister, concluded her in Unbelief, & then had mercy upon her. On Thurs. Night (she said) I was waked out of sleep by those words, 'My Spirit beareth witness with thy Spirit that Thou are a Child of GOD' [Rom. 8, 16]. From that time I have been filled with Peace & Joy Unspeakable. Such inexpressible Pleasure I have in Reading, Praying, & Hearing, as I thought was not on this side Heaven. My eyes are strangely enlighten'd, so yt all things appear quite different to what they did before. I am full of Consolation; & yet I find there is something behind. I have Fears now & then yt I shall not hold out, or shall not be so always. I want that Perfect Love wch casts out Fear.

Met ye Society at my Lodgings, & yt great Power of GOD was with us. I asked again & again who had found it present to heal? Several bore witness of ye Increase of their Faith, & one yt she had now recd The Unspeakable Gift. We had most *sensible* Fellowship with our absent Brethren, & rejoic'd as if we had seen ym all before us. I marvell'd at ye Power of His Grace. How does he finish his work & cut it short! A short Work does He make with this People. Indeed I never saw such simple childlike souls. We prayed most earnestly for Labourers; & surely the Lord will not leave ym as sheep without a Shepherd.

Mon. Sept. 27. Finish'd my Discourse on ye Woman of Samaria [John. 4, 5-42]. The Hoarfrost did not lessen my audience. I trust we shall quickly have among us many hardy soldiers of Xt. Rejoic'd this morning with more who have now recd the Atonement. Eliz. Shafto, Ann Wanlas, Christian Gibson, Chris Coldwell are added to the Little Children whose sins are forgiven. Isab. Johnson recd Faith last night at ye Society, & all her Language now is My Soul doth magnify ye Lord, & my Spirit rejoiceth in GOD my Saviour.

My Audience at Tames³³ was twice as large as before. I opened the Book on Isa. 43, 23, [recte 25] 'I even I am He that blotteth out thy tranagressions for mine own sake, & will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance; let us plead together: declare Thou, that Thou mayst be Justified'. Recd great Power to preach ye Gospel to the Poor. Some of the Rich of this World stood, at a distance from the Vulgar, & *seem'd* to listen to the Truth. Squire Bows³⁴ staid some time, But when I mention'd

³³ The villages of High and Low Team, a little south east of Swalwell, were known locally as the 'Teams' which Charles Wesley, no doubt following local pronunciation, writes as 'Tames'. There were iron works here.

³⁴ George Bowes M.P. (1701-1760) inherited in 1722 the estates of Streatlam (near Barnard Castle) and Gibside (in the Derwent Valley six miles south west of Gateshead), the latter containing considerable coal reserves. He was one of the group known as the Grand Allies, a cartel dominating the local coal trade.

Hell to Ears Polite the Honble Worthley M.³⁵ took his leave abruptly. Return'd to Town, & called (at ye Keel-men's Hospital)³⁶ in the Name & Words of the Universal Saviour, 'Look unto me, & be ye saved all the End [sic] of the Earth' [Isa. 42, 22]. Employed all the evening in Conference. **Tues. 28.** Preach'd again at the Hospital. It rain'd hard in the Night & so continued till I began. Then GOD stayed the Bottles of Heaven [Job. 38, 37]. The Weather hitherto has been as remarkably favourable yt it ia almost a Proverb here 'There will be no rain this evening, for Mr — is to preach'. How pitiable are Those who exclude the particr [particular] Providence of GOD from such Little things as they call ym. In all my Ways I will acknowledge thee & Thou shalt direct my Paths [Prov. 3, 6].

Preach'd Repentance towd [toward] GOD & Faith in Jesus Xt from Acts 3.19 'Repent ye therefore, & be converted, yt your Sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from ye presence of ye Lord'. Near 2000 heard me patiently. Visited ye Sick in ye Hospital.

³⁵. Edward Wortley Montagu(e) M.P. (1678-1761), was not 'Honourable' as Charles Wesley seems to have believed. (He is to be distinguished from Edward Wortley Montague (1713-1776) son of Lady Mary, of inoculation fame.) The Wortley Montagues owned or leased various collieries in north west Durham at Tanfield, Stella, Causey *et al*. Despite the notorious uncertainty of coal mining Edward was worth nearly three quarters of a million when he died, exclusive of his landed properties. E. Hughes, *North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century: The North East 1700-1750*. (1952), pp. 163, 195, 235.

³⁶. Keels were amall shallow-draught boats, some with sails, some with oars, which 'brought the coal from up-river collieries down the water highway of the Tyne to the waiting ships below Newcastle's stone bridge, and to Shields at the mouth of the river, where the colliers were moored. The Keelmen and their craft, until their extinction in the mid-nineteenth century, were a distinctive, if turbulent, feature of the river life for over five hundred years, and even something of a legend ... Like most waterborne workers they developed as a cohesive group, resentful of interference, jealous of their privileges, and when ashore living in their own distinctive communities'. (Roger Finch, *Coals from Newcastle* (1973), p.22.) The Keelmen's Hospital was a large two-storied set of almshouses, built of brick around an open square on the high ground above Sandgate, where the inmates (retired or disabled keelmen, and their widows and dependants) might look out over the river where the keelmen had spent their working lives. Paid for by the keelmen themselves, the Hospital (which still stands) was erected in 1701. Charles Wesley, and then John, began to use the hospital as a preaching place in the autumn of 1742 and went on doing so for another two years until permission was withdrawn by the 'managers'. See *JWJ*, vi, p. 281. In fact all reference by John Wesley to the Hospital after December 1742 show him preaching 'near' it but never again in it, nor even in the Hospital Square. But Charles Wesley obviously continued his Methodist work at the Hospital during visits to Newcastle in June 1743, February-March 1744, and November 1744, when we find this last poignant entry in his journal, dated 15th November: 'I passed an hour with my dear Keelmen at the Hospital who are cruelly treated by their masters for the Gospel's sake'. *CWJ*, i, pp. 314, 315, 317, 352, 353, 387. The withdrawal of permission seems to have been one element in the friction between the keelmen and the Newcastle merchant oligarchy (the hostmen) who sought to control the Hospital and the Keelmen's Charity in general. See F.W. Dendy (ed.) *Extracts from the Records of the Company of Hostmen of Newcastle upon Tyne*, Surtees Society cv, (1901), pp. 172ff.

Recd at my Lodgings more Names for the Society. Call'd on Mr Br³⁷ the most moderate of ye Dissenting Preachers, & went with him to Newgate. Preached there to the Debtors & Felons from Isa. 61. 'The Spirit of ye Lord GOD is upon me &c'. That Spirit was mightily among us, & shook the Foundation of their Prisons. O that everyone's Bands might be loosed!

Dined at Mr Br's, and came to a nearer Agreemt. I rejoiced in His uprightness of Heart. Related my conviction of Unbelief and the manner in wch Faith came. His heart seem'd knit to us. Lord, what we know not, show Thou us.

