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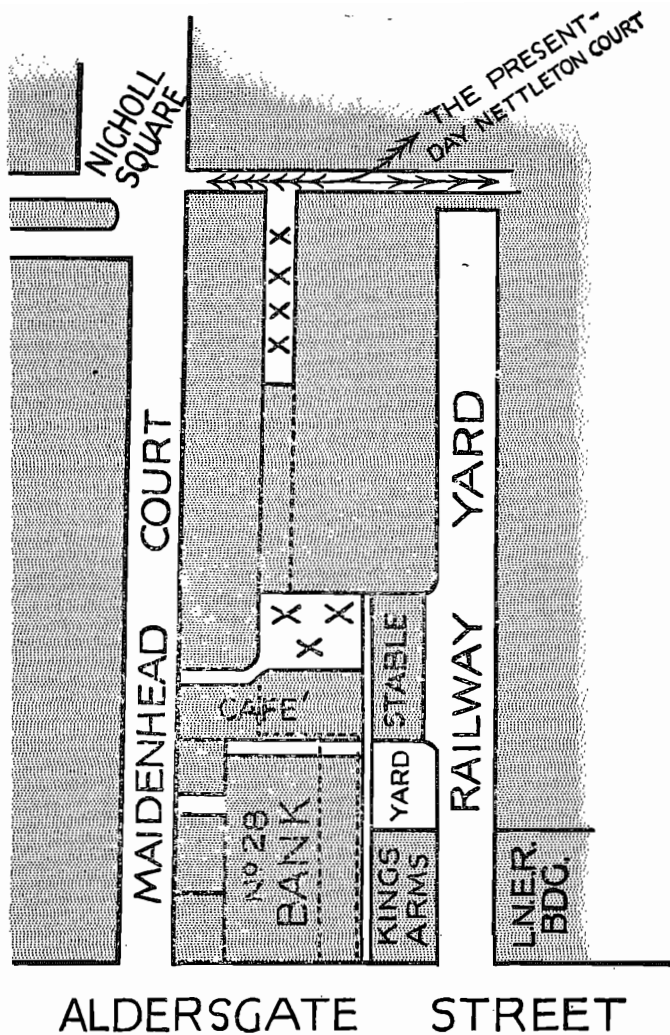
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ALDRSGATE STREET

No. 28, ALDRSGATE STREET AND SURROUNDINGS, 1933

X SURVIVING PORTIONS OF OLD NETTLETON COURT  
 : THE CONTOUR OF OLD NETTLETON COURT

(Sketch Plan by Mr. H. W. Mansfield)

## "A SOCIETY IN ALDERSGATE STREET."

(JOHN WESLEY'S "JOURNAL," MAY 24, 1738).

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A good deal of interest has recently been aroused by the discovery of portions of an 18th century "Tate and Brady" Psalter under the floor of an old stable loft in the L.N.E. Railway yard behind No. 26, Aldersgate Street. It has even been suggested that the loft may have been the scene of Wesley's great experience on May 24, 1738. The story of the discovery was graphically described by Mr. Stanley Sowton in the columns of the *Methodist Recorder* some months ago.

The discovery has prompted me to make a careful survey of the area surrounding No. 28, and I purpose in this article to detail the results of my investigations.

The area in question is bounded on the west by Aldersgate Street; on the north by Maidenhead Court, and on the south by the Railway yard. By the courtesy of the various occupiers concerned, I have been enabled to inspect closely the whole of the area.

### FIRSTLY, THE RAILWAY YARD AND STABLE.

The yard is shown in maps of 1720, 1739/40, 1746, and 1754, as the "Rose & Rainbow Court," while in Horwood's map of 1799 it appears as "Cock & Crown Court." It is mentioned by Strype, in his *Survey of London* in 1720, as "Deputies or Rose & Rainbow Court."

The building (No. 26) which spans the entrance to the Court, and which is now owned by the Railway Company, may very well have been the Inn that gave its name to the Court. Mr. H. W. Fincham, F.S.A., the eminent London antiquary, has examined the interior, and has expressed the opinion that it dates from the early part of the 18th century, although the exterior walls have been renewed or re-faced.

The stable is also, in Mr. Fincham's opinion, of the same period, excepting for the front wall, which has been rebuilt. The back and side walls, as well as the wooden fittings within, are early 18th century work. This has also been confirmed—so I understand from Mr. Sowton—by Sir George Oatley. The stable is built against the dividing wall that separates the Railway yard from old Nettleton Court.

Was the stable loft the scene of the meetings of the "Society in Aldersgate Street?" I think the following considerations will prove conclusively that it could *not* have been.

(1) The little structure was comparatively but newly built in 1738, and was doubtless serving the purpose for which it was erected, namely, that of an inn stable. The loft was almost certainly used simply and solely for the storage of hay.

(2) The only entrance to the loft is by means of a straight wall-ladder and it seems to me to be inconceivable that it has ever been used as a meeting-place for any assembly.

(3) I have very closely examined the back wall of the stable and its loft, and find the wall to be absolutely intact and unpierced: it could not, therefore, have had any opening into Nettleton Court.

I may here emphasise that the general belief that the historic room was situated somewhere within the site now covered by the premises numbered 28, Aldersgate Street, rests solely upon the evidence for Nettleton Court. Once we reject this evidence, any claim for the present generally-accepted site—or for the east side of Aldersgate Street at all—falls to the ground. As the stable was not entered from Nettleton Court, we are satisfied, therefore, that it cannot have been the scene of the meetings of the Aldersgate Street Society.

#### SECONDLY, 28, ALDERSGATE STREET.

The ground floor of No. 28 is at present a branch of Messrs. Barclay's Bank, and upon it is affixed the Wesley plaque of the Drew Theological Seminary. The present building, it is said, was erected about 1813. I have been permitted by the owner to inspect the title deeds, but, unfortunately, there is nothing now in existence that dates back earlier than 1871. The site appears to have been covered in the 18th century by two shallow buildings, having a frontage in Aldersgate Street, and by premises on the eastern portion of the site, which the late Mr. P. J.

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Lupton claimed were known as "Hall House," within which, he further claimed, the room was situated that became the meeting-place of the "Society in Aldersgate Street." Hall House was entered on the south from Nettleton Court, while an 18th century passage—that still exists—appears to have led into it from Maidenhead Court. Hall House, we are told, was destroyed about 1815, and its site is part of that now covered by No. 28, Aldersgate Street. If Mr. Lupton was correct in his assumption, the "sanctum" of the courteous Manager of Barclay's Bank is as nearly as possible the site of the historic room where Wesley felt his "heart strangely warmed."

