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# Proceedings

OF THE

# Wesley Historical Society

Editor: REV. JOHN C. BOWMER, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.

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Volume XL

February 1975

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## EDITORIAL

TO have reached volume xl is, on any account, something of note, especially when it is remembered that these volumes cover the best part of eighty years' continuous publication. During that period, magazines and journals of all kinds have come and gone (particularly in Methodism), so that survival itself is an achievement. Nor is mere survival a matter for congratulation: we are grateful that we flourish as well as survive. We have never lacked contributions of a quality befitting what we like to regard as a "learned" journal, and to all contributors we are indeed grateful. As a society, we have not reached our aim of 1,000 members yet, but new members are replacing deaths and resignations, so that we have maintained a steady figure of about nine hundred.

The work of our Branches is commendable, for it supplies a measure of contact between members which is impossible within the bounds of the parent Society. Their bulletins continue to be excellent exercises in local history. We also note with great satisfaction the success of the Conference organized by the World Methodist Historical Society.

Interest in Wesley studies shows no sign of diminishing, but perhaps the most significant developments are in the outworkings of Methodism in the nineteenth century. This is reflected in articles which have appeared in these *Proceedings* during recent years.

As, therefore, we embark on this fortieth volume, we proceed (forgive the pun!) with hope. One great desideratum is to increase our membership, and we would appeal to all our members to recruit newcomers whenever possible. Our annual subscription is ridiculously low. We know of no kindred society which could subsist on our fees and publish such a well-produced journal. We extend to all our members our very best wishes and our thanks for their support, and we express the hope that they will derive much joy from this "fellowship of kindred minds".

## MINISTERS AND PROBATIONERS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH "Hill's Arrangement"

[In this article our Registrar supplements and brings up to date a previous article on the subject by the late Rev. J. Bernard Sheldon in *Proceedings*, xxx, pp. 134-5.—EDITOR.]

THE volume entitled *Ministers and Probationers of the Methodist Church* is of great value to students of Methodist history, and the story of its development a most interesting one.

The first chronological list of Methodist preachers was made by John Pawson in 1795, and was entitled *A Chronological Catalogue of all the Travelling Preachers now in the Methodist Connexion*. The list is prefixed with an address by Thomas Coke, who says:

The following "Chronological Catalogue" will, I trust, be attended with various uses. First, it will be exceedingly helpful for the delegates of the different districts to draw up the rough plan for the stations of the preachers. Secondly, it will be equally so for the whole Conference, in enabling them to correct and complete that plan.

A copy of this rare document came into the hands of the Rev. Dr. David J. Waller some time between 1892 and 1896. Very wisely Dr. Waller reproduced it and included it in the 1896 edition of "Hill's Arrangement".

In 1798 William Myles published *A Chronological History of the People called Methodists*. This is a valuable book, and these days is rare. It ran into four editions, the last being in 1813. There is a list of preachers, which Myles divides into three groups which he calls "Races" (pp. 446-64). The "First Race" is from 1739 (when the itinerancy began) to 1765, and contains 220 names. The "Second Race", 1766 to 1790, contains 470 names, and the "Third Race", 1791 to 1813, 866 names. The greater service of Myles in this respect is that he notes the names of the preachers who died in the active work or as supernumeraries, and also those who desisted from travelling or were expelled. Thus he is the first to publish this information separately. Although he says that it is taken from the *Minutes of Conference*, a careful check reveals a few inaccuracies.

In 1801 Charles Atmore published *The Methodist Memorial*, containing as an appendix "A Chronological List of Preachers", i.e. those in the work at that time.

The value of Atmore's book is that he does not confine his "memorials" to those who remained in the ministry. Two cases will serve to illustrate this point. John Bennet entered the ministry in 1743, and desisted from travelling in 1751 because he had become a Calvinist. William Fugill, who entered in 1748, was expelled in 1764. The next year he applied for reinstatement, but was refused. He was allowed to return in 1767, but in 1768 was again expelled.

Information in the *Minutes of Conference* is given only concerning preachers who remain in the Connexion.

In 1815 Jonathan Crowther published *A Portraiture of Methodism*. On page 441 he writes:

I shall close this chapter with lists of the preachers, both dead and alive, arranged in three classes. The first contains the names of those now employed by the Conference, with the years in which they began to travel. The second, the names of those who have died in the work since its commencement, with the years when they set out, and when they died, on the left and right side of the names, as far as I could collect with any tolerable certainty. But in this list very probably there will be some inaccuracies. The third list records the names of those who departed from the work, or settled in trade as local preachers, such as have been, at different periods, expelled or discontinued.

There are some inaccuracies, but they can be rectified by checking with other lists. Crowther's third list constitutes the second of that kind and also the last. The names of the preachers who desisted from travelling or were expelled were published in the *Minutes of Conference* from 1765 until 1911. Ever since then, the answer to the question "Who are no longer recognized as ministers amongst us?" has been "Their names are recorded in the Journal." We have, therefore, no complete list of those who have been in the ministry. At a later date I hope to be able to publish a complete list.