At 3 met all the Family³⁸ of near 200 in their large room at the Hospital, & exhorted and prayed with ym till preaching-time. They recd me gladly; spake with much affection of my Bror Hall³⁹, whose memory is dear to them. I was quite spent by speaking to Them when I went out to preach on the Hill. The Congregation was vastly increased by our Nearness to the Town; but my Body for once failed me; having been speaking or preaching almost without intermission from 5 in the morning. Yet our Lord cd not fail of his Promise (Lo! I am with you always [Matt. 28, 20]) & directed me to Ezek. 16.1. Preached in great Weakness, yet my Hearers, I believe, were not so sensible of it as myself, for my Voice held out 3 quarters of an Hour. Visited one in the Hospital then walked (but sprained my Foot by the Way) to Mrs J.'s. Thence to my Inn, where a servt of Squire B's came to confer with me, who fights my Battles agt ye whole Family. He rejoic'd exceedingly in ye Glad Tydings I brought yt Jesus Xt hath purchas'd for us Power over all Sin. I sent by

³⁷ In the manuscript the last few letters of this name are heavily scored out. The person referred to is almost certainly George Bruce, M.A., minister of a Presbyterian congregation in Sandgate in the early eighteenth century. E. Mackenzie, *Newcastle upon Tyne* (1827), p. 384. Some explanation of the good relationship he struck up with Charles Wesley may be found in a sermon he preached to a ministers' meeting in Newcastle in August 1743 on *Personal Religion: a necessary qualification in a Minister of the Gospel* (published 1743). In it he said 'The cause I am pleading is that of religion and virtue; the good end I have in view is the credit and usefulness of a Gospel Ministry' (p.2). Ministers must take care to have their own souls as well as the souls of their hearers (p.17); nor should a minister 'think it unworthy of a man of his parts to instruct the poorest, nor to converse with the most vicious of their reformation' (p.5). However Bruce rejected 'gloomy enthusiasm' and 'angry zeal' (pp.6-7), which (along with accusations of 'Popery') no doubt was used to justify his break with the Methodists, and indeed his actual enmity towards them, by March 1743. See *JWJ*, iii, p. 72-3.

³⁸ This could mean the Methodist society meeting at the Keelmen's Hospital but is more likely to refer to the mixed community of Keelmen and their dependants who were inmates there.

³⁹ Westley Hall, a member of the Holy Club at Oxford: he attained a remarkable 'height of holiness' *JWJ*vi, p.91); married Martha Wesley (in equivocal circumstances); fell from grace and inflicted several mistresses on his wife; died repentant; was buried by John Wesley January 1776. Hall preached in Newcastle in 1740, and was obviously still remembered two years later, being spoken of by people there to Charles and also to John (*JWJ*, iii, pp. 13-14). The latter's published comment on his brother-in-law is scathing, in contrast to that of Charles in this document.

him a few of our Treatises to ye Young Ladies. Walked with his Help & Br Jackson's to our Dancing-room where the Society was met, now increas'd to 200. It was excessive hot, all ye Windows being shut; but I recd Extraordinary strength to exhort & pray for 2 hours. The enemy raged without (& not without Provocation) yt Xt shd be preached in his School & Synagogue. His Children broke the Windows, & attempted to break open the Door. Our Lord was Greater, & wrought more mightily among us. One was quite overpower'd thro' Vehemence of Desire, as she told Those who thought her in a Fit. By 9 we parted, & I dragd to B.J.'s a Body only not so weak as my Soul.

Wedn. 29. I live by the Gospel; & renew'd my strength to preach it this morning. Many poor People stood like Lambs in the Rain (the First we have had) while I declared my Mission to turn ym from Darkness to light, & from the Power of Satan to GOD, yt they might receive forgiveness of Sins, & an inheritance among all ym yt are sanctified [Acts 20, 32.]. Breakfd with a Constant Hearer of ye Word, & several of ye poor Keelmen (Keel-women I shd say) flocked to us. They related some instances of their Zeal wch pleased Them more yn me, as that a Gentleman, happening to say while I was preaching yt I ought to be sent to Bedlam, a stout y [?young] woman collard & kick'd him down the Hill. More of her Fellows join'd in the Pursuit so yt he was forced to fly for his Life. Another poor Scoffer they put into the Pound. I do indeed believe yt were any to offer me violence, ye People wd stone ym; by & by I trust they will learn to suffer wrong & turn the other Cheek.⁴⁰ Already there is, I am told, a visible alteration at San[d]gate. Swearing and Drinking is no more. They bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance. O yt they may adorn the Gospel in all things. Confer'd with more candidates for ye Society, wch is now augmented to 250. Marg. English gives GOD the Glory & informs me, yt I while I was speaking last in ye Society of the Blood of Jesus, the Spirit bore witness with that Blood, & applied it to her Heart. She felt her Sins forgiven, & is now in her First Joy.

Rode in ye hard Rain to Swalwell for my Word sake, not expecting a Congregation but many were gathered together, & waited quietly for my Coming. They wd not go, they said, but stay all day in ye rain if I wd but preach at last. I put ym under the Trees; stood upon some steps myseIf & preached thro this man Forgiveness of Sins. The Rain gave over & near 2000, I believe, heard me patiently, & among ym a Gentleman, an Officer. They all atood like men yt waited for ye Salvation of GOD.

⁴⁰ Incidents such as those related here by the Keelmen's womenfolk obviously lie behind the popular Tyneside story of John Wesley being defended against a hostile crowd by a fishwife, as he preached near the Guildhall on the Sandhill, Newcastle in 1742. 'Putting one arm round his waist she extended the other with clenched fist towards the crowd and shouted "Noo touch the little man if you dare". Such at least is one variant of the tale. Wilson Hepple (1853-1937), the Newcastle artist, painted the scene, and an engraving of it became popular in the late nineteenth century.

Return'd to Town, & preach'd at ye Hospital. It rain'd hard when I began, but none stir'd while I urged our Lord's Invitation, Come unto me, all ye yt Labour, & are heavy laden & I will give you Rest [Matt. 11, 28.]. The Power of the Lord was mightily among us. To Him be all the Glory.

Called at his Desire on Mr. W.⁴¹ one wo [who] had been with my Bror in Georgia, & carried him to our Society. Several strangers had broke in, so yt I thought of going away, but it was imediately suggested to me I ought rather to stay & preach. I did so & set ye Terrors of ye Lord in array agt ym. Never had I recd more strength from GOD. Many a Felix⁴² trembled, (I more yn hope) & ye poor mournful Sinners were more disposed for their Comforter. To Them I divided the Word of Grace, & expect to hear yt some of ym *are* come to Mount Sion.

Thur. 30. The Rain did not lessen my Congregation to wm I cried 'Verily, verily, ye Hour cometh. & now is, when ye Dead shall hear ye Voice of ye Son of Man, & they yt hear shall live, [John 5, 25.]. My Morning Visitants so increase upon me yt I have scarsely [sic] time to eat; but Man doth not live by bread alone. Mary M. informs me yt while I was speaking agt Robbing the King of his Custom⁴³, she found herself under Condemnation, & cried out of ye Deep to Jesus, till she recd Forgiveness of That, & all her other sins. Cath. Hales on Monday Night sunk in self-despair, & imediately J. Xt. was evidently set forth before her eyes as crucified: & ye same time those Words were inspoken to her soul, Thou hast chosen ye better Part. Marg. Kilpatrick tells me yt for some time she was struck blind. Then ye Scales fell from her eyes, & she saw ye Lamb standing before her cloath'd with his Vesture dipt in Blood: In thesame View she beheld all her sins as laid upon Him. I cannot doubt but our Lord has on this manner manifested Himself to ym, but their Fruits will more evidently show it. Among those yt came this morning to seek the Law at my mouth were 4 soldiers, who appear deeply convinc'd of Sin, & groaning for Redemn.

Half hour past 11 set out for Righton [Ryton]⁴⁴. Four several times, as I waa taking ye wrong way, some called after me, & set me right. I

⁴¹ This might refer either to James Welch, *JWJ*, i, pp. 125, 127, 128; or the unfortunate Captain Watson, i, pp. 186, 237, 242 *et al.*; or Mr Walker i, p. 232.