### THIRDLY, NETTLETON COURT.

The Nettleton Court of the 18th century was situated midway between Maidenhead and Rose & Rainbow Courts, and had an opening from Aldersgate Street just about where the south door of Barclay's Bank is now situated. This is confirmed by the position of the dividing wall, and of the remaining portion of the little Square—or rather, oblong—into which Nettleton Court broadened after passing beneath the premises facing Aldersgate Street and skirting Hall House.

Nettleton Court was first mentioned by Strype in 1720, and is shown in Aldersgate Ward maps of 1720, 1739/40, and 1754, and in Rocque's map of 1746. It is also shown in Horwood's map of 1799, though unnamed. The Court was largely built over following the erection of the premises now numbered 28, Aldersgate Street; and in 19th century maps the name "Nettleton Court" is transferred to a Court that runs southward from the other end of Maidenhead Court just after it merges into Nicholl Square. This later Nettleton Court appears in the 18th century maps as "Crowder Well Alley." The little Square already alluded to, still exists in part as a backyard of a cafe entered from Maidenhead Court, the western part of it being covered by part of the little building at present used as the cafe in question. The eastern end of the older Nettleton Court also survives as a narrow passage within the confines of Messrs. Battersby's premises, and is entered from the newer Nettleton Court.

### FINALLY, MAIDENHEAD COURT.

This Court still preserves a somewhat old-fashioned appearance. On the southern side are several small shops; the northern side boasting somewhat more pretentious business premises. After passing the first two shops, one notices the 18th

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century round-headed doorway, now walled up, that formerly opened into the vaulted passage that appears to have led into Hall House. The passage, together with part of the small adjoining building, forms an annexe to No. 28, and there is still an old local tradition that the doorway and passage formed an entrance to the historic meeting-room. This long-lingering tradition seems to confirm the findings of the late Mr. Lupton. A few yards further along Maidenhead Court is a second round-headed doorway that is still usable, though mostly unused: it opens into an arched passage that leads into the remaining fragment of Nettleton Square, the usual entrance to which is nowadays through the café. At the extreme end of Maidenhead Court we reach Nicholl Square, and immediately to the right we enter the present-day Nettleton Court. At the corner are Messrs. Battersby's premises, and on our right again is the entrance to the remaining portion of the eastern end of the Nettleton Court of Wesley's time.

Having now concluded this survey of No. 28, Aldersgate Street and the surrounding area, I would tender my thanks to the Revs. John Telford, B.A., and Thomas E. Bridgen, and Messrs. H. W. Fincham, F.S.A. and Joseph Blaiberg (the owner of No. 28, Aldersgate Street) for valued assistance kindly and freely given me; to the Manager of Messrs. Barclay's Bank and the occupiers of other premises in the area for access freely allowed to their business and other establishments, and to those who have been good enough to accompany me in tours of this historic area, including Revs John Telford, B.A., George H. McNeal, M.A., Messrs. H. W. Fincham, F.S.A., Stanley Sowton, and others.

HERBERT W. MANSFIELD.

Those who wish to pursue the subject further should refer to *Wesley Studies*, p. 81-87; *Proceedings* iii. 246, v. 246. Also the *Standard Journals*, i. 475. The Editor thereof considers that on the whole the balance of evidence is in favour of the Nettleton Court site, but he does not seem to rule out altogether another site, namely Trinity Hall, Little Britain, the authority for which is Walter Wilson's well-known book: *The History and Antiquities of Dissenting Chapels and Meeting Houses in London, Southwark, and Westminster, 1810*, iii. 350-364.

Mr. Lupton, referred to by Mr. Mansfield, was a Trustee of the vanished Lewin Street Chapel and of City Road. He lived to be one of the oldest business men of the Aldersgate Ward, and was for many years a student of its municipal and Methodist history.

F.F.B.

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

THE INFLUENCE OF BRISTOL ON METHODISM AT LARGE.

(Continued)

(3) *Conferences.*

Wesley held his first annual conference in 1744 and chose London as the place of meeting. He himself was the President for more than forty years of a gathering which became "the supreme court" of Methodism. "The purpose of the Conference was the definition of doctrine, the discovery of methods of church work, the appointment or dismissal of preachers, and the administration of united or connexional church finance."<sup>6</sup> The second Conference was held in the Horsefair Room in Bristol in 1745, and from that time onwards until 1790 no less than eighteen conferences were held in the city. The first Bristol Conference was held in a small room partitioned off from the preaching room and was composed of three clergymen and eight laymen. The importance of these Bristol Conferences during the formative years of Methodism is in the far-reaching resolutions approved and in the decisions made affecting Methodism at large. The Conference which met in Bristol in 1746 "will always be historic," because then there was inaugurated the Circuit system which has been maintained to this day.<sup>7</sup>

The Bristol Conference of 1771 is memorable first because of the Calvinistic controversy which then came to a head. Wesley writes in his *Journal* for Tuesday, August 6, 1771, "we had more preachers than usual at the Conference in consequence of Mr. Shirley's circular letter. At ten on Thursday morning he came with nine or ten of his friends. We conversed freely for about two hours; and I believe they were satisfied that we were not so 'dreadful heretics' as they imagined, but were tolerably sound in the faith."<sup>8</sup> Mr. Shirley was Chaplain to the Countess of

6. G. Eayrs' "John Wesley, Christian Philosopher and Church Founder," p. 214.

7. The Bristol Methodist Congress Handbook, 1929. Article on "The Oldest Methodist Chapel in the World" by the Rev. Dr. T. Ferrier Hulme, p. 39.

8. See *Journal*, vol. 5, p. 425, footnote, also Arminian tracts, B. 539, Bristol Central Library.

Huntingdon. He had sent out a circular letter inviting all who opposed Wesley's Arminian doctrines to attend in a body at the New Room, Bristol, to oppose them. As a result Wesley and fifty-three of his preachers signed a Declaration against "the most perilous and abominable doctrine of justification by works." But from this time onward Wesley's friendship with Lady Huntingdon appears to have ceased.

The second reason why the Bristol Conference of 1771 is specially memorable is that Francis Asbury and Richard Wright, who then responded to an urgent call, were appointed to America. Before leaving Bristol to make the long voyage across the Atlantic, Asbury received from the Bristol Methodists a new suit of clothes and a present of £10.<sup>9</sup> From the earliest days, therefore, Bristol has formed the link between English and American Methodism.

