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Proceedings

OF THE

Wesley Historical Society

Editor : REV. WESLEY F. SWIFT

Volume XXVIII

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HEADINGLEY PAPERS

III. John Cennick and Kingswood School

John Cennick is known to most Methodists by a handful of hymns and his ever-popular Graces. The student of Methodist history thinks of him also as a pioneer lay preacher in the Bristol area from the summer of 1739 until the winter of 1740, when he went over to the Calvinistic wing of the Methodist revival under somewhat unhappy circumstances. We are apt to overlook his work as a pioneer educationist at the original Kingswood School.

This school was founded in 1739 by George Whitefield for the teaching of the colliers' children, and was taken over by John Wesley. Whitefield and Wesley united in urging John Cennick, a young man nearing twenty-one, to become its first master. It was in this capacity, as prospective schoolmaster watching his school-buildings being erected and getting to know his future pupils and their parents, that Cennick commenced preaching. When the school was opened, late in 1739 or early in 1740, he was the only master, though Whitefield's original invitation was that he should be "one of the masters". The letter printed below shows that in August 1740 Cennick was still in sole charge but very anxious to have an assistant, not only to reduce his own responsibilities but also to extend the school's usefulness, as the area swarmed with children who were little more than savages. Cennick had even secured a recruit who, like himself, was content to work for his keep alone. This was William Spencer.

Spencer's appointment was approved by Wesley, and he thus became one of the pioneers of education at Kingswood. When Cennick was dismissed a few months later, Spencer remained in sole charge, and when Wesley opened the "New House" at Kingswood in 1748 Spencer was one of the original masters. After some years he left both Kingswood School and Methodism under a cloud. He became rich, and died intestate in 1779, providing Wesley with an opportunity to enforce the moral: "Reader! if you have not done it already, make your will before you sleep!" As early as 1764 his relationships with Methodism had become strained, but

Charles Wesley wrote in May that year to Joseph Cownley: "Billy Spencer was with us from the beginning: What you can do for him, I know you will." This letter reveals that beginning.

JOHN CENNICK TO JOHN WESLEY

Sat. Aug^t: 16, 1740

Dr. Brother,

I write now to ask your mind about letting Wm. Spencer be a sort of Usher to ye School at Kingswood under me, so might 15 or 20 Boys more be brought up, to ye good of them, and to ye satisfying an inquisitive people, who are always asking after more Masters.

You are persuaded I cannot always be there, yet so often as I could an Hour or two of a Day perhaps I might, and in that I might shew him what to do. He can write and cast account well; and would be content with Food and Rayment. This I believe we (that is our Society) could afford. Yet dr. sir if it be not according to your will speak and I have done. He is teased at home, and to get from them looks to Jamaca [sic]: I think 'tis better to abide here.

B. Chas is still very ill. Pray for him that his sickness be to the Glory of God! Pray for me that I may be humble, willing to be led by ye Lord's Hand whithersoever He pleaseth! There is now no Collections made, what must we do? Yesterday Mr. Morgan and wife (as he said) moved by ye Almighty went into ye Quakers Meeting dress'd as off [sic] that Society, and preached twice. The Bishop would have him return, he still persists and has made no small stir in this place. Mrs. Grevile, Jenny Smith, Tho^s Oldfield, W^m Winne seems now to have bid adieu to ye Word as among us preached. Tell me if you can talk with Mr. Seward, if he preaches, if many follow him? My Love to dear B. Nowers, Purdy, and all as many as bear ye Name of Christ, and asks after me. I think we go forward, and are vigilant here. Adieu!

To The Rev^d Mr. Wesley
at ye Foundry,
Upper Morefields
London.

The letter has other points of interest. It shows that in August 1740 there was little sign of the disaffection which overtook Cennick later in the year. It gives us a glimpse of Charles Wesley's desperate illness—probably typhus fever. It mentions the names of several well-known supporters of Methodism in London and Bristol, and mentions William Seward, whose preaching ended two months later in his death by mobbing. Perhaps of most interest, however, is the reference to "Mr. Morgan and wife", who attended a Quaker meeting dressed "as off that Society". The Rev. William Morgan, an Anglican clergyman, was a predecessor of Whitefield and the Wesleys in open-air preaching at Bristol. On 1st September 1740 Charles Wesley completed the story of Morgan's change of loyalty. He wrote to Whitefield about the troubles caused by the "still brethren": "The Quakers they say are exactly right & indeed the principles of the one naturally lead to the other. For instance take our poor Friend Morgan. One week he & his Wife were at J. Bray's under the preaching of the still Brethren. Soon after he turned Quaker, & is now a celebrated Preacher among them."

FRANK BAKER.

THE DISRUPTION OF THE CAMELFORD CIRCUIT, 1834-5

JOHN WESLEY'S letter of 13th January 1790 to John Mason, the assistant stationed at St. Austell,¹ in which he declares his resolution that "as long as I live the people shall have no share in choosing either stewards or leaders among the Methodists" is evidence that as early as that date there was some dissatisfaction in Cornwall about the government of the societies. Shortly after Wesley's death lay representatives from many of the Cornish societies met at Redruth and signed a series of resolutions demanding reform, of which the very first was: "That in the forming of Classes, the Members constituting every Class (or a Majority of them) shall chuse their Leader".²

Wesley had reminded Mason that he could count on the support of Richard Wood of Port Isaac (among others) in resisting the demands of the reformers. The deep loyalty of Wood and the fact that Joseph Benson was advised that there was no disaffection among the Cornish Methodists, must not obscure the fact that there was among the members a long-cherished desire for a more democratic system. If it had been otherwise the astonishing success of Dr. Warren's agitation in the Camelford circuit would have been inexplicable. The circuit had been formed from the East Cornwall circuit in 1803, its first superintendent being Richard Treffry, sen., and it was served by a succession of able ministers, including Francis Truscott (1805-7, 1815-17 and 1824-27) and Joseph Burgess (1817-20). The membership mounted steadily from 363 in 1811 to 702 in 1834.

The match that set the fire ablaze was the formation at Manchester on 7th November 1834 of the Grand Central Association: within eight short weeks the Camelford circuit was in turmoil. Dr. Warren toured the country to further the ends of the reformers and came to Devonport, but at Camelford "the extent of disaffection was such," writes Dr. G. Smith, "as to render the importation of further aid unnecessary".³

The Christmas Quarterly Meeting, 1834

The circuit ministers that year were Aquila Barber and John Averill. Barber entered the ministry in 1821 and is said to have been animated by Christian cheerfulness, a disposition which had little chance to display itself in the events about to be narrated. The circuit stewards were John Mead and Henry Vercoe. The leading laymen in the circuit were, without doubt, Thomas Pope Rosevear of Boscastle, a wealthy merchant who was a member of many trusts and had been at least five times circuit steward, and Robert Pearse of Camelford, who had served as circuit steward at

¹ Wesley's *Letters*, viii, p. 196.