⁴² Acts 24, 25. Charles Wesley seems to imply that some men of authority in Newcastle had come to sit in judgement on him, but (like Felix) had been moved by his preaching.

⁴³ Smuggling was a constant matter of concern to the Wesleys, especially in coastal areas. There are several references (over many years) to John Wesley's efforts to eradicate it in Sunderland, for example. *JWJ*, iv. pp.220, 325, vi, p.144.

⁴⁴ Ryton was (and still is at its heart) a village of great rural charm with an elevated position on the southern side of the Tyne some six miles west of Newcastle. The Humble family were long-established land owners in Ryton, who had begun to exploit the coal on their estates. The person who entertained Charles Wesley may have been John Humble, to whose wife Frances there is a memorial in Ryton Church. Humble was (and is) a common name along the river Tyne. John Lloyd, rector of Holy Cross, Ryton, 1738-1765, was some three years younger than Charles Wesley. His memorial, on the north side of the chancel, alludes to his 'fervent zeal for the Protestant religion'.

preach'd in ye Street on ye first Words yt offered, Peace I leave with you, my P. I give unto you [John 14, 27.]. The Lord gave me convincing words. I was surpris'd to see several Ladies stand all ye time in ye Rain. While I was returning home, Mr Humble sent after me. It was at his (suppos'd) Desire I had come; some telling me He had promised to bring all his Colliers to hear me. I drank tea at his House. His Wife seem'd of a Lydia-like spirit [Acys 16, 14-15.]. They told me my old Christ-church Friend, John Lloyd, was Minister of ye Place, & wd be glad to see me. I was overpersuaded at last to preach here again on Saturday.

As soon as I got to Town, ye Church-warden of our Parish⁴⁵ came to see me, an honest Orthodox convincible Pharisee, full of good will, & good wishes tow'd me, & very inquisitive after ye Truth.

At 4 preach'd in ye Hospital on ye Pool of Bethesda [John 5, 2-15]; never with more assistance. The Water was troubled; & some I know must have stept unto ye Pool. Mr Br⁴⁶ was of my Audience, I am pleas'd with him more & more. O yt all Predestinarians were like Him! My strength was still continued or rather restor'd to exhort & comfort ye Society of Mourning. One of my soldiers found Power to lay hold on His Saviour, & bore witness to ye Truth. Eliz Biggot is also enlightened to see her Interest in Christ. She was (like some others) struck blind, as she calls it, for half an Hour, & then suddenly a great Light shined into her Heart. There are Diversities of Operations, but ye same Spirit [I Cor 12, 6-9].

Oct. 1. At 5 this morning began Family Prayers in the Hospital. The whole House was pres', and recd me for their Chaplain. I told them in sincerity yt I had rather be the Keelmen's Chaplain than the King's. There's no expressing their love for me. They wd even pluck out their eyes & give ym me. I am so canny a creature!, the very Titus⁴⁷ of the Colliers. Preach'd in the Square on the Grand Promise of the Father. Breakfd in haste at Mrs Hall's, a sincere Follower of our Lord, & then proclaimed above all else Liberty to the Captives & the Opening of ye Prison to ym yt are bound [Isa. 61, 1; Luke 4, 18.]. GOD made bare his Arm before you; His Righteousness did he openly show in ye sight of these poor Heathen.

Call'd with my Old Friend on poor Mr G, whom his blind Leader, the Steward of their Society has again turn'd out of the Way. I spoke strong Words; wch I pray GOD he may never forget. Got an hour & an half for Conference, & rejoiced with Cath. Brown, whose heavy Burthen our Lord removed in private Prayer. Now she fears neither Sin, Death, nor Hell.

⁴⁵ St. Andrew's.

⁴⁶ George Bruce - see n. 23 above.

⁴⁷ Titus was one of Paul's right hand men in the missionary work of the apostolic period. Charles may be alluding to (and acknowledging) his own status as a right hand man to his brother John.

At Noon preach'd at Wickham [sic]⁴⁸ on Beware of false Prophets - by their Fruits ye shall know ym. The Curate last Sunday preach'd on ye same Text a sermon compos'd by ye Rector. The only Man yt had lifted up his [voice] agt ye Truth. The other Clergy seem dispos'd to take Gamaliel's Counsel [Acts 5, 34-36]. I gave the scriptural marks of Faith & True Prophets (by their Fruits ye shall know ym, their Doctrines & Lives) & then declared my Doctrine & manner of Life. I know not when our Lord has so open'd my mouth. 'What is the Chaff to ye Wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my Word as a Fire, & as a Hammer yt breaketh ye Rock in pieces? [Jer. 23, 28-29]. There was a vast concourse of People, it being a bright sunshiny Day. Towd ye end of my Discourse, ye Curate, who is also Schoolmaster, sent all his Boys to make as much Noise as they cd. But they did not (I believe), hinder One Person from hearing. Drank tea at Mr Rawlins the Churchwarden, & return'd to Town in grt Tranquility of Spirit. Visited a poor sinner of fourscore who, when I askd a Reason of ye Hope yt was in her, answer'd as usual, she hoped to be saved because she had never wrong'd anyone. Another I found patiently waiting for the Salvation of GOD thro' Faith in J. Xt. Called on my towardly Church.Wn, & walk'd with him to San[d]gate. One informed me yt a Minister out of ye Country was among my Hearers. I hand thought of explaining the Beatitudes, but my Book opened on John 3, & I saw immediately That was my Subject. I never yet found greater, hardly so great, Freedom. The Word was sharper yn a 2 edged Sword [Heb. 4, 12]. Lord beget us all again by ye Word of thy Truth.

Another Minister heard me lately (I am told) & wept all the Time. Glory be to Thee O Lord! Teach me to cast the Net on the Right Side, & I shall catch the Fishes [John 21, 6].

The Society when I came was excessively crowded. No Door, nor Window cd be opened for ye howling wolves without. Such Heat I never felt, neither in Georgia, nor under the Tropick. The Candles went out for want of air. I know none, except myself, cd bear yt Intense Heat for many minutes, & therefore spoke a few words (in the Name of Jesus & therefore not in vain) & used a short Prayer & was pronouncing the Blessing, when some without blew in Fire & Smoak among ye People & others within cried out Fire. In the same momt [moment] ye windows were all smashed to pieces, ye stones poured in on all sides, the People skream'd out, & ye room was like a Sacked City. Many caught hold of me to save myself or me, so yt out of pure Love I was almost torn to pieces. My Soul was full of Peace & Power. I labour'd to quiet ym for some time in vain; but with much ado I beat down their Fear & Clamours, & made

⁴⁸ Some three miles west of Gateshead, Whickham, like Ryton, was an ancient and attractive village, with its surrounding area much scarred by industry, especially coal mining. In 1801 the parish of Whickham had a population of 3659. Robert Thomlinson S.T.P., was rector of Whickham 1712-1748. On his fifth north eastern visit in 1746 (*CWJ*, i, p.432 ff.) Charles recounts a more friendly reception by the clergy in and around Whickham - at least until the Bishop intervened to prevent it.

my way to ye Door, where I stood, & put ym all out before me. The Enemy quitted the Field; We sang a Verse, & I gave thanks to GOD who giveth us ye Victory.

Spoke at Mr J's with a poor y. [? young] Creature, bred a Genteel Quaker, & now a Confirmed Deist. So far I gained upon her yt she desired to talk with me again.