In 1819 the Rev. William Hill published his first edition of *An Alphabetical Arrangement of all the Wesleyan Methodist Preachers and Missionaries who are now travelling in Great Britain and the distant parts of the Globe, with a view of all their circuits and stations to which they have been appointed by the Conference, from the commencement of their itinerancy to the present time*. The volume was printed in Bradford by T. Inkersley. Its cost was two shillings, and the profits were given to the Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools. There were names of 765 preachers, and at the end a separate list of 53 supernumeraries.

The second edition of "Hill's Arrangement"—by this name it became known and is often popularly referred to still—was in 1824. It was printed in Rotherham by M. Crookes. This edition has no list of supernumeraries, but a place is given to record the names of 432 ministers who had "died in the work". There was also added a list of the Presidents of Conference to date. The copyright of this edition was transferred to the Book Committee.

The third edition was published in 1827, and a supplement to this was added in 1833. The fourth edition was published in 1838, and the fifth in 1841. All these five editions bear the name of William Hill as editor, but in fact Hill died in 1827. It can be fairly assumed that he was responsible for the first two editions (in 1819 he was stationed at Keighley, which is near to Bradford, and in 1824 he was at Rotherham), but it is certain that he did not publish the 1827 edition, the supplement of 1833, and the fourth and fifth editions. Why

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his name was continued as editor until the sixth edition, and who did the work, we do not know, and perhaps we never shall.

The sixth edition, which made reference to "the late William Hill", was edited by the Rev. John P. Haswell, and he was responsible for five editions in all. He was succeeded by the Rev. Marma- duke C. Osborn, who edited four editions. In 1887 the Rev. Dr. David J. Waller became the editor, and under him seven editions were published and numbered 15 to 21. During Dr. Waller's editorship some important changes took place. In the nineteenth edition (1900) there was added a Chronological List of Ministers arranged according to the year in which they entered the ministry, and showing whether they were still in the active work or had become super-numeraries. In this edition also there was a change made with regard to missionaries: instead of the station in which they were working being stated, the country and the district were now given. This was done because often the work necessitated a missionary being moved quite frequently, and so the precise location did not have the same significance as in the home circuits. In the twenty-first edition (1908) the list of the Secretaries of the Conference since the death of John Wesley was added. In this edition also the name of the College (in those days the "Theological Institution") at which the minister received his training is indicated by an appropriate letter: D—Didsbury, R—Richmond, H—Headingley, B—Handsworth. (C—Wesley House, Cambridge was added in the twenty-fifth edition.)

In 1912 Dr. Waller was succeeded by the Rev. Arthur Triggs, who produced the editions numbered 22 to 25 (dated 1912, 1916, 1922 and 1926 respectively.) With the twenty-fifth edition there was a change of title, which now became *Ministers and Probationers in Connexion with the British and Irish Conferences of the People called Methodists*.

With the consummation of Methodist Union in 1932, the book took on even greater value by reason of the addition of the records of the Primitive Methodist and United Methodist Churches. The Rev. J. Henry Martin became editor, and was responsible for five editions of the very much larger work—in 1932, 1936, 1947, 1952, and 1957. With the 1932 publication, for some unexplained reason, the counting of the editions began to be reckoned from Haswell's 1847 edition instead of from Hill's first in 1819. The 1932 edition is therefore referred to as the twenty-first since 1847. The title also was again altered, the volume being called, as it is today, *Ministers and Probationers of the Methodist Church, formerly Wesleyan, Primitive and United Methodist, with their Appointments*. In 1963, with the twenty-sixth edition, the Rev. J. Bernard Sheldon became co-editor with Mr. Martin, and following Mr. Martin's death in 1965, he was responsible for the current edition, the twenty-seventh, which appeared in 1968. To our regret, Mr. Sheldon himself died in 1971.

The Primitive Methodist Connexion had no publication similar to “Hill's Arrangement”, but Mr. William Leary has now supplied the deficiency by listing all Primitive Methodist ministers from 1812 to 1932. A copy of Mr. Leary's list is in the Archives Library, where it is proving to be a very useful reference work.

For the denominations making up the United Methodist Church in 1907 some records do exist. Edwin Askew's *Handbook of the United Methodist Free Churches*, published in 1877, 1888, and 1899, contains a list of ministers and their circuits. Dr. W. J. Townsend edited *The Handbook of the Methodist New Connexion* in 1899, and this contains an alphabetical arrangement of ministers and their circuits, and also a list of deceased ministers, with the dates of their entry into the ministry and of their death. In 1932 *The Story of the United Methodist Church*, written by the Revs. Henry Smith, John E. Swallow and William Treffry, was published, and this contains the records of all the constituent bodies involved in the Union of 1907.

In 1968 the Rev. Dr. Oliver A. Beckerlegge published *United Methodist Ministers and their Circuits*—an arrangement in alphabetical order of the stations of ministers of the Methodist New Connexion, Bible Christians, Arminian Methodists, Protestant Methodists, Wesleyan Methodist Association, Wesleyan Reformers, United Methodist Free Churches and the United Methodist Church, from 1797 to 1932. This is a most valuable book.