² G. Smith, *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, ii, p. 702.

³ *ibid.*, iii, p. 280.

least twelve times.⁴ The superintendent and Robert Pearse condemned the Warrenite agitators, but T. P. Rosevear and the junior minister spoke strongly on behalf of the reformers. It was very uncommon for the ministers, in this particular agitation, to come out on the side of reform, and Averill's support must have counted for a good deal.

It was at the December Quarterly Meeting that the clash came. The meeting had almost ended when someone rose to propose that a memorial be sent to the Conference. As this memorial was intended to support the reformers (whom the last Conference had condemned), the chairman ruled it out of order. A further attempt was made to present the resolution, and the superintendent then said: "I shall not allow it; if you persist I shall leave the chair and break up the meeting." The meeting was behind the proposer, however, and seeing this Barber closed the meeting and left the chair. After he had gone T. P. Rosevear was elected to the chair and the memorial was proposed and carried. What were the terms of the memorial, and what the ultimate pigeon-hole to which it found its way we do not know, but events in the circuit moved swiftly. The "super" visited the society at Boscastle, and there refused to renew the ticket of T. P. Rosevear on the ground of "his having broken Methodist law by attending an illegal meeting", and so terminated his membership. The events which followed this expulsion are more than graphically described in a leaflet of the Reformers called "The Watchman's Lantern—March 18th 1835" which may be quoted.⁵

Expulsion of T. P. Rosevear Esq by the Rev. A. Barber.

Mr. Aquila Barber has had the hardihood to expel, by summary process, Thomas P. Rosevear Esq of Barn Park, the most influential member of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion in Cornwall, the friend of the late Dr. Adam Clarke, and of all that are, and all that is, both great and good. [After further editorial remarks upon this "ill judged exercise of priestly power" the pen is handed to a correspondent from Camelford, who certainly knows how to wield it.]

We have struggled, fought and conquered as a circuit; and have sent the "arrogant suffragan" to seek his bread and butter *elsewhere*. On Sunday, the 22nd ultimo, this Jesuitical tool of the Lords of Conference daringly excommunicated T. P. Rosevear Esq, and, *in his own freehold chapel* at Boscastle, despite the remonstrances of the leaders and other friends; though at the time cautiously alleging, "that it was not for any immoral act!" He did not even assemble the Leaders' Meeting! This excommunication is the most atrociously daring act of despotism yet perpetrated by our inglorious priesthood.

On Monday last, however, a multitude of our circuit officers came nobly to their posts, at the King's Arms Inn, in this place, as early as ten, a.m., and debated and arranged for their future course. Fifty eight dined together at twelve-o'clock, and at two, went in a body to

⁴ He was the grandfather of Mark Guy Pearse.

⁵ The varying accounts of the disruption within the circuit are found in *The Watchman's Lantern*, Nos. 10 & 14; *Wesleyan Methodist Association Magazine*, 1840, p. 281f; 1845, p. 177f; *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1857, p. 570f; 1860, p. 763f; *U.M.F.C. Magazine*, 1884, p. 382f; Smith, *History of Wesleyan Methodism*, iii, pp. 280, 305-6; Gregory, *Sidelights on the Conflicts of Methodism*, p. 201.

meet the priest, who declared to them, after a six hours' hot debate, that he had never seen such a mass of excellent, clever, intelligent men, as he had found in the officers of this circuit. They certainly *pinned* him like free men fighting for their civil and religious liberties. He, at length, after a world of cant, and tergiversations beyond precedent, decided that he *could not*, and *would not*, give Mr. Rosevear his ticket, nor restore his name to the Local Preachers' Plan; yet, with all his caution on the score of *negative expulsion*, he at length slipped out, "Mr. Rosevear has no business in this meeting!" Though Mr. Rosevear was standing upon a valuable property, on account of which he and his brother are, as trustees, deeply involved. He had calculated, it appeared, on Mr. Rosevear's *not* coming to the meeting, and on his (Mr. Barber's) having at least four supporters. He lost *all these!* for two excellent men at length united with us, and the other two turned so decidedly *against* him, that we are all but united. About eight o'clock p.m., the cry was raised "To your tents!" Off we went to the inn, after giving the priest notice on the spot that our connexion with him had ceased from that day. A committee was immediately appointed to arrange for working the circuit *without* him. He has gone off to the Bishop of Plymouth, for a new conference with him and his *high-toned* men, who *advised* the perpetration of the daring act of getting rid of "this disturber of the West, *by any means!*"

Another and more temperate version of the interview with the superintendent is given by W. R. Brown in the U.M.F.C. *Magazine* for 1884. We are told that the reformers' meeting appointed the senior circuit steward, Henry Mead of Boscastle, and an ex-circuit steward, Nathaniel Stephens of St. Tudy, to wait on Mr. Barber, reason with him, and request him to restore the membership of T. P. Rosevear. Their mission was not successful from their point of view, and they were mortified when, in the Camelford manse, they were further accused, if not cursed, in the words of the sixty-second psalm: "How long shall ye imagine mischief against a man? Ye shall be slain, all of you. As a bowing wall shall ye be, and as a tottering fence." It is difficult to reconcile this quieter version of the interview with the dramatic march of the fifty-eight men (and women?) from the King's Arms to beard the "super" in his den, and to engage with him in a six hours' wrangle. It is unfortunate that we do not possess Barber's own version of the affair. A Wesleyan sidelight on the sad story is given by W. P. Burgess in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for 1860. He says that Richard Martyn of Treworlas, who lived in the Camelford circuit in this period, was urged by T. P. Rosevear—"who had placed himself at the head of the secession and did all that he could to vilify, injure and destroy the religious system under which he had been brought up"—to join the seceders, but "Mr. Martyn gave no encouragement whatever to these suggestions, but remained immovable. His discernment enabled him to perceive the unscriptural character and the pernicious tendency of such proceedings; and his piety would not allow him to be at all connected therewith." So wrote the former minister of the circuit and brother-in-law of Robert Pearse. But to return to the Reformers.