(4) *Ordinations.*

On January 14, 1747 Wesley reached Bristol from Devizes and spent a quiet week resting in the city. It was during this week that Wesley received as an itinerant lay preacher, Joseph Cownley of Leominster in Herefordshire. Cownley knelt down in Wesley's room in the Horsefair, when "Wesley, having put a New Testament into his hand," said to him, "Take thou authority to preach the gospel," and gave him his benediction. This event is "of great interest in the eyes of those who watch the quiet evolution of the constitutional system of Methodism . . . . This simple ceremony sheds light on Wesley's method of receiving a 'labourer' in early days; it also illumines the path he afterwards travelled."<sup>10</sup> This was not an ordination in the sense in which Wesley later ordained others, for no certificate appears to have been given to Cownley, nor was he commissioned to administer the sacraments. It was more in the nature of a recognition than an ordination.

But in 1783 another link was forged in the chain which bound early Bristol Methodism with America. In this year the Independency of the United States was recognised and most of the Anglican clergy there withdrew, making it urgent that Wesley should find some other ordained preachers to carry on the work. The Bishop of London refused to ordain a Methodist preacher for America, so Wesley took it upon himself to ordain preachers for his work abroad.

There lived at this time at 6, Dighton Street, Bristol, John

9. The Bristol Methodist Congress Handbook, 1929, p. 40.

10. Simon's "John Wesley and the Advance of Methodism," pp. 10-11.



Castleman,<sup>11</sup> surgeon to the Bristol Infirmary, 1754-1779 Wesley's medical adviser and friend, and at his house on September 1, 1784, Wesley took a step of the greatest ecclesiastical significance. With Thomas Coke and James Creighton, "presbyters of the Church of England, in accordance with the proved practice of the early Alexandrian Church" he formed "a presbytery," and ordained Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey, deacons; "and on September 2 by the same hands, Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey were ordained elders, and Thomas Coke, L.D., was ordained Superintendent for the Church of God under our care in North America." The Methodist Episcopal Church of America which was formally constituted in December, 1785, traces its origin to these Bristol ordinations.<sup>12</sup>

(5) *The Notes on the New Testament.*

From November 26, 1753 until the end of the year Wesley was in the care of his friends at Lewisham on account of his ill-health, and on January 3, 1754, acting under his doctor's advice he removed to Bristol in order to drink the waters at the Hotwell. His brother's wife was lying ill in Bristol at the time, having been stricken with small-pox. Mrs. Vigor and Mrs. Jones, her friends, and Sister Burges, a nurse were caring for her. Dr. Middleton,<sup>13</sup> had been in attendance regularly, and Lady Huntingdon had visited her twice a day. It was impossible for John Wesley and his wife to stay at his brother's house in Charles Street, so their Bristol friends found lodgings for them, which tradition says were in the colonnade at the Old Hot Well.<sup>14</sup>

It was while he was staying at the Hot Well that Wesley began to prepare a work which he had contemplated for many years, a commentary on the New Testament. And to this day

11. Castleman was born about 1734.

12. See W.H.S. vol. ii., p. 103, for an account of a letter sent to Charles Wesley by Henry Durbin of Bristol, in which the latter is "full of indignation and amazement at the news of the ordinations." He writes on November 4, 1784 and says, "If you were thunderstruck before (Charles Wesley's Journal, February 2, 1751), I think your brother's printed declaration of ordination a louder clap. Your brother, Dr. Coke, and Mr. Creighton ordained the two preachers for America at five in the morning at Mr. Castleman's and Dr. Coke was re-ordained. Your brother, as head of the Methodists, is now a Presbyterian."

13. c.f. Section on Scenes &c.

14. See Journal, vol. iv, p. 91 footnote. Wesley visited the new Hot Well, farther down the river, in August, 1754. The Rev. John Dolman, Vicar of Chalk in Kent, in his "Contemplations among Vincent's Rocks, near the City of Bristol" (1772) testifies to the improvement in Wesley's

Wesley's Notes on the New Testament form part of the doctrinal standards of the Methodist Church.

WESLEY AND THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OF THE CITY.

We noticed in the last section that almost from the first the majority of Bristol clergymen were opposed to John Wesley. His "enthusiasm" was disliked and scorned, his outspokenness was discomfoting, and his methods were regarded as unorthodox, for like Whitefield he "submitted to be more vile" by preaching in the fields and open spaces. As time went on his relations with his fellow clergy, and sometimes with Dissenting ministers, became more strained, and the few whom he could count among his friends were men of outstanding influence in the religious life of the city at the time. Writing from Bristol to his brother Charles on April 9, 1739,<sup>1</sup> only a week after his first attempt at "field-preaching" on "a little eminence" since identified as the brickyard at the farther end of St. Philip's Plain,<sup>2</sup> he says: "The clergy here *gladiatorio animo ad nos affectant viam.*"<sup>3</sup> But the people of all sorts receive the word gladly." In a letter to his friend, James Hutton, a London bookseller, Wesley writes, "I waited on one of the clergy of this city (on Saturday, April 14, 1739) who had sent me word, "I was welcome to preach in his church if I would tell nobody of it," but he had altered his mind and told me now "he could not let me preach." The clergyman is said to have been John Gibbs, Vicar of St. Mary Redcliffe (1704-44).<sup>4</sup> He had evidently come to the conclusion that the interest Wesley's preaching had already aroused in the city would bring large crowds to Redcliffe if the evangelist preached there, and there might be "scenes" which he did not wish to encourage.

We may now enquire into Wesley's relations with some of the outstanding figures in the religious life of Bristol during his ministry there.

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health as a result of drinking the waters here. "When he (i.e. Wesley) first came, his once active body seemed as if it had nearly, very nearly, worn out his countenance; he looked as if a greedy consumption had determined soon to devour him. . . . In less than three weeks God so blessed the water to him, which he regularly drank, that he was enabled to set out on his Cornish circuit. . . . preaching every day."

1. The Letters, vol. i, p. 9.

2. W.H.S. vol. ii, pt. I, c.f. vol. iii, pt. 2.

3. The quotation is from Terence's *Phormio*, v, vii, 71,—"Set upon us with gladiatorial intent."

4. Letters, vol. i, p. 296 (footnote).

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### (1) JOSEPH BUTLER.