Sat. Oct. 2. Prayed with & exhorted my Family at ye Hospital. Then began expounding ye Beatitudes, in wch our Lord assisted me greatly. Dined at my New Friend's, Mr. H., & waited upon my old one of Xtchurch⁴⁹. But ye Sword of Division, I found, has quite cut him off! He laid many things to my charge, wch I defied him & all mankd [mankind] to prove. My Soul was griev'd, but not disturbed. [? Thro] the extraordinary Power of GOD, & his strength, went on into ye Streets & lanes of ye City to bring in the Poor & maim'd, ye Halt, & ye Blind [Luke 14, 21]. Twice as many as before both Poor & Rich were assembled whom I called to ye Gospel Feast. Come, for all things are Now ready. My tongue was loosed & my Heart. I besought & urged ym with many tears to accept of ye Invitation. They were much affected as well as myself; even the Rich cd not refrain from Tears. I expected extraordinary assistance; & yt GOD wd take me up because my Friend had cast me off. Did ever any one trust in ye Lord & was confounded? Return'd to ye Hospital & finished ye Beatitudes. Rejoic'd with my Landlady, now a Confessor of Xt. The Minister of Tanfield⁵⁰, & her wicked Husband, set upon her with Pharoah's Accusation; yt she neglected her Worldly Affairs. She stopt ye Minister's mouth with Tis better to be dead to ye World than to GOD. Again when he blam'd me for preaching in his Parish, she silenc'd him with If you laboured *more*, he need not labour so much. Out of ye Mouth of Babes & Sucklings hast thou ordained strength!

The poor People were not disheartened from meeting in ye usual Place. And for an hour & an half we had sweet Fellowship in Speaking, & praying, praising GOD.

Dear Bror⁵¹,

This People whom our Lord has gathered, will be scattered again, if left in their Infancy.⁵² Tomorrow I am bound by my Word to set out for Yorkshire.

⁴⁹ John Humble and John Lloyd. Charles Wesley is obviously at Ryton, fulfilling the promise made two days earlier. It must have been on this occasion that Robert Fairlamb and Jonathan Simpson were powerfully moved by Charlea Wesley's sermon on the parable of the great supper. The Simpsons were members of the Presbyterian chapel at Horsley (on the north side of the Tyne a few miles west of Ryton), but were soon excommunicated for their Methodist associations. They and Fairlamb were to become lifelong members of the Methodist Society. Stamp, *op. cit.*, pp. 5-7.

⁵⁰ Robert Wilson held the Perpetual Curacy of Tanfield (with that of Lamesley) from 1729 to 1751.

⁵¹ This covering note is published in *Works of John Wesley Oxford/Bicentennial ed.*, vol. 26, *Letters II 1740-55*, ed. Frank Baker (1981), pp. 86-7.

⁵² Frank Baker (*op. cit.*) has 'infamy'. Infancy appears to be correct and makes better sense in reference to the 'infant society'.

Our Brethren Lee & Errington I shall station here, till Br Maxfield, or Richards can relieve ym⁵³. London requires 2 but Bristol I cd look after alone for a month. [Sentence crossed out] On my return we must forthwith extract a 2d. hymn book out of each of ye 3 vols⁵⁴. 2000 I cd just now dispose of here. Neither London nor Bristol will yield such a Harvest of Souls as the Rude Populous North. Maxfd might come by Ship. Write to me under cover to our Friend: I shall return by Leistershire[sic] The Lord strengthen us for the Work whereunto He hath appointed us. My Love to All.

Adieu.

Sun. Afternoon

G.E. MILBURN

(Geoffrey Milburn was formerly Senior Lecturer in History at Sunderland Polytechnic.)

Wesley's Early Experiments in Education by William T. Graham. (Moorley's Print and Publishing, 1990, pp26, £1.50)

One sad omission from the celebrations of Wesley Year was a proper emphasis on John's immense interest in education, and the gap has not been filled by subsequent publications. This booklet, first read as a paper to the Wesley Fellowship, will help to put this right. Its especial strength is its description of the regimen for girls in the early years of Kingswood School. It also begins to do justice to Susanna's profound influence on her son in educational matters, frequently neglected by historians.

RUPERT E. DAVIES

⁵³ Four of Wesley's travelling preachers: *Thomas Lee*, 1727-1787, born in Keighley, much encouraged in his religious progress by William Grimshaw, began to preach in the Haworth Round c.1748, suffered much persecution, began to travel more widely in 1755. He was in the Newcastle circuit c.1759. J. Telford (ed.), *Wesley's Veterans* (n.d.) iii, pp. 198-219. *Matthew Errington*, born Houghton-le-Spring, converted in London under John Wesley in 1741, settled into the Foundery as a general factotum, travelling briefly as a preacher before moving in 1749 to Newcastle where he resided nearly forty years in the Orphan House, serving Methodism in the north east in various capacities. Stamp, *op cit.*, pp. 8-10. Errington accompanied Charles Wesley to Newcastle on the visit described in this journal.

Thomas Maxfield converted under Wesley at Bristol 1739, one of the first Methodist lay preachers, separated from Wesley 1763, became a dissenting minister in London, and later received episcopal ordination; published his *Vindication* 1767.

Thomas Richards, joined Wesley soon after Maxfield and like him became a lay travelling preacher. Attended Wesley's second Conference in 1745 but soon after ceased to serve Methodism and was ordained in the Church of England. Stamp, *op cit.*, p.116.

⁵⁴ The two-penny hymn book Charles desired was presumably to be drawn from *Hymns and Sacred Poems* 1739, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* 1740, and *A Collection Of Psalms and Hymns* 1741. The resulting book appears to have been *Collections of Psalms and Hymns*, enlarged, by John and Charles Wesley 1743, containing 138 hymns. Kenneth Mankin' *Our Hymns: A Commentary on Methodist Hymnod* (1988), pp. 4-5, 10.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER IN EARLY PRIMITIVE METHODISM, with particular reference to Hull Circuit and its Branches.

I

At first sight the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper does not appear to have been highly regarded in early Primitive Methodism. An examination of circuit plans for the decade 1820-30 reveals that there was normally a quarterly Sacrament at the circuit chapel, and often a quarterly Sacrament in a few other places. However a majority of preaching centres appear to be without what would usually be regarded as sacramental worship. The impression is given of a much stronger early emphasis on the lovefeast, with a growing emphasis on the Sacrament later in the century when the lovefeast was clearly in decline. In consequence during the early period, Primitive Methodism has been described as 'an anti-sacramentalist denomination'¹.

However, this is to quite misread the case. There were very sound practical and theological reasons for a somewhat cautious but progressive development of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Primitive Methodism. In fact like Wesleyan Methodism, Primitive Methodism needed time to evolve a settled church life. It did so in a much shorter time than the former, and Primitive Methodist observance of the two Sacraments as a regular feature of circuit life from the early 1820s, could be considered to have been achieved quickly².

In Wesleyan Methodism the Sacrament had been associated with controversy, intertwined with the whole question of authority within that movement³. In other later Methodist groups prone to fission the Sacrament could be a divisive factor as Hugh Bourne observed. In 1829

¹ Francis J. McKeon, *Religion, Education and Leisure in Primitive Methodism. 1812-1932*, Keele MA thesis, 1973 p. 212. cf H.G Marsh 'The Cultivation of the Spiritual Life in Early Primitive Methodism', *London Quarterly and Holborn Review* (hereafter *LQHR*) July 1952 p 181. For decline of lovefeast see: *PM Magazine* (hereafter *PMM*) 1865 pp. 641-650, esp p.644.