Both John Mead and Nathaniel Stephens were esteemed for "meekness of wisdom", and they can be absolved from any charge of being "constitutionally against the government". It was said of Mead that in his Free Methodist days "he considered separation from a christian church a very serious matter, and not to be undertaken without sufficient ground for its justification". Speaking for the Wesleyan Methodist Association, he said: "Our object is not one of hostility against any other section of the Christian Church: but simply to illustrate of particular principles." Stephens was equally high-minded and had many marks of godliness. These men, and others who supported them, were the fathers of Free Methodism in the circuit, and their names and integrity have been remembered with affection through the century following.

The Judgement of the District Meeting

The Devonport District Meeting (presided over by the "Bishop of Plymouth"!) fully approved of the conduct of Barber, and suspended Averill from his ministerial functions until the following Conference, and at that Conference he was expelled together with Dr. Warren and Robert Emmett. At this Conference the Devonport Chairman denounced the resolutions of the Camelford Quarterly Meeting "as revolutionary and as calculated to produce disorder and prove highly injurious to the Wesleyan body". Averill was condemned for issuing the Camelford Plan on his own authority with his own name at the head, and also for addressing the Reformers' meeting at Sheffield. He pleaded that he had acted throughout with the intention of keeping the Camelford societies together and saving them for Wesleyan Methodism. When the President (Richard Reece) announced his expulsion on the ground of his having violated the laws of Methodism, Averill inquired: "What laws?" The President instanced the law that a helper should not oppose his superintendent, and Averill added: "In the proper discharge of his duties: in this sense I have not opposed him." Averill joined the ministry of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, but after a year or two withdrew from it.⁶

There can be no doubt that whatever the rights and wrongs of the agitation, the majority of the leaders and members were of one mind with the Reformers. Six hundred and thirty-four out of seven hundred and two members, and fifty-one out of fifty-three local preachers, left the Wesleyan circuit and took with them almost all the chapels. Although most of the buildings had been properly secured to the Connexion, nothing could prevent them being appropriated by the Reformers in these circumstances. At the March Quarterly Meeting of 1835 the Camelford society (with 51 members) alone was represented;⁷ Wadebridge, Port Isaac, Boscastle, Delabole and Helstone were retrieved from the debris during the following year. Ann West, the class leader at Wadebridge, wrote in her diary:

⁶ *The Watchman's Lantern*, No. 22.

⁷ Circuit Stewards Account Book, now at Wadebridge.

"My soul has been in deep waters. I looked for some to pity and uphold, but there was none. No one stood by me. Only God knows what I have passed through. It has been like a separating soul from body, to give up all my beloved friends—only two members very recently added to the church remaining."⁸

She found comfort as she prayed over the verse "Though waves and storms go o'er my head. . . ."

It was probably by design on the part of the Wesleyan Conference that the next two superintendents appointed to Camelford, John Robinson and Oliver Henwood, had previously travelled in the circuit and would therefore have some advantage in dealing with the situation. Henwood had the further advantages of being Cornish, sound in doctrine, judicious in counsel and, with all that, a firm disciplinarian.⁹ Averill's place was taken by J. H. James (President, 1871). As the result of their labours, aided by Robert Pearse of Camelford and Henry Vercoe and Ann West of Wadebridge, the circuit made a quick recovery. Richard Wood's society at Port Isaac, reduced from sixty-six to two members in 1836, reached twenty-nine by 1840. But the Wesleyan circuit was never afterwards to equal the Free Methodist circuit in numbers, though with its greater concentration it probably equalled it in influence.

Disputes over Title Deeds

Robinson and Henwood were soon engaged in a sad struggle for possession of the preaching-houses, and there were some lively scenes. At Delabole, after a period in the hands of the Reformers, the chapel property was "forcibly taken possession of" by the Wesleyans, "the Conference super breaking through the door, the officers, members of society and congregation, being driven from the sanctuary in which they had so long worshipped", says the *Wesleyan Methodist Association Magazine*. The Wadebridge chapel was held by the Reformers for three years until March 1838, and was then restored to the Wesleyans who were threatening litigation to recover the premises. In most instances the Wesleyans seem to have accepted the *fait accompli*, and the old chapels (today usually the schoolrooms) became the homes of Free Methodist congregations.

The Treligga Injunction

Mr. Barber himself suffered defeat at Treligga, where the trustees issued an Injunction to restrain him from entering their premises—and this in spite of the fact that by their trust deed (of 1829) they were pledged to hold the land and chapel "on the usual trusts of the people called Methodists". The trustees' copy of this strange injunction, probably unique in Methodism, is now framed in the office of the Department of Chapel Affairs at Manchester, and may be quoted in full.

To Mr. Aquila Barber,
Camelford.

We the undersigned, being the major part of the Trustees, for the

⁸ Higgs, *Living Christianity*, p. 77.

⁹ *Wesleyan Methodist Minutes*, 1861, p. 10.

time being of the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, situate in the Village of Treliggo and Parish of St. Teath in the County of Cornwall do hereby give you Notice, that we require and demand of you not to preach in, or, in any manner whatsoever, occupy, the said Chapel, or Premises, nor to hold, or preside at, any meetings therein, nor, in any wise to act or interfere in or about the same premises, in the capacity of the Superintendent of the Camelford Circuit, in which the said Premises are reputed to be situate, or in any other ministerial or official capacity whatsoever.

And we hereby give you notice that, in case of your non-compliance with any of the requirements and demands herein contained, legal proceedings will be forth-with commenced against you, without further notice.

Dated this

day of April 1835

THOMAS POPE ROSEVEAR
 PHILIP SYMONS
 WILLIAM GARD
 RICHARD HOSKIN
 WILLIAM BUNT
 NATH. NORTHEY
 JOHN KELLOW.

Recovery and Reunion

The Stewards' Accounts for the old circuit (1811-1834) and for the continuing Wesleyan circuit (1834-66) have survived, and enable us to recognize the extent of the catastrophe and to appreciate the astonishing Wesleyan recovery. After the disruption the Wesleyans built up their membership once more from the foundations. By 1849 they could count nearly four hundred members. This tumultuous year in the wider Methodism was a quiet year in the Camelford circuit, for it had had its own upheaval fourteen years earlier.

The newly-formed circuit of the Reformers allied itself to the Wesleyan Methodist Association: two chapels in the circuit, Leatherbottle and Treligga, still announce that fact engraven in Delabole slate over their portals. The circuit sent John Ellery as delegate to the first Assembly of the Association, which met at Manchester in 1836.¹⁰ The first ministers appointed to the circuit were William Patterson (a Northumbrian, a student of the Greek Testament, and President of the Association in 1850) and William R. Brown (a native of Wadebridge, who became President of the U.M.F.C. in 1865). T. P. Rosevear served on various Connexional Committees and remained the guiding counsellor of the "Camelford, Wadebridge and Bodmin Circuit" until his death in 1853, and by this time the membership of the circuit was nearly seven hundred.