Bishop of Bristol (1738-50), author of "The Analogy of Religion," is known to have had two important interviews with Wesley in Bristol. The first took place on August 16, 1739, when Wesley conversed with the Bishop for about a quarter of an hour. A second meeting took place two days later, an incomplete account of which is to be found in the *Journal*.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Sutton, Dr. Josiah Tucker<sup>6</sup> and the Chancellor of the Diocese were also present. On this occasion the Bishop examined Wesley on his doctrines and on his activities in Bristol. Finding Wesley was too much for him on this score, he changed the conversation to a discussion of the administration of the sacraments in the Societies and the scenes associated with Wesley's preaching, and finally ended by advising Wesley to leave the city. "You have no business here; you are not commissioned to preach in this diocese. Therefore I advise you to go hence." To this Wesley replied that he was not aware of any law which forbade him, with the credentials he claimed to have as Fellow of an Oxford College, to preach in the diocese of Bristol. In pleading his college fellowship, however, Wesley was wrong. "His Master's degree gave him the *jus ubique docendi*, which Wesley seems to have mistaken for the *jus ubique praedicandi*."<sup>7</sup> This interview with the Bishop enabled Wesley to see the impression his visits to Bristol had already made upon some, and were likely to make upon others. The Bishop's attitude would be endorsed by many of his clergy.

### (2) JOHN HODGES.

Vicar of Clifton. Although strictly speaking Clifton was outside the city in the 18th century, it has always been easily accessible from Bristol, and for that reason alone we are not surprised that Wesley visited it. In 1739 the parish Church at Clifton was still only a plain country church, and the *Journal* tells us that Wesley was invited to take the afternoon service there on three consecutive Sundays in this year (May 6, 13 and 20) for the Vicar, who was lying dangerously ill. The *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*<sup>8</sup> contain valuable notes on these visits of Wesley to Clifton. Fragments from parish records show that the sick Vicar was John Hodges who succeeded the Rev. Humphrey Tucker, and whose signature first appears in the parish records on

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5. Vol. ii, pp. 256-7.

6. Ibid. footnote.

7. Dimond's "The Psychology of the Methodist Revival," p. 113.

8. W.H.S., vol. iii, pt. 6.

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April 11, 1732, and from that time onwards until 1738. But on Monday, May 8, 1739, the following entry occurs in the churchwardens' book: "In consideration that our minister, the Revd. Mr. John Hodges is very ill and not likely to Recover, wee who names are Subscribed Doe, in the Roome of Mr. Steph. Hodges chose Mr. William Busher to be the Church Warden instead of Mr. Stephen Hodges as Witness our hands this 8 Day of May, one thousand seven hundred and thirty nine, 1739, the mark of x Robert Clapp, Thomas Garland, Jos. Osborne, James Leigh, Edwd. Rogers, James Benan." The burial is entered thus: "Mr. John Hodges, May 24th. (1739)." Foster is unable in his article in the *Proceedings* to give any reason why Wesley should have been asked to "supply" Hodge's pulpit. But records show that John Hodges, son of John Hodges, of Clifton, co. Gloucester, gent., was educated at Balliol College and matriculated on November 24, 1716, aged 18. It is possible therefore that Wesley met Hodges in his Oxford days, and struck up a friendship that was renewed at Clifton towards the end of Hodge's days.

### (3) HENRY BECHER (or Beecher).

Vicar of Temple (1739-1743), who was also Rector of St. Stephen's (1731-1744) stands out in the history of early Bristol Methodism as one of the first clergymen to show public opposition to the Wesleys, for it was Becher who repelled Charles Wesley and his Kingswood colliers from the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in Temple Church on Sunday, July 27, 1740. After the sermon on this occasion, those who were not of Temple parish were asked to leave the church. The colliers did so, but Charles Wesley remained, and describes in his *Journal* what happened.<sup>9</sup> "While the shepherd was driving away the lambs I stayed, suspecting nothing till the clerk came to me and said, 'Mr. Becher bids you go away, for he will not give you the sacrament.' I went to the vestry door and mildly desired Mr. Becher to admit me. He asked, 'Are you of this parish?' I answered, 'Sir, you see I am a clergyman.' Dropping his first pretence he charged me with rebellion in expounding the Scriptures without authority, and said in express words, 'I repel you from the sacrament.' I replied, 'I cite you to answer this before Jesus Christ at the day of judgement.' This enraged him above measure. He called out, 'Here, take away this man.' The constables were ordered to attend, I suppose, lest the furious colliers should take the sacrament by force; but I saved them the trouble of taking away

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9. Charles Wesley's *Journal*, i., p. 246.

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this man, and quietly retired." The Vicar of Temple was not the only one of his family to show bitterness towards the early Bristol Methodists. Earlier in the same year, April 2, 1740, Henry Becher's brother, Michael Becher, Alderman and Sheriff, had strictly forbidden John Wesley to visit in Newgate "two wretches under sentence of death" though they were "earnestly desirous to see me." So it came about that on April 14, Benjamin Fletcher and William Lewis, convicted of highway robbery on Durdham Down, died at Gloucester without Wesley's spiritual counsel. Wesley's own comment is "I cite Alderman Becher to answer for these souls at the judgement seat of Christ."<sup>10</sup>

### (4) WILLIAM CARY.

Vicar of Temple (1713-1723),<sup>11</sup> succeeded to the incumbency of St. Philip and St. Jacob in November, 1723, and remained until 1759. On Sunday, September 7, 1740 there is this entry in Charles Wesley's *Journal*, "Mr. Cary's curate informed us that Mr. Cary had ordered him to repel my brother and me from the sacrament." A later entry, Sunday, October 5, 1740, reads, "I offered myself at the sacrament and was not refused, though Mr. Cary himself administered." Had Cary changed his mind in less than a month? Or did he object to John and not to Charles Wesley, so that he was willing to give the sacrament to the latter when he was unaccompanied by his brother? We cannot say, but it is plain that John Wesley had made an impression on yet another Bristol clergyman.

### (5) JOSIAH TUCKER.

Dean of Gloucester and Rector of All Saints' (1739-49) and St. Stephen's (1750-1794), was one of the earliest critics of Methodism in Bristol, but he was not in Wesley's opinion an opponent. Wesley told Mr. Bailey of Cork,<sup>12</sup> that Dr. Tucker and Dr. Church, "have wrote as gentlemen, having some regard for their own, whatever my character was." "The Principles of a Methodist," written in 1740<sup>13</sup> concerning which Wesley says it is "the first time I have appeared in controversy," is an answer to Tucker's criticism of Methodism. In the preceding year<sup>14</sup> Wesley

10. W.H.S. vol. iii, pt. 6.

11. Catcott's manuscript notes on Temple Parish, p. 27, in Bristol Central Library.

12. Works ix., p. 65.

13. Ibid viii., p. 359.

14. *Journal*, July 31, 1739 and November 1, 1739. Wesley appears to have attended Tucker's induction at All Saints on Sunday, July 23, 1739. *Journal*, vol. ii., p. 245.