² Norman W. Mumford, 'The administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in the Methodist Church after the death of John Wesley,' *LQHR* Jan 1951 pp 61-70. J.M.Turner, 'From Society to Church', *LQHR* 1963 p. 110-5.

³ J.C.Bowmer, *Pastor and People*, (1975) pp. 19-36. Also W. R. Ward 'The legacy of John Wesley: The pastoral office in Britain and America' A. Whiteman, J.S. Bromley and P.G.M. Dickson, (eds), *Statesman, Scholars and merchants : Essays in eighteenth-century history presented to Dame Lucy Sutherland*. (Oxford, 1973). pp. 323-350. After the death of Wesley, Methodists from Hull-were foremost in petitioning the Connexion to reject separation from the Church of England. The circular was dated Hull, May 14th 1791. See W.H.Thompson, *Early Chapters in Hull Methodism 1746-1800*, (1895) pp. 63-5.

Bourne believed that the Wesleyan Protestant Methodists at Preston were about to make inroads on Primitive Methodism, when:

Divine Providence frustrated their intentions; and while they were meditating our people's ruin, a difference of opinion arose among themselves about the sacrament. And this like the organ business at Leeds, produced a division; and they were soon formed in two separate parties entirely distinct from each other⁴.

It is in the light of sacramental controversy, especially within the parent body, that the Minute of the Primitive Methodist Preparatory Meeting in Nottingham in 1819, and subsequently reiterated in following years, should be understood:

34Q To whom shall the Sacrament be administered?

A To all our Societies who request it⁵.

This did not imply a casual or uninterested approach to the Sacrament, but for the sake of avoiding any possible disruption within the Connexion each Society was to be free to decide its own policy. This policy, although in a more flexible form, was in line with the Wesleyan Plan of Pacification of a generation earlier. Then, the Sacrament was to be administered in a Society when a majority of trustees and leaders approved, but only with the consent of Conference⁶.

The kinship of the Sacrament and the lovefeast, as in the New Testament period should also be noted⁷. Indeed within early Methodism the lovefeast has been described as a 'domesticated, democratised folk sacrament'⁸. However, while in early Primitive Methodism the lovefeasts, may often have served a sacramental purpose, they were referred to distinctly and observed separately. They also appear to have served a different audience. Thus during the course of a Sunday Primitive Methodism provided for the committed through Prayer Meetings⁹, and the quarterly Sacrament, while the camp meeting and lovefeast catered for a much wider audience. In the York branch of Hull circuit on Sunday February 24th 1822, Sampson Turner and Nathaniel West gave the Sacrament to 'nearly 100 communicants' in the morning, but at the lovefeast which followed from half past one 'there were hundreds of

⁴ *PMM* 1829 p. 353 Extract from the Journal of Hugh Bourne.

⁵ Preparatory Meeting 1819 p. 9. This was confirmed at the first Annual Meeting held in Hull, May 1820, *General Minutes* 1820 Q48 p. 11. cf *General Minutes* 1821 p8, *Large Minutes* 1824 p. 29.

⁶ J C. Bowmer, op. cit., p. 35

⁷ C.F. D. Moule, *Worship in the New Testament* (1961) pp. 18-46. Vincent Taylor, 'The NT Origins of Holy Communion', *LQHR*, Apr 1959 pp. 84-90 Frank Baker, *Methodism and the Lovefeast* (1957). For emotional, psychological, and spiritual development within a lovefeast, see M R Sheard, 'The origins and Early Development of Primitive Methodism in Cheshire and South Lancashire 1800-1860', Manchester PhD thesis, 1980 pp. 592-600.

⁸ J Walsh, 'Religious Societies, Methodist and Evangelical 1738-1800', *Studies in Church History* XXIII (1986) pp 288f.

⁹ At Mill Street, Hull, Primitive Methodists held a weekly Sunday Prayer Meeting at 6.0am (the earliest of any denomination in Hull) and 8.00pm. Edward Baines, *History, Directory, and Gazetteer of the County of York*, (1823) Vol II p. 241

people present¹⁰. The different means of grace were complementary to each other, all were geared to evangelism, but the Sacrament appears to have been observed during the quieter part of the day where that was possible.

II

From the fragmentary, but earliest documentary evidence available, the Sacrament itself can first be identified within Primitive Methodism from the time of the Nottinghamshire Revival. Hugh Bourne's manuscript Journal reports the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Derby on Sunday November 17, 1816, and at Hulland on Christmas Day of the same year. The Derby/Nottingham plan 1817-8 (Nov-Jan) shows Robert Winfield presiding over the Sacrament at Nottingham on Nov 23rd, 1817, and Jan 4th, 1818¹¹. The early circuits made from Nottingham, show the Sacrament travelling with the revival, and there is clear evidence for the Sacrament at Loughborough¹², Chesterfield, Sheffield¹³, Louth, and Grimsby¹⁴ in 1820, and at Barnsley, Wakefield, and Huddersfield¹⁵ in 1821.

By 1822 the Sacrament had appeared on the Home branch of the Hull circuit, with arrangements for the Sacrament at five places during the quarter July-Oct 1822¹⁶. Thereafter, Mill Street, Hull circuit's mother chapel, always appears to have a quarterly Sacrament, and during most quarters Beverley and South Cave also¹⁷.

The branches of Hull, and the circuits made independent from Hull usually show the Sacrament held quarterly in the circuit chapel. Very often it was also observed in one or two of the larger communities as well¹⁸. Occasionally the proportion of places with a quarterly Sacrament was quite high, as in the Brompton circuit for 1828 (Jan-Mar), where eight of the ten places with weekly preaching have a quarterly Sacra-

¹⁰ *PMM* 1822 p. 190 Extract of Nathaniel West's Journal.

¹¹ 'S' is shown for these dates beside No 10: R, Winfield, although this plan has no key. For Winfield see H.B. Kendall, *Origin and History of PM Church* (n.d.) p. 509

¹² Loughborough circuit plan 1820 Apr-Jly: Loughborough May 28, Syston June 25, Seagrave June 25, Bedworth July 23.

¹³ Sheffield circuit plan 1819/20 Dec-Feb: Chesterfield Jan 16, Sheffield Jan 23.

¹⁴ Grimsby branch of Nottingham circuit 1820 Oct-Dec: Louth Oct 1, Grimsby Oct 8.

¹⁵ Barnsley circuit 1821 Jly-Oct: Barnsley Oct 7, Staincross Sept 6, Wakefield Aug 12, Newsome/Huddersfield Oct 14, Netherthong Aug 12, Skelmanthorpe Aug 26, Cawthorne/Silkston Sept 23, Osset Aug 5, Horbury Sept 9.

¹⁶ Hull Branch of Hull circuit plan 1822 Jly-Oct: Hull (Mill Street) Oct 6, Beverley Jly 28, Barrow Oct 6, South Cave Sept 1, Hessle Sept 26.

¹⁷ Other places known to have had the Sacrament in home branch of Hull circuit 1819-51 (from circuit plans): Cottingham, Elloughton, North Cave, Anlaby, Mason Street, Nile Street. Weeknight Sacrament is shown on the 1838 Jan-Apr plan at: Swanland, Sutton, Cherry Burton, Newbald, North Ferriby, and Walkington.