After the passage of a hundred years T. P. Rosevear's portrait still hangs in the vestry at Boscastle, but Nathaniel Stephens' portrait at St. Tudy has been relegated to the lumber under the school-room platform. Memories of the bitterness of the years of division still linger in the present re-united circuit, but they are only discussed by the very aged and the historically-minded; which, perhaps, is fortunate.

THOMAS SHAW.

¹⁰ *Wesleyan Methodist Association Minutes*, 1836.



JOHN WESLEY'S DEATH BED

(from the original sepia drawing by Richard Westall, R.A.)

See Notes and Queries, page 168

“ A SOCIETY IN ALDERSGATE STREET ”

IN two earlier articles in *Proceedings*, xix, pp. 77-80 and xxii, pp. 190-1, I made allusion to the “ Tate and Brady ” psalter which was found early in 1933 in a rat-hole in the floor of a stable-loft in the railway yard entered by an archway beneath the premises at 26, Aldersgate Street. Happily the psalter came into the possession of Mr. Stanley Sowton, who propounded the theory that the stable-loft was actually the room in which John Wesley’s heart was “ strangely warmed ” on 24th May 1738. As, however, I pointed out in my earlier articles, it is inconceivable that the society would have met in a stable-loft reached only by a wall ladder and with no visible entrance from Nettleton Court, where was the room hired by Wesley’s friend, James Hutton. Notwithstanding all this, however, the discovery is a real piece of circumstantial evidence, and by 1940 I came to the conclusion that it undoubtedly indicated the site of the room in which the little society met.

After repeated investigations of the stable and its surroundings, early this year, Mr. W. F. Grimes, M.A., F.S.A.—the eminent archæologist and Keeper of the London Museum—was kind enough to make an exhaustive examination of the brickwork of the stable and the wall against which it is built, and he has reported as follows :

I agree with you that in its present form at least the stable is later than the wall behind it, being nineteenth-century more or less, while the wall is eighteenth-century or earlier. The latter has no visible feature by which it can be more closely dated. The floor looks a comparatively recent one to me, but in any case I imagine the floor which produced the psalter could hardly be that of the 1738 building. In the drastic remodelling which would have been called for by the erection of the stable, the earlier floor would surely have gone. Presumably then the psalter was an accidental survival, though its presence on the site must be something more than a coincidence.

What now appears certain beyond doubt, from Mr. Grimes’ report, is that the stable succeeded an earlier building which would have been entered from Nettleton Court by a doorway in the still-remaining wall. The early brickwork has been patched up unquestionably, and the doorway obviously disappeared when the stable was built. There can now be no reasonable doubt that in the building which preceded the stable was the room in which James Hutton’s society met from 1736 onwards and to which John Wesley may have gone on that memorable 24th May 1738.

Nettleton Court, in which the entrance to the erection containing the society room was situated, was a narrow court entered in Wesley’s time from Aldersgate Street by an opening on the site of the present south doorway of Barclay’s Bank. Advancing along the court from Aldersgate Street, the building that preceded the premises now used by the bank would have been on the left, while just beyond on the right was a tiny square, on the right again of which would have been the entrance to the house containing the society room, the front wall

of which in part, at least, still persists. Little now remains of Nettleton Court. The ruins of a one-time café that had a door leading into the square of Nettleton Court throws open to view what remains of the square, while miraculously the early walling and the little stable behind it remain unscathed. All else that remained until 1940 of Nettleton Court has gone.

I should much like to see the plaque that was erected by the Drew University to the frontage of Barclay's Bank removed and re-erected on the wall of the stable, as the site of the bank—so favoured by the late Mr. F. J. Lupton—has to be entirely ruled out. Assuming that it was indeed to Hutton's society that John Wesley went "very unwillingly" on 24th May 1738, then the site is no longer in doubt. It stood on the spot where still stands the little stable, entered from the railway yard beneath 26, Aldersgate Street.

After having personally found from the rate-books of the parish of St. Botolph, Aldersgate Without, the actual site of John Bray's house in Little Britain that was the scene of Charles Wesley's evangelical conversion on Whit-Sunday, 21st May 1738—now marked by a City Corporation plaque, it is a great happiness to me that the site of James Hutton's society room in Nettleton Court is also now certain. I am personally grateful to Mr. W. F. Grimes for his great kindness in critically examining the brickwork of the stable and of the walling behind it.

HERBERT W. MANSFIELD.

In *Proceedings*, xxviii, p. 83, we suggested that the publication of the *Proceedings of the Eighth Ecumenical Methodist Conference* would be awaited with some impatience. This book has now been published by the Epworth Press (pp. 322, 17s. 6d.), and World Methodism can now read the verbatim addresses and lectures which were given at Oxford in 1951. The contents of this volume are, of course, a "mixed bag": there is something to suit all tastes—philosophers, theologians, sociologists, as well as historians, will all dip into these pages to their great profit. Many of the addresses were of some historical importance; we select the following as being outstanding in this respect: "The Means of Grace" by Ronald V. Spivey; "Methodism in Relation to Protestant Tradition" by E. Gordon Rupp; and "Methodism in Relation to the Catholic Tradition" by Umpfrey Lee. The book is packed with good things, and will surely rank as an editorial and publishing achievement. Not only those who heard these addresses in their original form but many others will find, as the publishers suggest, that a "knowledge of the things contained in this volume" is indispensable to an understanding of Methodism today.

In *An Album of Methodist History*, by Elmer T. Clark (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, pp. 336, \$7.50), the International Methodist Historical Society has sponsored a most ambitious project. It purports to be a history of Methodism in 1,000 pictures; in effect, two-thirds of the book are about American Methodism (naturally enough, perhaps), and the work suffers in consequence. It is not without errors, some of a serious kind, e.g. an unfortunate misreading of a caption in Hurst's *History of Methodism* has caused the author to depict Headingley College as Didsbury, and Didsbury as Headingley. This book was well worth producing; it is a pity that it fails to achieve perfection, and that its price and its American emphasis will (we fear) adversely affect its European sales.

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 THOMAS SHAW.