Thus Mr. Leary and Dr. Beckerlegge have supplied us with a complete record of Primitive Methodist and United Methodist ministers. At the present time I am myself making a list of Wesleyan ministers from 1739 to 1819; that, with a list of those who have desisted from travelling since 1819 up to the present day, will furnish a full record of all who served as Methodist ministers, in whatever section, from Methodism's first beginnings until now.

The last edition of “Hill's Arrangement” having appeared in 1968, a new one was due in 1973, but the Methodist Publishing House was not able to undertake the venture. In the meantime, however, I am keeping the records up to date, and am most willing to supply any information thereon upon receipt of a stamped addressed envelope. It is hoped that some day a more favourable economic climate may prevail, enabling, in some form or other, a further edition of “Hill's” to appear and take its place alongside its predecessors which have provided such a useful body of reference-material for more than a century and a half. KENNETH B. GARLICK.

[In the next issue Mr. Garlick lists the names and circuits of sixteen ministers excluded from the second edition in 1824 because of a change in the pattern of publication.—EDITOR.]

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The Annual Meeting of our Society will take place on Monday, 30th June, at Island Road chapel, Garston, Liverpool. The Lecture this year is to be delivered by Dr. Ian Sellers, whose subject will be “Adam Clarke and the Eternal Sonship”. A fuller notice will appear in our next issue.

## IRISH NOTES

**Retirement of Mr. Norman Robb.** The 1974 Conference of the Methodist Church in Ireland met in Cork, and it was therefore in that city that the Annual General Meeting of the Irish branch of the Wesley Historical Society was held. On Friday, 14th June, members gathered to pay tribute to the unique service rendered to the Society by Mr. W. Norman H. Robb upon his retirement from the office of President—a position he had held with distinction for a number of years. For very many more years the Wesley Historical Society in Ireland has been identified with Mr. Norman Robb: as indefatigable Secretary-Treasurer he kept the organization going, supported previous Presidents such as the Revs. R. Lee Cole and Robert H. Gallagher in all their activities, and inaugurated what has now become a regular feature in our programme—the annual Pilgrimage in connexion with our Methodist heritage.

It was therefore sad to have to report that this very year, for the first time since the present civil disturbances began in the North of Ireland, the Pilgrimage had to be postponed. All arrangements had been made to visit Antrim, Castledawson, Magherafelt and Cookstown, but Saturday, 25th May fell right in the middle of the UWC strike, when petrol supplies were at their lowest, and when disturbances did actually occur in Cookstown. But the plans were not abandoned: it is fully intended to carry them out next year. This postponement does not detract from the work of Mr. Norman Robb, and the whole Methodist Church in Ireland, as expressed by a resolution of the Conference, is conscious of the debt owed to him for all he has done.

**New President and Vice-President.** Mr. Frederick Jeffery was elected President in succession to Mr. Robb. Mr. Jeffery, who is Senior Vice-Principal of the Methodist College, Belfast, was the Wesley Historical Society lecturer at the Newcastle upon Tyne Conference in 1973 (see *Proceedings*, xxxix, p. 61), and also is the author of the small standard history of Irish Methodism published some ten years ago.

The Rev. Dr. R. D. Eric Gallagher was elected Vice-President. Dr. Gallagher, well known in British Methodism, is a former President of the Irish Methodist Conference, as was his father, the late Rev. Robert H. Gallagher, who was the President of our branch at the time of his death in 1965.

**Aldersgate House.** The Archivist, Mrs. Marion Kelly, provided an account of the restoration of Aldersgate House, Belfast, damaged by terrorist bombs in the early days of the present troubles, and the improvements being made to the Wesley Historical Society section, which had escaped the original damage. With the help of the Public Record Office and the Ulster Museum, provision has been made for the security, as far as possible, of the Society's material. Any member interested has only to apply to Mrs. Kelly (Methodist College, Belfast, BT9 6BY), and access can be arranged for inspection and research.

**Publications.** Copies of the 1973 Wesley Historical Society lecture, *Methodism and the Irish Problem*, as well as of Mr. Jeffery's brief history, *Irish Methodism*, can be obtained from the Secretary-Treasurer, Mr. John H. Weir (50, Meadowbank Place, Belfast, BT9 7FF). The former now costs 60p., and the latter 30p., and the Society will pay postage to any part of Britain. For overseas orders an extra small amount is requested, to cover the higher postage involved. JOHN H. WEIR.

## JOHN WESLEY'S FIRST PREACHING SUNDAY

WHERE and when did Wesley first preach, and what was his text? The traditional answer to this threefold question is that the place was South Leigh (South Lye in Wesley's *Journal*, which accords with pronunciation)—a small village some nine miles to the west of Oxford and two or three miles south-east of Witney; the date was Sunday, 26th September 1725, exactly a week after his ordination as deacon in the Church of England; and the text was from Matthew vi. 33: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness".