¹⁸ eg Bridlington branch 1826 Jan-Apr, Bridlington Quay, Barnard Castle branch 1829 Jly-Oct, Barnard Castle, Brough, Middleton. Driffield branch 1825 Jly-Oct, Driffield. Keyingham branch 1828 Jly-Oct, Keyingham. Newcastle circuit 1824 Jly-Sept, Newcastle, Salfyport. South Shields circuit 1825 Jan-Apr, Jarrow, Usworth, Chester-le-Street.

ment¹⁹. A Carlisle circuit plan for 1828 (Nov-Jan) does not appear to show any Sacraments, although the word is in the key.

If the Nottingham group of circuits was first to observe Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and the Hull group was second, then Tunstall was third. Neither the Ramsor branch of Tunstall circuit 1821-2 (Oct-Jan), the Home branch of Burland circuit 1823 (Jly-Oct), nor Chester branch of Burland circuit 1823 (Jly-Oct) show any Sacraments. However by 1824 (Jan-Apr) the Home branch of Tunstall circuit, and its Western Mission branch circuit, mainly in Gloucestershire, show one Sacrament each. These Sacraments were at Congleton, conducted by H Bourne, and at Stroud conducted by J Bonser²⁰.

An explanation for the pattern discerned will be partly found in the Tunstall Non-Mission Law. Consolidation in the Tunstall Circuit had led to stagnation, and in the Tunstall locality up to 1819 Primitive Methodism retained far more the characteristics of a sect, with all the barriers to development that sect mentality produced²¹. It was where the Revival was most marked, and where new people were drawn in, that Primitive Methodism moved most quickly to assume more the character of a Church - or at least developed from a pietist to conversionist sect²². Thus Jeremiah Gilbert, product of the Nottinghamshire revival, and of Wesleyan background, took sacramental worship with him as superintendent of the Sheffield and Barnsley circuits, and planted it firmly²³. Hull Circuit too was an offshoot from Nottingham, and so the gap in sacramental worship 1819-22 is something of a puzzle. An answer may be found again in the Tunstall Non-Mission Law. Hull circuit's first superintendent William Clowes, was directed to that place not from Nottingham, but from Tunstall circuit. The fact that Clowes travelled to Hull from an area where the Sacrament was not being observed, may explain this break in the Nottingham tradition.

III

The Primitive Methodist *Large Hymnbook* published in 1825 contained three hymns for the Lord's Supper²⁴. However, while in the

¹⁹ Brompton circuit plan 1828 Jan-Mar, Sacrament at: Brompton, Hutton, Middleham, Appleton, Richmond, Reeth, West Witton and Carperby.

²⁰ Subsequent sacramental development in Tunstall circuit, plans: 1827 Jly-Oct (3 places), 1836 Jan-Apr (6 places), 1852 Jly-Oct (8 places)

²¹ For 'Tunstall Non-Mission Law' see Kendall op.cit., i, pp. 187-193, 507-510. For Sect life see: Bryan R. Wilson (ed), *Patterns of Sectarianism* (1967), Bryan R. Wilson, *Sects and Society* (1961).

²² Bryan R. Wilson, *Patterns...* pp. 27-8.

²³ Jeremiah Gilbert served as a Wesleyan local preacher for 7 years in the Newark circuit. *PMM* 1853 pp. 321-8, *PM Minutes* 1853 p. 5-6. *Extracts from the Journals of Jeremiah Gilbert*, North Shields, printed J K Pollock, 1824 p. 8 'Sunday May 14 (or 21?) at Sheffield.... Preached at half-past ten in the chapel; and at two administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It was a solemn time.'

²⁴ No 427 'We now approach thy table, Lord'. HB
No 428 'Thy flesh, O Lord, is meat indeed'. HB
No 429 'We thy last supper can't forget'. WS @ HB

Preface 'On Worship' Bourne added suggestions about the form of the preaching service, and the lovefeast²⁵, to the earlier directions that had been given for prayer meetings, class meetings, and camp meetings, no comment was made about the form of the Lord's Supper. Indeed it was not until 1860 that the Primitive Methodist Conference authorised a printed form of service for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the use of which was entirely optional²⁶. However a sacramental service was held at the 1841 Conference at Reading²⁷, and Bourne published a report of this in the *P.M. Magazine*, although it must be questioned whether this form would be representative of circuit and society practice.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, a service in its own right was held on Saturday evening, June 12th, 1841 in a large Sunday School Room. Hugh Bourne, James Bourne and William Clowes were appointed to officiate²⁸. The form of service, using as far as possible Bourne's own words, was as follows:

Singing

Prayer

Account of the feast of the Passover in Egypt

Account of the Institution of the Lord's Supper²⁹

The unleavened bread lifted up before the people with suitable remarks

The breaking of the bread (1 Cor 11, 24)

The pouring of the wine from bottle to cup, with reference to the blood that was shed.

Comments on 'wine'

The breaking of the bread into small pieces

The three appointed to minister received the sacrament

The congregation came forward and received kneeling

A verse was sung, and the participants retired, others coming to take their places.

As a large quantity of unleavened bread had been prepared many of the delegates were also able to receive a piece to take back to their home circuits³⁰.

In this service Bourne gave particular emphasis to the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine. 'The nearer we can follow the example

²⁵ Hugh Bourne, *Large Hymn Book for the use of the Primitive Methodists*, Bemersley, 1825. Form given for Preaching Service, Preface vii, The form of the Lovefeast, Preface x.

²⁶ *Forms for the Administration of Baptism*, etc, June 1860, 80pp.

²⁷ The printed Conference plans for 1845 (Hull) and 1848 (Leeds) reveal a continuation of this tradition, and give prominence to a service of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper during Conference.

²⁸ The 1841 printed Conference plan had originally named Mr J. Bourne, and Mr J. Flesher to officiate at the Sacrament.

²⁹ It is not clear whether readings from the Scriptures were used, or whether events were related from memory. Nor is it clear in the preparation, elevation of the host, fraction and libation, where speech may have become prayer. Bourne may not have judged such points important. He laid stress that the atmosphere created was that of reverent approach to God.

³⁰ *PMM* 1841 pp. 353-6

of our blessed Lord, the better; as it will be a more effectual means of increasing our faith, and opening our minds to instruction'³¹.

Bourne believed that the use of unleavened bread was important. Quoting Adam Clarke, Bourne had written in the *P.M. Magazine* earlier in the year:

Now if any respect should be paid to the primitive institution, in the celebration of this divine ordinance, then unleavened, unyeasted bread should be used³².

The point was that while bread itself may be an emblem of the body of Christ, *unleavened* bread indicated the character of that body. It pointed to the disposition of 'sincerity and truth' required in that body, and stood in contrast to the old leaven of 'malice and wickedness'³³.

Bourne also as a staunch Temperance advocate was able to use the fruit of the vine with clear conscience:

At Reading, our Sister Ride purchased six pounds of good raisins, which cost two shillings and nine-pence. She had them cut, and put into an earthen vessel; poured on them as much boiling water as she thought proper; covered the vessel over, and set it warm stirring it occasionally. And the next day the wine was ready for bottling³⁴.

Bourne believed that Jews in America and England made their Passover wine in this fashion. Again the imitation was theologically symbolic. Such wine, used within the week, was as unleavened as the bread! Thus in the *P.M. Magazine* for 1841 Bourne directed the wider Connexion to adopt New Testament practice as he understood it, and to find a deeper symbolism in a particular form of the elements³⁵.