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

refers to a "candid and courteous unnamed critic," who is this same Tucker. Wesley's *Diary* shows that he often attended the Sunday afternoon service at All Saints when Dr. Tucker officiated.

### (6) RUMNEY PENROSE.

Rector of St. Ewen's (1777), stands out in contrast to Becher and others who so rigorously opposed Wesley. His father, also Rumney Penrose, had been Rector of St. Werburgh's in 1739, in which year according to Wesley's own report he preached in that pulpit his first sermon in a Bristol church. St. Werburgh's church, which has been removed and re-erected not far from Baptist Mills, then stood in Corn Street. St. Ewen's was taken down about 1829, and its site is now occupied by the City Council House. It had not been used for worship since 1788, three years before Wesley's death. Wesley preached in St. Werburgh's on April 16, 1777, and in St. Ewen's on the following Sunday, the 23rd. The earlier Rumney Penrose was one of the few Bristol clergymen who opened his pulpit to Whitefield on the occasion of his first visit to the city.<sup>15</sup> Wesley appears to have had a good friend in the younger Penrose, though the records of St. Werburgh's give no account of Wesley's visits to the church.<sup>16</sup>

### (7) JAMES ROUQUET (or Roquet).

Curate of St. Werburgh's, has been described as one of the most attractive of the minor characters of the period—"with all a Frenchman's vivacity"<sup>17</sup> for his father was a French Protestant refugee. James horrified the Bristol merchants by his ultra-Radicalism and his outspoken sympathy with the revolted colonies,<sup>18</sup> but the poor almost worshipped him, for he did some of his best work as chaplain of St. Peter's Hospital and the jail. His funeral was a sight that Bristol long remembered, and his friends from the slums turned out in their thousands to follow him to the grave. Rouquet first met Wesley at Oxford, and was later appointed headmaster of Kingswood School, probably about 1751. He it was who introduced "Captain" Webb to the Bristol Methodists in 1765. In 1768 Wesley made a will<sup>19</sup> (although

15. W.H.S. vol. iii., pt. 6

16. The present Rector of St. Werburgh's tells me that he is unable to find any records of services and preachers for this period. They seem to have been entered up in insignificant notebooks and are probably lost, although a few of a later period are still preserved.

17. Balleine's "History of the Evangelical Party in the Church of England," p. 90. W.H.S. vol. ix., pt. 1.

18. Tyerman's "The Life and Times of John Wesley," vol. iii, p. 15.

19. Wesley was not in sympathy with the revolted colonies, but this does not seem to have made any difference to his admiration for Rouquet.

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his last was made in 1789) in which among other bequests he left "to the Rev. James Roquet, all my manuscripts." Roquet had been educated at the Merchant Taylors' School in London, was converted under Whitefield's ministry, went to Oxford where he graduated at St. John's College, before taking up his position in Wesley's school at Kingswood. Later he obtained episcopal ordination, and at the time when the will was made, he was curate of St. Werburgh's. According to Sketchley's Bristol Directory for 1775, Rouquet (spelt Roquet by Wesley) lived at 15, Dove Street, not far from 3 (now 4), Charles Street, where Charles Wesley lived from 1749 to 1771. Rouquet died on November 16, 1776, and was buried in St. Peter's Church, City. The *Bristol Journal* (late Sarah Farley's) for Saturday, November 23, 1776, gives the following account of his death. "On Saturday died (of a putrid fever, of which he had been ill about a fortnight) in the 47th year of his age, universally lamented, that truly great and good man, the Rev. James Rouquet, Lecturer of St. Nicholas, and Chaplain to St. Peter's Hospital in this city. His character as a man, a Christian, and a clergyman, has seldom been equalled, perhaps never exceeded." It is pleasing to find such a tribute to a man whose associations with Wesley might have brought him into public disfavour, and we can only wonder what it might have meant to the progress of Methodism in Bristol if Rouquet had lived to share the friendship of Wesley a few years longer.

W. A. GOSS.

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## TWO WESLEY LETTERS IN AMERICA.

BY MRS. ANNA ONSTOTT, HISTORIAN OF JOHN STREET  
METHODIST CHURCH, NEW YORK.

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There has recently appeared a volume under the title of *Ancestors and Descendants of John Quarles Winn and His Wife Mary Liscome Jarvis*, compiled by the Reverend David Watson Winn and Elizabeth Jarvis Winn. This book constitutes a valuable contribution to Methodistica and throws new light on the relationship of John Wesley Jarvis, who was a grand-nephew of John Wesley and a notable American portrait painter of the early nineteenth century.

John Wesley's sister Ann, called Nancy, married John Lambert, a surveyor, at Epworth, England, in 1725. They had

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a son John and a daughter Ann. In 1778 Ann married John Jarvis, a sea captain, who was a son of James Jarvis, a hatter in New York. James Jarvis was one of the first trustees and class-leaders of John Street Methodist Church. It was he who made to order the hats worn by the first Methodist preachers—Robert Williams, Richard Beardman, Joseph Pilmoor, and Francis Asbury—and it is interesting to note that the Trustees of old John Street Church paid two pounds and five shillings per hat.

Two children were born to John and Ann Jarvis in England, whom they named Elizabeth and John Wesley. Captain John Jarvis, whose wife and children were still in England, wrote an interesting letter from Peekshill-on-the-Hudson in 1785 to Mr. Lang in New York inquiring for letters from England :

“ Mr. Lang,

Please to call at a house next door to the Methodist Meeting in John Street and inquire if Dr. Coke is in town, and if he is give him my name when you see him and desire to know if he has any letter for me from Mr. Wesley, Mr. Atlay, Mr. Web, Mrs. Hall, Miss Harvey or Mrs. Jarvis, or whether he was desired at all to enquire about me, and if he is not yet come you may, if you please, leave this for him and that I live at the widow Brewers, Crompound, nine miles from Peekskill Landing, and you'll oblige—

Yours to serve—

JOHN JARVIS.”

The above communication shows that Captain Jarvis was quite familiar with the movements of the early leaders of Methodism and knew about the coming of Dr. Coke as the first Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the purpose of his mission.

Soon after this Mrs. Jarvis came with her two children, Elizabeth and John Wesley, and remained some time in New York City, and that they attended John Street Methodist Church is proved by the following entry in the old church record :

“ Baptised 1787, March 13, Edward, son of John Jarvis and Ann Lambert.”

In the year following Mrs. Jarvis was in Philadelphia. What a pity her husband did not remain in New York and continue his late father's business, a well established hattery.