This traditional answer has received such long and honoured support that it may seem impertinent to challenge it at all three points. Tyerman, more than a century ago, named the place, on the basis of an entry in Wesley's *Journal* for 16th October 1771, and proceeded to make the conjecture as to date.<sup>1</sup> Curnock accepted Tyerman, and added the detail regarding the text.<sup>2</sup> Telford, whilst accepting South Leigh as the scene of Wesley's first preaching, was content to give the date as "soon after his ordination".<sup>3</sup> Dr. Frank Baker was more cautious when he wrote: "Wesley's first sermon was apparently preached on Sunday, 26th September 1725, exactly a week after ordination".<sup>4</sup> The late Rev. W. L. Doughty, in his careful study of Wesley's sermons and texts, accepted both place and date.<sup>5</sup> Dr. V. H. H. Green has accepted Tyerman's word.<sup>6</sup> This is but a selection from Wesley historians through a century of writing.<sup>7</sup> Naturally the tradition as to date and place has been repeated by local historians and writers of guide-books.<sup>8</sup> Not surprisingly, a commemorative tablet has been placed on the pulpit of the South Leigh church. The bicentenary celebration of Wesley's first preaching was held at Witney fifty years ago. Curnock's conjecture as to text has not received the same attention, but it has been generally accepted.

Nevertheless, Tyerman's conjecture has to meet grave difficulties. These should be faced, and an alternative seriously considered. Similarly, Curnock's conjectured identification of text needs to be examined because of evidence which has come to hand since he wrote.

<sup>1</sup> L. Tyerman: *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*, i, p. 44.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal*, i, p. 60.

<sup>3</sup> J. Telford: *Life of John Wesley* (revised edn., 1924), p. 40; *Popular History of Methodism* (1900), p. 7.

<sup>4</sup> F. Baker: *The Methodist Pilgrim in England* (1951), p. 33.

<sup>5</sup> W. L. Doughty: *John Wesley, Preacher* (1955), p. 5.

<sup>6</sup> V. H. H. Green: *The Young Mr. Wesley* (1961), p. 69.

<sup>7</sup> e.g. J. R. Gregory: *History of Methodism* (1911), i, p. 17; C. E. Vulliamy: *John Wesley* (1931), p. 24.

<sup>8</sup> F. C. Gill: *In the steps of John Wesley* (1962), p. 34; E. C. Williams: *Companion into Oxfordshire* (quoted by Doughty, op. cit., p. 9); Brabant: *Oxfordshire* (Methuen, 1924), p. 181. (Victoria County History not yet completed for Wootton Hundred, in which South Leigh is situated.)



The first difficulty is that Wesley's diary for 26th September 1725 gives no record of preaching at South Leigh on that day. The date is left blank. His ordination on the previous Sunday is duly recorded; his two preaching appointments in the Buckinghamshire villages of Fleet Marston and Winchendon on the following Sunday are noted; but the intermediate Sunday, which Tyerman gives as Wesley's first preaching date, takes no account of the notable occasion.<sup>9</sup> Can it really be that Wesley was silent about an event of such moment? Curnock wrote: "Strange to say, no record of the sermon or of its preaching appears in the Diary."<sup>10</sup> When one considers the trivialities recorded for the previous week, the silence is more than strange: it is almost inconceivable. Those details included:

Treated by Ditcher at the Coffee House and Tennis Court . . . walked round the meadow . . . sat in the Coffee House . . . played two hours at tennis . . . sat at the King's Head.<sup>11</sup>

The acceptance of Tyerman's conjectured date must face the problem of Wesley's apparent silence on a matter of outstanding importance in the context of recorded trivialities.

A second difficulty, which seems to have escaped notice, is that the diary makes no reference to any direct preparation for preaching at South Leigh on 26th September. Despite the trivialities noted, the diary is written by a young man of deep religious sincerity. On the Monday following his ordination he wrote: "Resolved to Review always twice a day." The diary record is interspersed with single letters, some of them Greek, which indicate, in Curnock's view, that

Wesley strove at this time after literal obedience to the apostle's injunction, "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."<sup>12</sup>

A young man of such serious purpose would treat preparation for his first preaching service conscientiously. But the diary does not indicate it. The week following 26th September tells a very different story. Preaching in the Buckinghamshire villages in the Vale of Aylesbury was booked for 3rd October. That involved serious preparation. Curnock summarized the diary record for the week as follows:

He spent the . . . week in reading Watts, the Greek Testament and the Book of Common Prayer, in communion with the best of his friends, in prayer and self-examination, and in writing and revising a new sermon. "Hide nothing" is the principal Saturday-night record.<sup>13</sup>

This is what one would expect to read in the record of the week preceding a first preaching service. But it is absent from the week preceding the *conjectured* first service at South Leigh on 26th September. Curnock, having accepted Tyerman's conjecture, is driven to explain why there should be a stress on sermon-writing in the week following 26th September. He wrote: "Apparently the sermon

<sup>9</sup> *Journal*, i, p. 59.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, i, p. 60 n.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

delivered at South Leigh did not satisfy his fastidious taste, or we may hope, his hungry spirit."<sup>14</sup> Such a conjecture is unnecessary if the blank in the diary for 26th September is accepted at its face value, viz. Wesley did not record preaching, simply because he did not preach.