IV

An examination of the circuit plans for this same year of 1841 shows some increase in the number of places receiving a quarterly Sacrament on that noted in the 1820s. The figures for the Hull circuit where branch plans are known to be extant are as follows: Hull home branch (6), Scarborough branch (4), Keyingham branch (5), Brigg and Alkbro branch (4), Kentish missions (4), Isle of Wight (5), London mission (5)³⁶. In circuits made from Hull there is considerable variation, for instance Driffield (11) and Ripon (8) contrast with Pocklington (0).

³¹ *PMM* 1841 p. 356

³² *PMM* 1841 p. 305 'On the Sacramental Bread' is taken from Adam Clarke's commentary on Matthew 26, 26. See vol v pp. 262-8.

³³ 1 Cor 5, 7-8.

³⁴ *PMM* 1841 p. 355

³⁵ *PMM* 1841 pp. 524, pp. 305-7, pp. 353-6, *PMM* 1842 p. 468, J.T. Wilkinson, *Hugh Bourne 1772-1852* (1952) pp. 153-5

³⁶ Plans consulted: Home branch of Hull 1841 Jan-Apr, Scarbro' branch of Hull 1841 Jan-Apr, Keyingham branch of Hull 1840-1 Nov-Jan, Brigg and Alkbro' branch of Hull 1841 Jan-Apr, Kentish Missions in Hull circuit 1841-2 Oct-Jan, Isle of Wight Mission, Hull circuit 1842 Jan-Apr, London Mission of Hull circuit 1841 Aug-Oct.

The number of places receiving the Sacrament in Tunstall circuit was five³⁷. Two new developments can be detected. One is that Ramsgate and Margate in the Kentish missions branch of Hull circuit each have *two* Sacraments planned for the quarter³⁸. The other is that Loughborough circuit had planned a *monthly* Sacrament on a Thursday evening for the circuit committee³⁹.

It is difficult by 1841 to detect any real pattern of variation between regions. While the number of places receiving the Sacrament may still appear small, it must not be assumed that places without the Sacrament planned would all have considered themselves deprived. They either did not wish to receive it, or they walked - as they did for camp meetings, lovefeasts, and everything else in life.

The Primitive Methodist practice of a quarterly Sacrament at the circuit chapel, and perhaps also in a small number of other centres, was very similar indeed to the Wesleyan practice at this time, especially in the rural circuits⁴⁰. However in Hull itself by the mid-1840s the increasingly sophisticated Wesleyan congregations meeting in the town's six large chapels were able to attend a monthly sacrament⁴¹. This contrasted with Primitive Methodist practice in Hull which was still for a quarterly celebration, but it also contrasted with what was offered to the Wesleyan rural Societies in Hull West and Hull East - most of whom did not have Sacraments planned at all⁴².

Primitive Methodist frequency also reflected eighteenth-century Anglican sacramental practice, which in spite of the zeal of Dr Denis Granville in the Northern Province, might still be considered by some to have 'all the dead weight of years of puritan neglect to overcome'⁴³. The Book of Common Prayer had stated 'Every parishioner shall communicate at least three times in the year of which Easter to be

³⁷ Plans consulted: Driffield circuit, for the Home and Hornsea branches 1841 Jan-Apr, Ripon circuit (including Thirsk) 1840-1 Oct-Jan, Pocklington circuit 1841 Jan-Apr. This Pocklington plan does not include Sacrament in the key. Tunstall circuit 1841 Jan-Apr, Other circuit plans consulted include: Malton, Otley, Whitby, Brompton, Swinefleet, and York, all for 1841 Jan-Apr, plus a large number of similar date for a substantial part of the Connexion.

³⁸ Plan of Kentish Missions in Hull circuit 1841-2 Oct-Jan.

³⁹ Loughborough circuit plan 1842 Jly-Oct

⁴⁰ This statement is made after examination of a substantial number of Wesleyan plans, including the following: Hull 1823 Feb-June, Selby 1816 June-Nov, Pocklington 1816 Jly-Dec, Burlington (Bridlington) 1816-7 Dec-May, Scarborough 1813 Feb-Aug, Epworth 1815-6 Nov-Apr, Snaith 1821 May-Oct.

⁴¹ Hull West WM plan shows: Waltham Street, Great Thornton Street, Scott Street, all with a monthly Sunday evening Sacrament (1845 June- Sept) Hull East WM plan shows a similar practice at George Yard, Wesley Chapel, Kingston Chapel (1848 June-Sept).

⁴² Hull West 1845 June-Sept. Hessle and Anlaby each have one quarterly Sacrament. The Sacrament is not planned at Swanland, Newland, North Sulcoates, and West Ella. Hull East 1848 June-Sept. Sutton has one quarterly Sacrament. Stoneferry, Marfleet, Preston, Hedon, Paul, Swine and Wyton do not have any Sacraments planned.

⁴³ J. Wickham Legg, *English Church Life*, (1914), p. 22

one'⁴⁴. In practice this meant that in parish churches well into the nineteenth century it was still customary for parish clergy to only administer the Communion quarterly⁴⁵. St Mary's, Lowgate, in Hull had a bi-monthly celebration during the eighteenth century⁴⁶. At Holy Trinity, Hull, at the time of the Herring visitation of 1743, the incumbent reported that the Sacrament had been monthly but that greater frequency had been introduced to reduce the numbers so that he and his curate were not overwhelmed⁴⁷. However many of the rural areas continued to lag well behind⁴⁸. This was especially true when the pace of Anglican observation quickened from the 1840s⁴⁹.

John Wesley, in the tradition of Archbishop Laud and the Caroline Divines received Holy Communion regularly, at least once a week and at times every other day⁵⁰. From the 1830s, sacramental revival through the Tractarian Party in the Church of England, sought to establish practices similar to Wesley's more widely within the Anglican Communion⁵¹. However, most of Wesley's own followers in all branches of Methodism did not see it like that. Primitive Methodists were not high Anglicans. In Hull especially they were proud of the town's long-standing 'pure and protestant' tradition, and proud of the part played by Hull at an early and decisive stage in the Civil War when the town's gates were closed against Charles I⁵².

Primitive Methodists and Tractarians shared common sacramental insights, at least in part⁵³, but the experience of harassment bordering on persecution from 'awakened' Tractarian incumbents only confirmed Primitives in their Protestant pedigree. William Garner, a leading itinerant in the Hull circuit was well to the fore in returning fire for

⁴⁴ *The Whole Book of Common Prayer...etc.*, 1857 edition, p. 172. while in Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, the Prayer Book directed 'every Sunday at the least'.

⁴⁵ John R.H. Moorman, *A History of the Church in England*, (1954) p. 334

⁴⁶ M.E. Ingram, *Our Lady of Hull*, (1948), pp. 108-9

⁴⁷ Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series LXXII (1929), pp. 78,79. Henry D.Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast*, (1989) p. 564 n.52. Interpretation of frequency, *ibid* p. 419

⁴⁸ Owen Chadwick, *The Victorian Church*, Part I (1966), pp. 514-5

⁴⁹ Among the Tractarian contributions to the quickening of this pace was from the East Riding that of R.I. Wilberforce, *The Doctrine of the Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, 3rd ed (1850) pp. 404-456. Eugene R Fairweather, *The Oxford Movement*, (1964) pp. 335-367.

⁵⁰ J.C.Bowmer, *The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Early Methodism*, (1951) pp. 50-3.

⁵¹ Trevor Dearing, *Wesleyan and Tractarian Worship* (1966) pp. 7-25.

⁵² Edward Gillett, and Kenneth A MacMahon, *A History of Hull* (1980 pp. 116-129, 166-180.