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Students of Methodistica will be delighted to find in the volume mentioned at the beginning of this article a rare facsimile letter of John Wesley, the original of which was discovered by Miss Elizabeth Jarvis Winn of Baltimore, Md., in the Philadelphia Historical Library. Here is a transcript of said letter as written by John Wesley to his niece Ann Jarvis, addressed to Mrs. Jarvis at the Methodist Chapel (St. George's), Philadelphia.

“ March 31, 1788.

Dear Nancy :

What a pity it is that your husband did not know when he was well ! And that he should give up that little comfortable Business which Providence had given him at York to gape after he knew not what, a fine shadow afar off somewhere in Kentucky ! I wondered what had become of you when I heard nothing about you for so long a time. I have a rule with me to answer all the letters I receive : Except those that have no name ; Of them I take no notice. I have no doubt at all but your business will recover if you still serve & trust in God. I was worse down in the . . . and seemed to be not far from the end of my journey. But it has pleased God to renew my strength and raise me up once more. My sister Hall is just as she was, a very young old woman. Peace be with all your Spirits. I am

Dear Nancy,

Your affectionate Uncle  
J. WESLEY.”

### NOTES ON THE FOREGOING.

#### WESLEY'S NIECE.

This letter, judged by the photostat kindly furnished by Mrs. Onstott, appears to be genuine.

On examining the letter one is struck by the absence of the place name which almost invariably heads Wesley's communications. This deprives us of information that would enable us to determine the date, which is not clearly written. Mrs. Onstott transcribes it as 1788. I venture to think however that it is 1790. The postmark, moreover, appears to indicate this.

The records relating to John Wesley's sister Ann are very scanty. Dr. Clarke in *Memoirs of the Wesley Family*, p. 482, says :

Of this lady I find no record among the family papers nor from any of the survivors in any of its branches, but that

she was married to a gentlemen of the name of John Lambert, of whom I know but this, that he was a land-surveyor in Epworth. We have to regret that of Mrs. Lambert, her husband and their children, if they had any, we know nothing farther.

Stevenson, *Memorials of the Wesley Family*, states that she was born in 1702, and that a son whom Stevenson thought to be the only child was baptised in 1726 and died before reaching his majority. Mrs. Lambert was present at her Mother's death in 1742, and according to Stevenson there is no later record concerning her.

What is the authority for the statement made in Mrs. Onstott's notes, (a statement presumably taken from the book she is reviewing) that Wesley's sister Ann had two children, John and Ann? Ann Wesley, afterwards Lambert, was born in 1702. Consequently no child of hers was likely to be born later than 1740, and would be at least thirty eight years old in 1778, the time Ann Lambert married John Jarvis of New York. This is older than would be expected in the case of one who became the mother of two children in England—and moreover, it seems impossible that she should be the mother referred to in the baptismal register of 1787. Now remembering in addition to this difficulty, that the two authoritative biographers referred to above, know nothing of any daughter of Ann Lambert, Wesley's sister, it seems necessary to look for some explanation.

There is a passage worthy of consideration at this point, in a letter written by Charles Wesley to his wife, August 17, 1778 (*Jackson's Life of C.W.*, ii, 313). Referring to his elder brother John's activity, he says

Lizzy Ellison he is sending to keep school in Yorkshire. N. Lambert, I doubt not, will soon be provided for. She is a serious, solid, deserving girl. How unlike her cousin. I wish you would write immediately to Mrs. Milly and employ her to get her (if she can) a good place, which will be better and safer than business.

Is the N. Lambert mentioned in this letter the lady who married John Jarvis in 1778? Is it fanciful to see in the expectation that she will soon be provided for, a glimpse of an approaching change in her condition? She is spoken of as a girl, though old enough to take a place or enter into business. Apparently she is the cousin of Elizabeth Ellison. Now we learn from Stevenson that Elizabeth was the eldest daughter of John Ellison and his first wife. This John Ellison was the son of

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Richard Ellison who married Wesley's sister Susanna. Elizabeth Ellison, Dr. Adam Clarke says, turned out unfortunate, and he had known John Wesley shew great kindness to her, after relieving her in distress to which her imprudence had reduced her.

These considerations seem to present the N. Lambert of Charles Wesley's letter as a grand-daughter rather than a daughter of Wesley's sister. Is it too venturesome to conjecture that the son of John and Ann Lambert baptised in 1726, though he died in his minority, nevertheless lived long enough to be married and become the father of the Nancy Lambert we have been discussing? In the absence of direct evidence such a conjecture seems more likely than the existence of the supposititious daughter of John and Ann Lambert, who would in any case be too old to fit the circumstances.

If we are right in inferring that it is a daughter of John Lambert the younger to whom Charles Wesley alludes, then the way seems clear for the conclusion that she was the bride of John Jarvis in 1778. She would then be approximately thirty-two years of age. It would be quite natural for John Wesley to call himself her uncle, and one could understand Charles Wesley speaking of her as a girl.

John Wesley refers in this letter to "my Sister Hall." This was his sister Martha, who died a few weeks after he did in her eightyfifth year, and was buried in the same vault. Writing to Charles, May 3, 1786, Wesley says :

Seven guineas Patty has had from me within this month, besides ten or eleven which she has worried me to give Nancy Jervas this winter.

Patty is doubtless Mrs. Hall. And it is not a very daring conjecture that the Nancy Jervas for whom Mrs. H. interceded was Ann the wife of John Jarvis of New York. According to Mrs. Onstott's account she was in England about this time, and it may have been the absence of her husband which caused her difficulty.

These notes are written for *Proceedings*, a medium for the testing of conjectures as well as for the presentation of established conclusions. I submit them to the judgment of such of our members as may be interested.

REV. JOHN WESLEY TO HIS SISTER PATTY  
(MRS. MARTHA HALL).

Whitehaven

May 28th, 1781.

Dear Patty,

Here I am, waiting for a passage to the Isle of Man.

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After spending a few days there, I expect to be here again, and in a day or two to strike off to Newcastle-on-Tyne. I was in a manner a stranger to sea sickness till my last voyage, but 'tis an excellent medicine, and you must not expect that medicine should be very pleasant. Still I think there is hardly a Father in England that can furnish three persons who after living so many years are so young as my Brother & you & me. We have only to praise God, and as Mr. Halyburton says: "to live out our lives to HIS glory."

I am, dear Patty,

Your affectionate Friend & Brother,

J. WESLEY.

To Mrs. Hall  
City Road  
London.