These grave difficulties call for a careful scrutiny of the passage in Wesley's *Journal* on which the South Leigh conjecture is based. Wesley wrote:

Wed. 16 [Oct. 1771].—I preached at South Lye. Here it was that I preached my first sermon, six-and-forty years ago. One man was in my present audience who heard it. Most of the rest are gone to their long home.<sup>15</sup>

In passing, it may be noted that the 1771 service was probably held in the house of the "one man" who had heard Wesley soon after ordination, and whose name was Winter.<sup>16</sup>

It is not difficult to understand Tyerman's<sup>17</sup> conclusion. First, he interpreted the words "Here it was that I preached my first sermon" as meaning "Here it was that I first preached a sermon". He then turned to the diary to discover the exact date. He found the entry for preaching at Fleet Marston and Winchendon exactly two weeks after ordination, but found no record of preaching at South Leigh in those two weeks. But the Sunday between ordination and the Buckinghamshire preaching was blank. It was the one chance of giving South Leigh the priority he assumed was its due. So he took the chance. He used Wesley's turn of phrase "preached my first sermon", but gave it the meaning "I preached for the first time".

The difficulties raised by Tyerman's conjecture prompt two questions. Did Wesley mean that it was at South Leigh he conducted his first preaching service? Or did he mean that the first sermon he ever made was preached at South Leigh? He may have preached that first sermon in several places. That was his practice with his early sermons. Of any one of those places he could have written "Here it was that I preached my first sermon", but of only one could he have said "Here it was that I first preached a sermon". In his *Journal* Wesley wrote the former, but Tyerman interpreted it as the latter. Dr. R. P. Heitzenrater of Centre College, Danville, Kentucky, by a painstaking, scholarly investigation of the varied contents of Wesley's first Oxford diary and of other relevant material, has noted no fewer than fifteen occasions when it is likely that Wesley preached the first sermon he ever wrote.<sup>18</sup> One of the fifteen had the distinction of being the first place where Wesley ever preached. Tyerman gave that honour to South Leigh. But he did it by giving Wesley's words an interpretation which strictly is not valid, and to support his conclusions had to glide lightly over the great difficulties involved.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Methodist Recorder* Winter Number, 1904, pp. 46-7.

<sup>17</sup> I have not found Tyerman's conclusion in any earlier studies of Wesley that I have been able to consult.

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*, v, p. 432.

<sup>18</sup> *Proceedings*, xxxvii, p. 115.

Dr. Heitzenrater's researches into the diary lead him to believe that 12th February 1727 is the likely date when Wesley preached that "first sermon" at South Leigh.<sup>19</sup> This involves its own difficulty. Wesley mentions preaching there forty-six years before 1771. An autumn date in 1725 agrees with this computation, but early 1727 is not strictly accurate. That difficulty, however, is small compared with those raised by Tyerman's conjecture. Wesley was writing after a long, crowded interval of years; during the period between ordination and leaving Oxford to help his father at Epworth he visited numerous places in the vicinity of Oxford; he was not likely to refer to his old diary, in the midst of the multifarious concerns of the 1770s, to verify precise dates of his visits to South Leigh: hence, an error of a year and four months can hardly be called a major problem.

If 3rd October 1725, the date of Wesley's first diary-recorded preaching, is accepted as his first preaching Sunday, and the priority which has been accorded to South Leigh is accepted for Fleet Marston and Winchendon, the problems posed by Tyerman's conjecture are resolved, the diary record is honoured, and Wesley's words in the *Journal* are interpreted as meaning what he wrote.

Curnock's belief that Wesley's first sermon was based on Matthew vi. 33 would also appear to be a mistaken conjecture. How he reached it is not clear. Certainly there is evidence that Wesley was preaching from this text a few weeks after his ordination, and it would provide a very appropriate theme for a young man opening his preaching ministry. Possibly Curnock felt the force of this, and in the absence of evidence to the contrary made his conjecture. He was very confident it was true. In the *Journal* he gave a picture of South Leigh church, and two pages before it a reduced facsimile of the first page of Wesley's manuscript sermon on Matthew vi. 33, with the caption "Reduced facsimile of the first page of Wesley's first sermon".<sup>20</sup> Clearly he did not know of another manuscript of an early sermon in Wesley's handwriting, on the outside of the top sheet of which, added at a later date, Wesley had written: "The first sermon I ever wrote."<sup>21</sup> The text was Job iii. 17: "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest." What Curnock described as Wesley's first sermon is therefore likely to have been his second.

That it *was* his second sermon is confirmed from a miscellaneous page in Wesley's first Oxford diary. The full significance of this escaped Curnock, but Dr. Heitzenrater discovered it. The page gave a list of texts and subjects. By the side of some of them is a number which would appear to indicate the order in which he used them in making his sermons. The figure 1 is before an abbreviated form of "There the weary", and the figure 2 is before "Seek ye

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Journal*, i, p. 58.