THE JOURNAL OF ISABELLA MACKIVER

THE Journal of Isabella Mackiver covers the later part of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. It is mainly a record of her religious life, and does not attempt to deal with the social and political events of the period, although from time to time we do catch a vivid glimpse of some contemporary happening. Isabella was the daughter of a sea captain, and married into a family of shipbuilders; hence it is natural that adventures at sea form a constantly-recurring though incidental theme in her narrative. The background of the Journal was Scarborough in the eighteenth century, and in particular the Methodist society to which Isabella and her parents belonged. Her account bears witness to the transforming effects of that society on some of its members, and the way in which they were given strength to endure the perils and hardship of their time.

Alexander Mackiver, the father of the diarist, was a Scotsman who settled in Yorkshire, and worked for the Tindalls of Scarborough as captain of one of their larger vessels.¹ His decision to become a Methodist took place during the year 1761-2, and was the result of a conversation with one of his fellow sailors. In the first part of her Journal Isabella recounts the story of her father's early life, showing how his conversion took place during a period of warfare and danger at sea:

My father Alexander Mackiver was born at Cromartie in Scotland in the year 1727. His father died when he was young. He was brought up in the Presbyterian religion, had a good education and was a dutiful son to his mother. But being desirous of following the profession of a sailor bound himself apprentice for three years. He was much respected by his master and was friendly with the family as long as he lived. After his apprenticeship he became Captain of the Hopewell, having a young protected master under his charge. One day when the ship was in danger he spoke some improper words. One of his companions J. Gilland reprov'd him. My father told him he was too busy to attend to him at that moment, but at a future opportunity shou'd be glad to have some conversation with him; after which he became convinced of the necessity of a change being wrought by the regenerating influence of the Divine Power, feeling the truth of that scripture, "Except ye be born again ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven". At that time there being a war between the French and English, the ship was captured by a privateer and carried into Calais . . .²

Captain Mackiver was kept in a French prison for a year, during which time he seems to have experienced further religious convictions. At last a letter arrived informing Mrs. Mackiver that her husband had been released from prison, but he cautioned her to tell

¹ The Tindalls were shipbuilders and shipowners in Scarborough from the seventeenth century to the middle of the nineteenth.

² The Seven Years War (1756-63) was then drawing to a close.

no one, for fear the English press-gang might catch him before he could get home:

. . . Last Saterdag I came out of Cales at six o'clock in the morning with twenty more prisoners on board. There was a man of war lying off Cales which prest every Soul that was on board but three Masters and me and one Dutchman.³

As soon as he arrived back in Scarborough Captain Mackiver joined the local Methodist society. His wife was at first unfavourable, being in what her daughter describes as "an unregenerate state". Later, however, she changed her views and became a Methodist. The two children were brought up to share their parents' beliefs, and Isabella tells how she and her brother were trained to memorize sermons:⁴

After my father was released from French prison he joined the Methodist society and according to J. Wesley's rules attended the Church of England. My mother, brother and I also accompanied him. After we returned from thence, my father generally questioned us about what we had heard, and expected us to bring home some part of the sermon. He was a very kind father but very strict, so that we were afraid of offending him.

For another nine years Captain Mackiver continued to work for the Tindall family as captain of the *Free Briton*. His death on 23rd March 1771 came as a great shock to his family and friends:

After having spent the winter of 1771 with us he left home for London. A few days after his arrival on going out to the Exchange he found himself unwell, and when he returned home to his sisters, he was seiz'd with apoplexy and expired soon after. This was a most trying dispensation to us. The suddenness added to the poignancy of our loss; he having left us only a week before in perfect health. . . . He was a very affectionate husband and kind parent, and would frequently retire and in secret pour out his fervent prayers to the Father of Mercies for our preservation, that we might be safely guided through this vale of tears. He was much respected and beloved by the Society of Methodists to whom he was united.

The next section of Isabella's Journal deals with the period between her father's death and her marriage to John Tindall. It was not a happy time, for the little family had to live in very reduced circumstances, and her brother William contracted a disease of the chest. Isabella herself was always delicate and liable to prolonged fits of depression. At this time her contacts were mainly with Quakers, although she still kept up with some of her father's old Methodist friends. For some time Isabella continued to hesitate between Methodists and Quakers. She had friends in both societies and it was difficult to decide which to join:

After I became serious, before I joined the Methodist Society, I generally attended the Friends' meetings and read their books, and

³ From a letter preserved in the Tindall family, and quoted in *The Tindalls of Scarborough*, by Christian Tindall, p. 49.

⁴ Mrs. Mackiver was Isabella Wilson (b. 1735), daughter of a Filey ship-builder. Her daughter Isabella, the writer of the Journal, was born in 1761.

found a great similarity in the most spiritually minded of both persuasions; indeed the more spiritual they both are, the nearer they approach to each other (and the truth) . . . When I was about seventeen I went with one of my companions to the Methodist Meeting; by that and reading the religious books which belonged to my father, I was convinced of the necessity of a change of heart . . .

At this critical stage in her life Isabella came under the influence of a remarkable woman who was later to become her sister-in-law. Ann Tindall, who was about fifteen years older than Isabella, knew all the celebrated ladies in Yorkshire Methodist circles, and was a particular friend of Miss Elizabeth Ritchie and Mrs. Crosby.⁵ She took a prominent part in the maintenance of the Wesleyan Chapel at Scarborough, and was frequently consulted about local matters by John Wesley. Her contacts with leading women in the movement meant that Scarborough became an important centre for their activities. Isabella's Journal contains an account of the deep impression made by the visit of Mrs. Crosby from Leeds:⁶

After my conversion several of the Methodists wish'd me to join their society, but I did not like the idea of it till the following circumstance. Sarah Crosby of Leeds came to Scarborough. She was going to have a young women's band meeting at six o'clock in the morning, which they invited me to attend. It proved a profitable opportunity to me, and I afterwards joined the Society, for which I have abundant cause of thankfulness. I remember her saying to us that she enjoyed such a sense of the Lord's presence that—

Not a cloud did arise
To darken the skies
Or hide for a moment
Her Lord from her eyes.

I joined the Society June 14, 1778 . . . S. Crosby's language to me was very encouraging. She desired me not to expect too much in joining the Society, which she said was generally the case, the young beginner expecting to find them a company of angels, whereas they ought rather to consider it as a hospital where the members had different disorders to be cured.