The above was copied from an unpublished transcript letter of John Wesley by Mrs. Anna Onstott, Historian of John Street Methodist Episcopal Church, New York City, who found it in the archives of the Methodist Historical Society at 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

This letter appears in a very attenuated form in the *Standard Letters*, vii, 65.

Dear Matty,

There is hardly a father in England that can furnish three persons who after so many years are so young as my brother and you and me.

Line out our lives to His glory.

I think "Patty" is more likely to be correct than "Matty." This letter is referred to in *Journal* vi, 318, in connection with Wesley's visit to Whitehaven. The Editor states that Wesley read Halyburton (so spelt) in Georgia. It is interesting to note that the Life of Haliburton (so spelt) was read by Charles Wesley to some of his friends at an early date, and that it was afterwards incorporated in the curriculum of Kingswood School. The quotation from Haliburton is given in Mrs. Onstott's version as to *live* out our lives to His glory. This seems more likely to be correct than *line* out as given in the *Journal* and *Letters*.

F.F.B.

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AMERICAN METHODISM.

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We have received two interesting booklets from Mrs. Onstott, who is the official historian of John Street Chapel, New York.

The first is entitled :

The Story of Old John Street Methodist Episcopal Church,  
44 John Street, New York City,  
1766-1932.

Dr. Francis Bourne Upham, Pastor.

The object of the publication is well stated :

To put into the hands of its many world-wide visitors an informing and pleasing memento of the beginnings and subsequent history of the first, and, therefore, the most hallowed, shrine of American Methodism. To produce in plain, brief terms, a story which we trust will help to create, widen and deepen veneration and affection for this historic Methodist shrine, whose spiritual offspring of millions are scattered throughout the world.

After an excellent account of the events which led to the erection of the first Chapel, there is given the subscription list of 250 subscribers to that effort. Use is made of the unpublished journal of Pilmoor, now in possession of the Philadelphia Methodist Historical Society.

The book is enriched by many appropriate illustrations, including reproductions of two portraits of Wesley recently acquired from the collection of the late Rev. Marmaduke Riggall. They are, respectively, Wesley at the Charterhouse (see *Sayings and Portraits of Charles Wesley*, 229), and "the Aristocratic Wesley" (see *Sayings and Portraits of John Wesley*, 179). Pictures are given of the three Chapels erected successively in John Street, 1768, 1818 and 1841; Philip Embury, his wife Margaret, his house, his Bible; the old Rigging Loft; Captain Webb and his chair; Francis Asbury; Barbara Heck, her birthplace, her Bible; Dr. J. B. Wakely and the present Pastor. Mention must also be made of the portrait of Peter Williams the slave, for thereby hangs a very remarkable story. Some years after his birth Peter became the property of a tradesman who subsequently found it desirable to leave the country as he was a loyalist. This

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owner offered Peter for sale and the Trustees of John Street Chapel, at Peter's request, bought him in 1783 for £40 and at once installed him with full responsibilities as Sexton. Immediately he began to make payments to the Trustees to secure his liberty. His last payment was made in November, 1785, but he continued as Sexton many years. In this capacity, assisted by his wife, he was able to promote the comfort of Asbury and other preacher guests of the John Street parsonage. He helped to secure subscriptions for building the first Church for negroes in New York, erected in 1801.

The book, though but small, is full of information, and should prove very useful.

The second pamphlet we desire to acknowledge, is entitled :

A Daughter of the Dawn, a Drama of Early American Methodism, inspired by the Life of Barbara Heck, Mother and Co-founder of Methodism in North America, written in celebration of the Bi-centenary of her birth (1734-1934) by Mrs. J. Lane Miller.

This pageant was performed at the beginning of the year in connection with a successful celebration of the bi-centenary.

Those who are interested in the story of Methodist beginnings in America should not overlook a book (recently published by the Epworth Press at 6/-) by the Rev. Richard Pyke entitled : *The Dawn of American Methodism*. Dr. Harrison, reviewing it, calls it a very interesting and readable account of the subject. It begins with Wesley and Whitefield in Georgia, and takes the story on to the separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church from the Methodist Episcopal Church (South) on the subject of slavery. It covers the romantic period when the Colonies won their independence, and the marvellous westward expansion began. Methodism won its strong position in the Republic in those years because it followed the people, and was led in its labours for the Gospel by men of ceaseless devotion like Francis Asbury and William McKendree. Asbury naturally plays a large part in the story, and it is well that English Methodists should remember that he travelled even more widely than Wesley or Whitefield in his Gospel campaigns, preached more frequently, and lived harder. The reasons for the Episcopal form of Church government, the influence of Wesley and Coke in bringing this about, and the modifications of Episcopacy that American Methodism needed, are clearly set out. Dr. Harrison concludes the review from which these sentences are taken by expressing the hope that Mr. Pyke will continue the story for the benefit of English readers.

F.F.B.

## BLENDON HALL AND THE DELAMOTTES.

It was my good fortune a few months ago to inspect Blendon Hall the home of the Delamotte family and the scene of many stirring events in the earliest days of the Methodist Revival. The Hall is about a mile from Bexley village and from the church of which the Rev. Henry Piers was the Vicar. He was one of the six clergymen who attended the first Conference in 1744.

The whole district of North Kent is redolent with memories of the Wesleys and of Whitefield in the earliest days of their evangelical fervour. Readers of Whitefield's *Journal* will remember the amazing crowds which gathered to hear the elequent preacher at Blackheath and at Gravesend, (en route to Georgia), and later still on Bexley Common and above all in Bexley Church. Shoreham vicarage and church with rood-loft still intact, the home of the Perronets, is not many miles away.

The earliest rendezvous was Blendon Hall. One regrets that the utmost research has not revealed much about the Delamottes. Tyerman informs us the father was a rich London sugar merchant, and a county magistrate and that, in addition to the parents, the family consisted of two sons, William and Charles, and a daughter named Betty. How they made the acquaintance of the Wesleys, and how they had acquired such deep interest in personal religion we cannot say, but Wesley tells us that Charles Delamotte aged 21 had resolved against his father's wish to accompany him to Georgia, "to act as his servant": he went as we know as school-master to the town of Savannah.

It was more than interesting to walk over the old mansion shortly to be demolished. The structural alterations have been few, though the house has been modernised internally and has been inhabited until a year or two ago. The house is of three stories, and of considerable extent. The frontage is plain and without ornamentation of any kind, the walls are plastered and colour-washed. There is a large entrance hall, which may have been the private chapel, and from this we pass into several spacious and handsome rooms leading into one another. Extensive vaults are in the basement and numerous rooms for the servants occupy the topmost floor.