<sup>21</sup> This manuscript is at Wesley College, Bristol.

first".<sup>22</sup> Thus, from two sources, both in Wesley's own handwriting, there is evidence that Wesley's first sermon was based on Job iii. 17.

In transferring the scene of Wesley's first preaching from Oxfordshire to Buckinghamshire, a further query has to be raised. Wesley wrote that the second service on 3rd October was at Winchendon. There are two places bearing the name, and each has its own historic church. The one is named Upper, Over or Superior Winchendon, and the other is Lower, Nether or Inferior Winchendon. Which did Wesley visit? There can be no doubt it was Upper Winchendon. Lower Winchendon found its affinity with parishes in a different direction. For reasons which are somewhat complicated, Fleet Marston and Upper Winchendon were more readily brought together as a unit.<sup>23</sup> In a recent reorganization of parishes they are united as part of the larger parish of Waddesdon.

The diary indicates that this was not one of the occasions when Wesley made his outward journey on the Saturday and stayed the night with friends. He rode his hired or borrowed horse to Fleet Marston on the Sunday morning. It is no longer possible to trace the exact route a horse-rider would take in early October. Not only were road-systems between Oxford and the Vale of Aylesbury greatly changed as turnpikes developed later in the century, but the widespread enclosure of the open fields obliterated many bridle-tracks. Important changes in the road-systems may be traced from eighteenth-century maps, but the obliteration of the bridle-ways often is unrecorded. Three facts may be stated: (i) he would not take the route a motorist would follow today; (ii) his day's journey would involve riding a full thirty-five miles; (iii) the countryside through which he passed would be fertile agricultural land, mostly cultivated on the open-field system of agriculture, with nucleated villages gathered around or near an ancient stone parish church. Fleet Marston and Upper Winchendon, however, both deviated somewhat from this general village-pattern, and this deviation, deep-rooted in history, was part of the reason for Wesley's visit in 1725.

Both in area and population Fleet Marston was an unusually small parish. It had suffered severe depopulation at the hands of the rising capitalist sheep-farmer in the fifteenth century, and had never recovered. Most of its 930 acres were rich, heavy, low-lying lands (the name enshrined the tradition of an ancient marsh), and these were unsuited, for the most part, to arable farming, but offered substantial profits in stock-raising. It was a type of farming which required a minimum of labour and encouraged an owner to hold the relatively easy rewards in his own hands rather than allow them to be dispersed among a number of yeomen farmers. The earliest

<sup>22</sup> See *Proceedings*, xxxvii. Facing page 124 is a facsimile of the page in Wesley's diary.

<sup>23</sup> C. S. Moreton: *History of Waddesdon and Over Winchendon* (SPCK, 1929), p. 127.

population return available is that of the 1811 census.<sup>24</sup> The parish then had 46 inhabitants. Normally, in a stable village of the South Midlands, unless affected by enclosure or some other abnormality, the figure for 1725 would be considerably less than that recorded in 1811. Fleet Marston experienced one major change in the latter part of the eighteenth century: its large house was demolished. This may have involved the removal of a small domestic staff, but the numbers engaged in agriculture would not be much affected. On balance, the population in 1725 may be estimated as no more than in 1811. Wesley's congregation would be a proportion of about forty men, women and children. (The proportion at the 1851 census was one-third!)<sup>25</sup>

The church, like the parish, was small and unimpressive. Nearby stood a decaying mansion; by comparison the few other dwellings were small. It was a forlorn little collection of buildings rather than a village. The church, when fully seated, had accommodation for 84 persons.<sup>26</sup> Later, for convenience and appearance, the number was reduced to 50.<sup>27</sup> A Victorian historian wrote:

The Church is small . . . At the west end of the nave, in the roof, is a little bell-cote, in which hangs one bell . . . the fittings of the pulpit are plain . . . The east window is a single light. The ceilings are of plaster.<sup>28</sup>

It is utterly unlikely that the small congregation would include anyone who shared Wesley's academic interests. The occupier of the large crumbling house and his family would not rise to that height. The farm labourers and their families would, at best, have only the rudiments of education. A century later their successors included some who could not even write their own names.<sup>29</sup> The sprinkling of prosperous yeomen and skilled artisans who prided themselves on some mastery of the "three Rs" in the larger village community of 1725 were not represented in Fleet Marston. Moreover, the labourers of the district were reputed to be stolid rather than eager, and it was said that the farmers themselves often lacked enterprise because the land offered such rich returns for a minimum of exertion. A spiritually-awakened individual in the congregation might exercise a transfiguring effect on the dull scene. Apart from that, it was an inauspicious setting for the opening of what was to be England's most influential pulpit ministry in the eighteenth century.

The insignificance of Fleet Marston and its church is suggested by the fact that when the *Visitation Book* was drawn up after the great Episcopal Visitation of Buckinghamshire in 1661, Fleet Marston was not even noted.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Fleet Marston does not appear in the 1801 census return. Either it was overlooked or the return was lost, or else it was included with a larger parish.