In October 1778 another Methodist lady came to Scarborough from Leeds. This was Mrs. Clapham, a friend of Mrs. Crosby, Miss Bosanquet, and Miss Ritchie.⁷ Isabella was greatly impressed by her personality:

⁵ Ann Tindall was born in 1747 and died in 1806. She was a member of the Methodist Society for thirty years, and managed the finances of the Scarborough Chapel and Building Fund. John Wesley gave her religious and literary advice in a series of letters, thirty-six of which are now in the British Museum (covering the period 1774-90). Wesley addressed her as "Dear Nancy" and signed himself "yours affectionately". A full account of this correspondence was given in British Museum *Quarterly*, Vol. VIII, No. 4. Some of Ann Tindall's poems were printed in the *Arminian Magazine*, but her work was very uneven in quality.

⁶ In his notes on Mrs. Crosby, the Rev. Dr. A. W. Harrison stated that some of the Mackivers joined the society through her influence (*Proceedings*, xiv, p. 108) but Isabella's Journal makes it clear that her parents had been Methodists long before Mrs. Crosby's first visit to Scarborough.

⁷ Mrs. Clapham was the widow of William Clapham, and the sister of Henry Hall, Mayor of Leeds. She is mentioned in Wesley's *Journal* and

Sister Clapham has been here from Leeds, and met both class and band. She enjoys purity of heart and is a great advocate for it in others, and exhorted us to be attentive to the Holy Spirit, and when we are favoured with His Presence watch and guard the sacred treasure, keeping the eye of our mind towards Him in reverence and love.

After joining the Methodist society Isabella decided to live a stricter life, and deny herself the small luxuries which she had hitherto enjoyed. Money was not to be spent on "lace, ruffles or any useless ornaments", but to be distributed among those in want. When visiting rich relations at Filey she was relieved to find that she could remain unaffected by their outlook. In 1779 she wrote: "I see it is my duty to watch and pray that I may not give way to trifling conversation, which eats the life of religion out of the soul . . . My dear E. Maxwell [her greatest friend] has called upon me, but I am afraid we have not sufficiently improved the time". In the same year Isabella began to visit the poor, and was at first extremely shocked by scenes of misery and vice.

The death of her son William in October 1780 came as a shattering blow to Mrs. Mackiver, and she fell into a state of nervous prostration from which she never fully recovered. Of her five children, only Isabella now remained. Among the neighbours who came to condole with the Mackivers was John Tindall, master of the Scarborough shipyard, and to her surprise he informed Isabella that a few months previously he had experienced a revelation that she was to be his wife. A sailor called Francis Grey had been courting her for some time, but after a month of meditation and prayer she decided to give him up in favour of John.

After her marriage Isabella was much occupied in household affairs. Between 1782 and 1798 she gave birth to ten children, and was able to rear the majority of them although scarlet fever and smallpox carried off two. Even when members of her own family were ill she never ceased to visit the sick and dying of Scarborough.

During the closing years of the eighteenth century the Tindalls were growing increasingly wealthy, and Isabella was greatly concerned about the proper attitude to take towards material possessions. She prayed to be preserved from being "lifted up by prosperity", and kept reminding herself that "here we have no continuing city". But it seems probable that she was feeling an unconscious urge to meet people who shared the same experience as herself, if only to compare notes on how to combat the insidious dangers of growing affluence. On 24th March 1797 she noted in her Journal: "I took my dear daughters Jane and Ann to the Friends' School at York, where I believe they will have a guarded education." This entry is significant in its social implications, for the Quakers were beginning to develop a type of middle-class education which they eventually brought to a very high standard. The daughters were happy in this environment, and evidently made

Letters. In later life she married Robert Walker of Honley (Yorks). The marriage of her daughter Hannah is referred to in *Proceedings*, xv, p. 69f. in a note on Honley.

many friends. No doubt the school was one of the factors which re-awakened Isabella's interest in the Society of Friends, for it brought her into contact with several families very similarly placed to her own. In 1801 when she began to think of rejoining the Quakers, she had been a devoted Methodist for twenty-three years, and it is impossible for the reader of her Journal to perceive any intellectual reason for the break that occurred at this time.

For the rest of her life Isabella was a member of the Society of Friends, and the later part of her Journal is concerned with her activities among a wide circle of Quaker acquaintances. No difference in her religious views is discernible in her writing, and she continued to mention her Methodist friends with the utmost veneration. Among those with whom she remained on intimate terms was Mrs. Mortimer (the former Miss Ritchie), and on visits to London she never failed to call on this distinguished old lady. With her Scottish ancestry and Yorkshire upbringing, Mrs. Mortimer had much in common with Isabella. The eighteenth century was vividly present in her memory, and she had a fund of stories about the great characters she had known. On 31st May 1822 Isabella wrote:

We again paid a visit to Elizabeth Mortimer which was very interesting. She told us many little anecdotes of her friends, and said one of her sons is curate at Madeley and occupies John Fletcher's house. When on a visit there last summer she had the same apartment which her invaluable friend Mrs. Fletcher occupied, and it recalled to her mind the many precious opportunities they have had together. She is now in her seventy fifth year and seems in the full possession of her faculties. She mentioned several of our active friends who are gone to glory, spoke of Sarah Crosby my friend whom I highly esteemed, also of George Cussens the person who visited my brother William in his illness and wrote us the account of his death.

Thus the eighteenth century lived on in the memories of these two elderly ladies, for the friendships forged in that tumultuous past could never be obscured by the demands of a more materialistic age. Isabella died in 1836, a year after her friend Mrs. Mortimer. In their youth they had been in such delicate health that they had not expected to live; yet in fact they were fated to survive the majority of their companions.

The Journal which Isabella bequeathed to her daughters cannot lay claim to any literary merit, but it is full of shrewd observations which are of both psychological and historical interest. It also shows something of the transforming power of the Methodist movement in relation to a society which was often sordid and worldly. Above all it is the record of an indomitable woman who battled against many odds, including her own constitutional tendency towards melancholia and despair. Her descendants had good reason to consider that her influence played an important part in the shaping of their destinies; while no one reading her Journal can doubt that the decisive factor in her own life was her early contact with Mrs. Crosby and the Scarborough Methodists.

SUSAN C. BROOKE.

BOOK NOTICES

The Doctrine of Assurance, with special reference to John Wesley,
by Arthur S. Yates. (Epworth Press, pp. xviii. 242, 25s.)

Dr. Yates remarks in the Preface that hitherto the Doctrine of Assurance has been strangely neglected, and in this book he attempts to fill the need. His sections treat of Assurance in the experience of the eighteenth century, in its theological setting, in the New Testament, in the history of the Church, and in relation to philosophy. It will be seen that the author has felt it necessary to supply the whole need in one compendium, for this programme is not properly that of a book but of a library. Yet great credit is due to the recognition of the need and the ability to map the subject out as a coherent whole.