⁵³ In fact Primitive Methodists and Tractarians as two maligned groups of enthusiasts, shared a number of common themes. Each emphasised in its own way: faith, heart work, holiness, independence of Church from State, and disciplined community life. The comment of Bebbington that Evangelicals were not just similar to the Tractarians but were actually an earlier phase of the same movement that in the 1830's proliferated into many strands', appears to be justified in the case of the Primitive Methodists. D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* (1989) p. 96. For 'high' elements within the Primitive Methodist doctrine of Baptism see: Bernard G. Holland, *The Doctrine of Infant Baptism in Non-Wesleyan Methodism* (1970) eg p. 11 'Bourne makes a bold and imaginative claim for the function of the Church'.

the Nonconformist counter offensive⁵⁴. It is not surprising that in the subsequent divide created partly by the teaching of the Oxford Movement, and partly by the gut reaction of those who felt not just their theology, but their humanity to be under attack, the Primitive Methodists continued to find themselves identified with those who followed the century-long pattern of frequency that had been established in the greater part of the Anglican Communion.

V

The Nottingham Preparatory Meeting (1819) faced the question:
By whom shall it be administered?

The answer given was:

By those persons whom the Quarter Board may judge proper⁵⁵.

In practical terms this meant that often an itinerant would preside, as at lovefeasts and other special services. However there was no equation of Sacraments with the itinerancy, and no 'principle' which excluded local preachers. Therefore from the larger total pool of 'preachers' Primitive Methodism was able to respond quickly and with great flexibility to changing sacramental needs within a circuit. There was no need to 'prove' deprivation - always a difficult undertaking - to a body that might appear remote from the circuit. The circuit itself was free to respond to and anticipate growing sacramental need. For instance in the rapidly developing Barnsley circuit in 1821 the July - October plan showed 74 preaching places, 6 itinerants, one itinerant missionary', 4 local preachers, 17 'On Trial', and 16 exhorters. The circuit was able to appoint two of the local preachers to share the sacraments with the itinerants.

However this policy does not appear to have been implemented uniformly throughout the Connexion. A comparison of the Tunstall and Hull home branch circuit plans shows local preachers frequently appointed for the Sacrament in Tunstall circuit, but not in Hull home branch⁵⁶. There would appear to be two reasons for this. First of all Bourne was undoubtedly more radical and innovative than Clowes - in character, worship, and church order. This difference of outlook reflected itself in the original crisis over camp meetings, the later form of camp meetings, and in Bourne's opposition to chapels with fixed pews that curtailed freedom of movement in worship⁵⁷. Only occasionally

⁵⁴ *PMM* 1844 pp 351-57, William Garner, 'Reflections, Occasioned by Semi-Popish Barbarity to the Innocent Dead'. *PMM* 1843 p. 466-7, 1844 p. 68-70, 193-7, 507-8.

⁵⁵ Minutes of a Meeting held at Nottingham August 1819 p. 9

⁵⁶ Tunstall circuit plans showing a local preacher presiding at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper: 1836 Jan-Apr, 1838 Jly-Oct, 1838-9 Oct-Jan, 1839 Apr-Jly, 1839 Jly-Oct, 1841 Jan-Apr, 1847 Jan-Apr, 1847 Jly-Oct, 1848 Jan-Apr, 1848-9 Oct-Jan.

⁵⁷ *PMM* 1837 p. 112 cf *PMM* 1833 p. 112 'Many of our Chapels in Yorkshire are grievously over-filled with pews'. For Bourne, Chapel worship was to be far more like Camp Meeting worship-brought indoors, and not dominated by preaching.

during Clowes' lifetime, did Hull circuit use those who were not itinerants to preside at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper⁵⁸.

The second reason is the different level of penetration that Primitive Methodism had achieved in the two areas. The 1851 Religious Census revealed that progress in Hull was approximately twice that of the Potteries district, looking at the situation in population terms. This meant that Hull had approximately twice the density of itinerants, and these were able to preside far more frequently at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper than was the case in the Stoke area⁵⁹.

The situation should not be seen principally as an assertion of 'lay values', for both itinerant and local preachers would be considered 'lay' in Primitive Methodism at this time⁶⁰. Fortunately Primitive Methodism did not experience the tensions over church government that were rife in Wesleyan Methodism, and suffered only minor secessions in comparison. The flexible policy of allowing each circuit to decide for itself which Societies should receive the Sacrament, and who should administer it, would appear to have contributed to the lack of sacramental strife in Primitive Methodism.

After 1851 the practice of non-itinerant presidency took a firmer hold on Primitive Methodism. While the Ramsor circuit plan showed limited practice of non-itinerant presidency in 1847, it had expanded considerably twenty years later⁶¹. Then 42 preaching places were served by two itinerants who were appointed for two Sacraments each. A further 30 preaching places were provided with a quarterly Sacrament using the services of 23 local preachers. However it was not just in the rural circuits, nor where itinerants were sparse that the presidency of local preachers was developed. In the Walworth branch of London Second circuit, with itinerants also in the Home branch and at the Book Room to call upon, the 1856 circuit plan showed Sacraments allocated as follows: local preachers (2), circuit local help (2), itinerants (4). In Hull where a Primitive Methodist (Continuing) Church came into being at Methodist Union in 1932⁶², one of the fears was that the new church would not honour the now cherished practice of lay presidency.

⁵⁸ Examples of non itinerant Presidency in branches of Hull: Barton branch 1828-9 Oct-Jan (At Winttingham, Nov 9, W. Thornton, preacher no 11). London branch 1838 Dec-Apr (New Tothill Street, Westminster, Feb 10, W. H. Sanson, preacher no 8).

⁵⁹ *Sketches of the Religious Denominations of the Present Day*, Abridged from the Official Report made by Horace Mann. Stoke upon Trent Parliamentary Borough, Population 84,027. P.M. attendance on Sunday March 30th 1851 including Sunday Scholars, morning 445, afternoon 1320, evening 1367. Hull Municipal Borough, population 84,690, attendance: morning 2714, afternoon -, evening 2730.

⁶⁰ For a broad perspective of the role of the laity in Primitive Methodism see: Atkinson Lee, 'Hugh Bourne and the Function of the laity in the Church'. *LQHR* July 1952 pp 174-6.

⁶¹ The Ramsor circuit plan 1847 Apr-Jly has one such case. Details for 1867 are taken from Ramsor circuit plan 1867 Jly-Oct.

⁶² Chapels were built at: Redbourne Street, Hull; Westgate, Driffild; Holmpton; and Patrington,

Postscript

The persistence of lay-presidency in British Methodism 58 years after Methodist Union is a tribute to the fair-mindedness of those within the larger Wesleyan tradition to whom the practice was new. The persistence of the practice is also a tribute to the broader more flexible concept of ministry inherited from the Primitive Methodists in a period when circuits have continually found themselves short of ordained staff. Ultimately however, a theological examination of the Primitive Methodist concept of ministry needs to be made - but this is to reach the frontiers of a whole new area of study.

STEPHEN HATCHER

(Stephen Hatcher is a minister in the Skipton and Grassington circuit)

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Abbreviations

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Lond QHR - *London Quarterly and Holborn Review*

Meth Rec - *Methodist Recorder*

Meth H - *Methodist History*

Each section is arranged in date order

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ELIZABETH HART

(Elizabeth Hart is Librarian of the Vancouver School of Theology)

***Laurie Gage and his staff congratulate Rev Dr
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***P O Box 105
Westcliffe on Sea
Essex***