<sup>25</sup> Religious Census Return, 1851 (Public Record Office, HO/129/5), Nos. 151-2.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Kelly Directory: *Buckinghamshire* (1931), p. 118.

<sup>28</sup> Sheahan: *History of Buckinghamshire* (1862), p. 402. Upon restoration of the church in 1869, however, an attractive fifteenth-century roof was revealed.

<sup>29</sup> Parish Registers (Buckinghamshire County Record Office, Aylesbury).

<sup>30</sup> *Episcopal Visitation Book, 1662* (Buckinghamshire Record Society, 1847).

Upper Winchendon, where Wesley preached in the afternoon, lay directly between Fleet Marston and Oxford, and could easily be included in his return journey. It was another small parish of about 1,000 acres which had suffered mediæval depopulation. Like Fleet Marston, its appearance was therefore different from that of the majority of villages in the vicinity, then cultivated on the open-field principle. But the ultimate effects of the depopulation had been less severe, and it is likely that its population in 1725 was twice to three times that of its neighbour. The church, a fine mansion, and other dwellings, were sited on the crest of a line of hills rising boldly from the low lands of the Vale of Aylesbury. This combination of hill and vale suited a mixed agriculture, and thus could support a larger population. In turn, this larger population gave scope for some of the skilled trades of the countryside. The mansion was widely known for the splendour of its gardens. All this gave variety to the type of employment available within the small community. The church, situated near the mansion, was an impressive building. Three seventeenth-century bells hung in its massive tower. Its furnishings included features of unusual interest. The remarkable pre-Reformation pulpit was carved on three sides from a solid block of oak; a traceried screen which somehow had escaped the spoliations of sixteenth-century reformers stood between nave and chancel; pews offered seating for almost all the congregation ever likely to be assembled at one time; the communion-table and rails embodied skilled craftsmanship; on the chancel walls hung a silk banner, pennon, crested helmet and gauntlets which had belonged to the lord of the manor who had died in 1715. Fleet Marston church was beggarly beside Upper Winchendon.

The influence of the mansion on the life of the village had been specially distinctive. Its owner in the second part of the previous century had been Philip, Lord Wharton, army commander in the Civil War, staunch Puritan, and member of Cromwell's House of Lords. The communion-table, set in the chancel at a distance from the east wall of the church, with a seat behind it, doubtless was a relic of his influence.<sup>81</sup> He had encouraged literacy and Bible-reading. Under the terms of his will, a charity was established by which those who lived in areas specially connected with his life could receive a free Bible in return for memorizing seven named psalms.<sup>82</sup> Upper Winchendon was one of the places most likely to benefit from this.

All this suggests that Wesley could find the setting for his afternoon service much more inspiring than he had experienced in the morning. Nevertheless, signs of ecclesiastical apathy were apparent. The parsonage had been allowed to fall into decay, and the parish no longer had a resident incumbent. Hence the need for his presence.

<sup>81</sup> Lipscomb: *History of the County of Buckingham* (1847), i, p. 571, states that the communion-table was still in that position, and attributes it to "Presbyterians in the time of Cromwell".

<sup>82</sup> The Wharton Bible Charity, founded in 1696, continues to operate in certain counties.

Nor was the mansion the centre of inspiration it had formerly been. Its owner, untrue to his Wharton inheritance, was absent on the Continent, having already embarked on a course of reckless, dissolute living which was to result in the sale of his Winchendon property to pay his debts.<sup>33</sup> Both parishes, weakened in the fifteenth century, were already set on the course whereby Fleet Marston church has been closed and vandalized, and Upper Winchendon has been incorporated in a larger parish, with services of worship only on two Sundays of each calendar month. It is doubtful if Upper Winchendon ever had a resident incumbent after 1723.<sup>34</sup> When the active support of the lord of the manor failed, the parish quickly became an ecclesiastical backwater.

Under these depressed conditions Wesley read his carefully-prepared sermon. Not one word had been left to the hazard of the moment when he faced his meagre congregations. Even the announcement of the text was fully written :

In the third chapter of Job, at the 17th verse are these words, " There the wicked cease from troubling, there the weary are at rest."

Similarly the ascription at the end of the sermon was written in full :

Now to the adorable and blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost be ascribed, as is most due, all honour, majesty and dominion, both now and for ever ! Amen.<sup>35</sup>

He read from " an exquisitely neat little manuscript ".<sup>36</sup> The style of its writing is exactly as that reproduced by Curnock in the *Journal* for the sermon on Matthew vi. 33. There are eight sheets of octavo paper, and seven were written on both sides. This seems to have been the length he allowed himself in those early days, for the manuscript of his second sermon is fourteen pages. The whole could be read deliberately within the compass of about twenty minutes. There was also a top sheet on which he wrote details for identification.

Mr. Doughty's characterization of the sermon on Matthew vi. 33 might almost have been written for Job iii. 17. He wrote :

It was a pleasant, neat, compact and ingenuous little discourse . . . calculated to make such of [his] hearers as understood him feel happy and comfortable ; a sermon couched in scriptural language, containing many Scripture quotations and adaptations, and full of good advice, but lacking that pungent exposition of the Christian faith that was presently to characterise his preaching and, metaphorically, to " shake the gates of hell ".