The house does not enclose a courtyard but there is a large enclosed, cobbled stable-yard where the evangelists often preached to crowded congregations of villagers and servants. From Whitefield's *Journal* I cull such phrases as—"I returned to my

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sweet retreat at Blendon. Oh the comfort of being all of one mind in a house": and again, "I preached with more power than ever in Bexley Church and assisted in administering the Sacrament to about two hundred communicants, and then dined, gave thanks and sang hymns at Mr. Delamottes," and once more, "Preached in the afternoon to about three hundred people in Justice Delamottes' yard and in the evening on Blackheath to upwards of twenty thousand."

It is however to Charles Wesley's *Journal* one must turn to people these spacious rooms, and to hear the vivid conversation of two centuries ago.

On Tuesday, April 25, 1738, (only a month before Wesley's great experience in Aldersgate Street), there were warm discussions at Blendon Hall. "Soon after five, as we were met in our little chapel, Mrs. Delamotte came to us. We sang and fell into a dispute whether conversion was gradual or instantaneous. My brother was very positive for the latter, and very shocking; mentioned some late instances of gross sinners believing in a moment. I was much offended at this unedifying discourse. Mrs. Delamotte left us abruptly. I stayed, and insisted a man need not know when first he had faith. His obstinacy in favouring the contrary opinion drove me at last out of the room." (C. W's *Journal*).

I turned to leave: the old Hall was already in the hands of the builders and large posters announced that very desirable modern residences were shortly to be erected on the Blendon Hall estate.

J. CARTWRIGHT ADLARD.

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## A PIONEER OF IRISH METHODISM.

The enterprising spirit of our Irish Branch is well-known. It has been recently shown in a practical form by the erection of a tablet in memory of one whose Gospel triumphs are an inspiration to recall.

The service for the unveiling of the tablet was held at Moy, and was well supported. The Rev. William Corrigan, Secretary of the Irish Branch, read a letter of congratulation from the General Secretary of the W.H.S. He concluded his address by saying, "We cannot estimate a fraction of what we owe to men whose names have long passed from memory, and who, like John Smith, lie in unforgotten graves; but here, at least, to-night we glorify God for one Methodist hero whose name, now rescued from oblivion, will never more be allowed to perish from the annals of Methodism."



A courteous letter has been received from the Rt. Hon. Stanley Baldwin, whose great-grandfather, James Macdonald, was brought into Methodism and its ministry through the labours of John Smith.

The Rev. R. H. Gallagher outlined the career of John Smith. The main facts are summarised on the tablet itself, but it should be noted that he never went to school, and in his early manhood was very careless. His conversion was very thorough, and before he was called out to be a travelling preacher he was a class-leader and carried out much fruitful evangelism. His career as a travelling preacher was attended by remarkable spiritual victories, though it was cut short by the violence of unreasonable men.

The Tablet reads as follows :

TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN MEMORY OF

JOHN SMITH

A PIONEER METHODIST PREACHER.

BORN AT CLARE, TANDRAGEE 1713 CONVERTED AT  
COOTEHILL 1758. CALLED OUT TO PREACH BY JOHN  
WESLEY 1766

FOR SEVEN YEARS HE WAS IN LABOURS MOST  
ABUNDANT IN THE COUNTIES ARMAGH, FERMANAGH  
AND TYRONE, AND WAS USED OF GOD IN THE SAL-  
VATION OF MULTITUDES. UPWARDS OF TWENTY  
YOUNG MEN LED TO CHRIST BY HIM ENTERED THE  
METHODIST MINISTRY. AMONGST THEM BEING THE  
FOLLOWING

NEHEMIAH PRICE, JOHN PRICE, JOHN MAYLEY, JOHN  
BREDIN, WILLIAM HORNER, ROBERT SMITH, JAMES  
SMITH, ANDREW DELAP, JOHN WAUGH AND JAMES  
MACDONALD.

IN 1774 HE WAS WAYLAID NEAR CLOGHER AND  
CRUELLY BEATEN. WITH DIFFICULTY HE REACHED  
CHARLEMONT WHERE HE DIED A MARTYR'S DEATH.  
HIS DUST LIES IN AN UNKNOWN GRAVE IN LEGAR  
HILL.

SAMUEL BATES WHO STARTED THE FIRS TSUNDAY  
SCHOOL IN IRELAND AND AFTERWARDS BECAME AN  
ITINERANT, WAS ONE OF HIS LAST ATTENDANTS.

HE RESTS FROM HIS LABOURS AND HIS WORKS DO  
FOLLOW HIM.

ERECTED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE WESLEY  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

OCTOBER 1933

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

729. **WIGAN METHODISM.** The Rev. C Deane Little has recently compiled a booklet of 68 pages entitled *Our Old Sunday School* (Price 1/-). Mr. Little has had to bear in mind the limitations imposed by his primary title, but he has done much to fulfil the promise of his sub-title, 150 years of Wigan Methodism. He has gone into the subject so thoroughly, and evidently has so much first-hand information at his disposal, that we hope he will be good enough to shape the earlier part into an article for our columns.

730. We have received a copy of a well-printed brochure entitled ; *The History of Wesleyan Methodism in Bamford, 1789-1933.*

The first part, written by Rev. F. Gordon Mee, Superintendent of the Heywood Circuit, in which Bamford is situated, deals with the beginnings of Methodism in Bamford. These beginnings are shrouded in obscurity, but they almost certainly include some personal touches with the founder of Methodism, for he must have ridden through Bamford on eight or nine occasions when passing between Rochdale and Bolton. He would use the old road through Broadhalgh, Diggles, Dixon Fold, Hollin Hall and past the front of old Bamford Hall to Simpson Clough.

There is a tradition in the Circuit that on one of his journeys Wesley passed through Heywood and preached at Captain Fold. James Wolstenholme of that place commenced the first Sunday School in Heywood in 1793. Possibly the visit of the evangelist accounted for his "warmed heart." The first clear record of Methodism in Bamford is that in 1789 Dixon Fold appears on the Rochdale Local Preachers' Plan for a service on alternate Sundays at 5 p m.

A reproduction of this plan, which has been carefully preserved, is given. It will furnish useful information to students of the development of Methodism in a wider area than that covered by the Rochdale Circuits of the present day.

The story is brought down to the present day by Mr. John Oddie, who writes upon the erection of the present Chapel, which has recently celebrated its Jubilee. (Copies of the booklet may be obtained from Mr. John Oddie, 33. Bury Road, Bamford, Rochdale.