Nevertheless, the parts inevitably suffer from superficiality, and particularly is this true of the chapter on the doctrine of the Fathers, where Dr. Yates would have been better advised to confine himself to Origen, Athanasius and Chrysostom, whom Wesley—no mean patristic scholar—definitely cites in support of his teaching. And how came our author to omit a discussion of the passage from Augustine which is so pertinently quoted by Wesley in the John Smith correspondence? Indeed, one feels that at times Dr. Yates loses sight of the distinctive criteria of the doctrine and is ready to cite any instance of certitude as relevant, for example, Polycarp's martyrdom (p. 151). This is again so in the chapters on the doctrine in the hymns of the Wesleys, where the relevance of many of the citations is in grave doubt, for instance, "I hear, I *feel*, He died for me" (p. 94; M.H.B. 114). All so-called "religious experience" is not evidence for the doctrine of Assurance. The distinctive criterion in Wesley's exposition is the teaching of a self-authenticating revelation that the soul is at that present moment reconciled to God; it was this, not "the witness of our own spirit" but the witness of the divine Spirit, that Bishop Butler and his century found "a very horrid thing". Dr. Yates never attempts a summary statement of the doctrine, and one feels that had he done so at the beginning of his book—even if later it needed modification or expansion—his treatment would have been more precise and therefore more valuable.

Wesley's "conversion" is rightly shown to be in fact his first experience of Assurance—the Rector of Epworth's dying words would have been relevant either here or in the discussion on the "newness" of Moravian teaching—and the scriptural evidence is carefully reviewed, and some of Wesley's conflicting statements are related to their proper purposes and so largely robbed of their contradictory character.

This is a book which many local preachers could read with great profit, especially in view of the Postscript, an earnest appeal for the doctrine in the preaching and life of the Church. But the final reflection with which one puts down this volume is once again that Wesley as a theologian has never received his due. Any other people than those called Methodists would long before this have produced a systematic, authoritative exposition of their founder's theology, whereas what we in fact have are a number of varying treatments of this or that aspect of his thought, but never the grand sweep of the coherent whole. Indeed, as a result, some even doubt whether there is a coherent whole. Dr. Yates's book has the merit of emphasizing this need, and if it is not as satisfactory in some of its details as one would

have hoped, its defects are those of its virtues, and the author may yet stir up a band of theologians to do for Wesley the theologian what Curnock, Telford, Sugden and others have done for him as an historical figure.

STANLEY B. FROST.

Hugh Bourne, 1772-1852, by John T. Wilkinson. (Epworth Press, pp. 203, 18s. 6d.)

The stature of Hugh Bourne grows with time. For strength of character, courage, singleness of purpose and apostolic labours he stands in worthy succession to the early Methodist preachers. The manner in which he bore exclusion from membership in 1808 for "setting up other than ordinary worship" is entirely honourable to him. As the new movement gathered strength he became its organizer, financier, lawyer and disciplinarian. The volume of his literary output was astonishing. He frequently walked thirty miles a day visiting the societies. He must have set up a record for distances travelled on foot by a man of his years. In the end he succumbed to the foot-trouble which had been a constant source of pain for close on forty years.

Mr. Wilkinson tells this brave story simply and intimately, drawing freely on Bourne's own words in the *Journal* and the *Autobiography*. He deals frankly with the estrangement of Bourne and Clowes, for which he holds Bourne responsible, pleading in mitigation the infirmities of temper and judgement which are liable to accompany old age. It appears from these pages that Primitive Methodism barely escaped the disasters of a "fly-sheets" controversy.

There are quaint details such as the Conference resolution "That our travelling preachers do not wear trowsers", and that camp-meeting sermons should not exceed twenty minutes: "the conductor to give each preacher a signal by pressing the point of an umbrella or some other matter against his foot . . . and to repeat the signal if need be".

The book is a worthy contribution to the celebration of the centenary of Bourne's death, and it fully deserves the publisher's claim that it will be accepted as the authoritative and standard account of a great man and his work.

NORMAN UPRIGHT.

John Wesley & Co. (Halifax), by E. V. Chapman. (Halifax Printing Company, pp. 82, 5s.)

History of the Wesleyan Reform Union, by W. H. Jones. (Epworth Press, pp. 62, 5s.)

Methodist Union has altered the technique of writing "local histories", for the erstwhile "other Methodist bodies" have become an integral part of modern Methodism. Mrs. Chapman's account of Halifax Methodism in all its branches is therefore all the more welcome. This well-written, strongly-bound volume, with its profuse illustrations, is the result of long and commendable research, and we hope that the author (who is one of our members) will soon find it necessary to provide a second edition.

The "Reformers" of 1849 have been amply chronicled from time to time, and at least half of Dr. Jones's *History* covers familiar ground. Its chief value is in bringing the story of the Reform Union up to date, and this task is accomplished in a most interesting and informative fashion. Is it too much to hope that the last chapter of this book has still to be written?

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

NOTES AND QUERIES

928. INVERNESS, ELGIN AND KEITH.

The three letters written by Robert Melson, and printed in *Proceedings*, xxviii, pp. 110-15 under the title "Trials of a Methodist Preacher in Inverness in 1808-9", prompt two comments.

First, the distances in paragraph two of the third letter (page 114) are easily elucidated: the place "60 miles, 2 excepted, from the circuit town" is Buckie—via Culloden, which was probably the only road in those days. The town forty miles from Inverness to which the preachers hired a horse was Elgin, and the place 36 miles further on to which they had to walk was Banff.

Second, in the same paragraph, Melson writes of "Elgin and Keith being given up". This statement needs to be read in the light of the first letter. The *Minutes* make it clear that in 1809 the staff of the Inverness circuit was reduced from three to one, but there was preaching in both places for several years afterwards; indeed, in 1914 the Elgin circuit was formed. Perhaps the phrase "being given up" refers to the preacher and not, as would appear at first glance, to the preaching.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

929. "A PROHIBITION AGAINST METHODIST MEETINGS".

With reference to the note under this heading in *Proceedings*, xxviii, p. 104, a letter which gives some evidence of the tolerance of a local squire has recently come into my possession. The letter is dated 12th December 1805, and reads as follows:

Mr. R. C.

Sir,

I received your letter of the 23rd. November last by Mr. Donald, and I perfectly agree with the sentiment expressed therein. I am happy to see so many of my tenants are such religious men as to cause them to part with their money to erect an edifice for public worship, though but small and upon principles of some shades of difference from the Established Church, though I am not fond of encouraging Sectaries, still, I shall pass in this instance, and order my Steward Mr. Grimsby, when he receives the next rents at Christmas to pay the deficiency of £44. 10. 6 upon this ground that however Christians may differ in their shades of opinion, that at last, all good Christians will be gathered together into one fold, and under one Shepherd named Jesus Christ, who died for the atonement of the sins of all.

For modes of faith, let pious zealots fight
They can't be wrong whose life is in the right.

I am, Sir,

Yours etc.

[Sir] H. ETHERINGTON.

The chapel referred to is at Thorne Levels, a tiny village on the road between Doncaster and Scunthorpe.

G. SELBY BELL.

930. JOHN BREDIN.

The reference to John Bredin in *Proceedings*, xxviii, p. 72f, prompts the following biographical note. Bredin was an Irish Roman Catholic, born about 1737, and started life as a schoolmaster in the Roman Church. Unfortunately he became the victim of strong drink, and when he was about twenty-nine years of age he was a hopeless drunkard.

Through the instrumentality of John Smith, a pioneer Methodist preacher, Bredin was soundly converted, and was called into the itinerancy by John Wesley in 1769, three years after his conversion. He travelled extensively in Ireland, Scotland and the Channel Islands. When stationed in Cork with Samuel Bradburn he introduced Methodism to West Cork, and when in Londonderry he introduced Adam Clarke to John Wesley.

Early in his ministry his health gave way, probably as a result of his early excesses and also through the hardships of his itinerant life. His name appears in the Irish *Minutes* of 1786 under Longford as an invalid, and from that time until his death in 1819 most of his years were spent as a supernumerary. It is evident from what we know of him that he suffered from dyspepsia and haemorrhoids. Wesley, it is true, thought him a weak brother, but may not his weakness have been due to his frail constitution? It is also a fact that he loved good books, and several of Wesley's extant letters were addressed to him. He died in Belfast in November 1819, and was buried in Lambeg churchyard. The epitaph on his tombstone reads:

Here lieth the body of John Bredin, whose uncommon abilities, and unusual success in the work of the Ministry are well known throughout Great Britain and Ireland, where he laboured in connection with the late Rev. John Wesley. After being highly honoured by the Great Lord of the Vineyard in beholding much precious fruit, he was called to his reward on 2nd November 1819. Aged 82.

ROBERT H. GALLAGHER.

931. ROBERT GAMBLE.

On page 31 of my book *The March of Methodism* occurs the sentence: "Robert Gamble was waylaid by ruffians and beaten to death." In writing these words I was relying on Findlay's *Wesley's World Parish*, usually completely accurate, and in so doing have been guilty of repeating a statement which is undoubtedly false, as several correspondents have pointed out. Frank Baker has adduced a wealth of detail to disprove the story. The following are the most relevant facts. Moister wrote *Heralds of Salvation* in 1878, and this contains the first printed reference to Gamble's being beaten to death. Moister claims to have heard the story from the daughter of Mr. Claxton of St. Vincent. He himself was not stationed in St. Vincent until 1842—that is, fifty years after Gamble's death. There are no earlier records of Gamble's tragic end, nor does it appear to have been current in the West Indies. Moister has several inaccuracies in his account, including statements that there are no references to Gamble's death in the Methodist records, and that he laboured for scarcely twelve months. In fact, the *Minutes* of 1791 give a circumstantial account of his death. He appears to have begun his ministry in St. Vincent and laboured for about two years in the area, though for the latter part of it he was in charge of the work at Nevis and St. Kitts. There is also the negative evidence of Coke's silence. Thomas Coke investigated the evidence of persecution in 1793 and tried his best to get Matthew Lumb released from prison, but, in arguing the iniquity of such persecution he does not appear to mention any death (Gamble's or anyone else's) caused directly or indirectly by such persecution.

It therefore seems that Moister's account was wrong, and its propagation in the two modern histories is merely the continuance of error. We must almost certainly accept the evidence of the *Minutes* of 1791

that he died naturally of a "putrid fever" in February of that year "after a sickness of sixteen days".

CYRIL J. DAVEY.

932. JOHN WESLEY'S DEATH BED.

The portraits of John Wesley are legion, and hitherto-unknown minor engravings continually come to light. A portrait by an established artist of Wesley, however, and especially of Wesley on his death-bed, is something of a rarity. We reproduce one for our illustration in this number, through the kind co-operation of Messrs. P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., Ltd., of 14, Old Bond Street, London, W.1, who have the portrait on sale. It is an original sepia drawing measuring 11½ ins. by 9 ins., and is by Richard Westall, R.A. On the back, in a contemporary hand, is the inscription: "The Death of Revd. John Wesley. 2 March 1791."

Richard Westall, according to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, was born at Hertford in 1765, and died 1836. He was apprenticed to an heraldic engraver in London in 1779, developed his talent for painting at evening classes, and exhibited a portrait-drawing in 1784 at the Royal Academy, being admitted a student there in 1785. In 1786 he became a professional artist, and his highly-finished water-colour drawings, exhibited at the Royal Academy, won him a speedy reputation. For a time he shared a house with Thomas Lawrence. He was a very speedy worker, and has to his credit an amazing body of engraved book-illustrations.

There is no record, so far as we know, of Westall being admitted to see Wesley during his illness, and it seems likely that he made the drawing after Wesley's death, while his body lay in state. The artist's eye would register the details more accurately and speedily than those of the thousands of other mourners, though the immense number filing past meant that most people did not have long to gaze upon Wesley's features.

FRANK BAKER.

933. WESLEY COMMEMORATION TABLET UNVEILED AT CHESTER.

A tablet commemorating the bicentenary of John Wesley's first preaching in Chester has been placed in the outer wall of St. John Street Methodist schoolroom. On Wednesday afternoon, 8th October 1952, a brief open-air service was held, the tablet being unveiled by the Rev. Samuel Parlow. At a service held in St. John Street chapel immediately afterwards the address was given by the Rev. T. R. Griffin, L.Th.

The tablet is of grey Welsh granite, and is engraved in gilt letters. The inscription reads:

NEAR THIS SPOT, ON JUNE 20, 1752,
THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, M.A.
PREACHED ON THE OCCASION
OF THE FIRST OF HIS MANY VISITS
TO THIS CITY.

'O let me commend my Saviour to you.'

ERECTED BY THE METHODISTS
OF CHESTER, 1952.

In his *Journal* Wesley has recorded, under date Saturday, 20th June 1752: "I rode to Chester, and preached at six in the accustomed place, a little without the gates, near St. John's church."

ALFRED A. TABERER.