Probably the text from Job did not lend itself so readily to good advice, though it is implicit in what he says about the cause and cure of life's tribulations. Also, if exposition of the evangelical doctrines of the Christian faith is lacking, life's unhappy experiences are set in a theological context.

<sup>33</sup> For details of Fleet Marston and Upper Winchendon, see county histories : Lipscomb (1847), Sheahan (1862), and Victoria County History (twentieth century), also local directories.

<sup>34</sup> Moreton, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

<sup>35</sup> In this and other quotations, Wesley's " ye " is rendered as " the ", and his liberal use of capital letters within sentences has also not been copied.

<sup>36</sup> Doughty, *op. cit.*, p. 9.

Within a framework of introduction, two main points and application, the young preacher unfolded his theme in orderly fashion. In his introduction he so stressed "the miseries of life" as to declare that "All agree in calling life a burden." But he noted that few were anxious to lay it down. This he attributed to fear of what may follow death. Christianity, however, pointed to "entrance into a more desirable country". In this context he saw the text as pointing to "the Original of most and the final Cure of all our afflictions". He then proceeded with his main theme: the principal cause of human afflictions and their final cure. In support of his argument that most human ills proceed from the activities of wicked men, who are "imitating the Grand Adversary", Wesley pointed out that ungodliness naturally tended to cause suffering, but when the wicked made an open attack upon the godly, they sought to destroy the fortunes of others, to deprive them of their reputation, to make their integrity burdensome in adversity, as it was with Job, and in prosperity to turn them from their faith. Even abhorrence of the ways of the wicked could lead to "displeasure at the person rather than his crime"; hence an exhortation, "Fret not thyself because of evil-doers". Finally, in his first section, he warned that the poison of evil examples was as likely to infect as "open attempts upon our piety".

The second section opened with a statement of the theological viewpoint from which the blessedness of the rest which awaited the godly would be surveyed. It read:

It is not my design to enter into any particular enquiry, whether the happiness of the Just immediately after death, be the same with that they will enjoy, when united again to their bodies: or whether, as seems most agreeable to Holy Writ, it receives a new accession at the Great Day. Sure we are that it is infinitely superior to any happiness it is possible to arrive at in this world. They are delivered from all those cares, afflictions and dangers, all that anguish and anxiety which is unavoidably their portion as long as they remain in this transitory life.

Then followed a familiar portrayal, supported by scripture quotation such as "They shall hunger no more . . .", of the "perfect" quiet and "rest from their labours" the "just" would enjoy. The blessedness of freedom from the tyranny of sin was considered, but, in conformity with Wesley's understanding of "what seemed most agreeable to Holy Writ", the climax of all was "a lively sense of further glory reserved for them". His own climax to the section read:

If the reward of the Just before the day of final retribution will be so inexpressibly, so inconceivably great and glorious: . . . what shall we say of the state of Just men made perfect?

The application included challenge:

Seeing then that all things are for our sakes [he said], seeing we have the promise of perfect happiness annex to our obedience, of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that passeth not away, what manner of men ought we to be in all holy conversation and goodness?

A message of consolation followed the word of challenge:



Let us comfort ourselves with the firm persuasion that we shall soon rest, where the wicked cease from troubling . . . [and when] oppressed with a sense of our infirmities or discouraged by the mortifying reflection that this body, however now set off with outward advantage or adorned with the bloom of youth and beauty, must shortly be resolved into its principles of dust and ashes; let us reflect at the same time that God will not leave our soul in hell, but in His own good time reunite it to its ancient companion, and that then this corruptible shall put on incorruption and this mortal be clothed with immortality; finally that though after our skin, worms destroy this body, yet even in our flesh shall we see God.

It was a subject suited to the preacher's father, who had been working on his massive commentary on the Book of Job for upwards of fifteen years, and who had suffered so much at the hands of others, rather than to a young man of twenty-two years. Wesley sensed no such incongruity. The present state of the manuscript indicates that after the service he carefully gathered its sheets together and protected them for use on numerous subsequent occasions. Later in life he returned to the text, and at the height of the agonizing Grace Murray experience found personal comfort in it.<sup>87</sup>

But the message of a future life as a happy escape from the tribulations of the present world would not be inappropriate to village congregations consisting chiefly of hard-worked, impoverished people, even though it is likely that the Wharton régime at Upper Winchendon, at least in the seventeenth century, had been one of benevolent paternalism. How much, however, would his rustic congregations understand? Familiar quotations from scripture could have their healing, but in general Wesley's language would be outside their range. His opening sentence was not calculated to secure eager attention. He read:

The miseries of life have been so copiously described and the inconsistency of perfect happiness with this state of probation so clearly evinced by many writers, that reason alone would easily induce us to give sentence on their side.

It was far removed from his later ideal of using "the most obvious, easy, common words, wherein our meaning can be conveyed".<sup>88</sup>

Whatever his impression of the two places, and whatever their impression of him, it is of interest to note that three times in 1730 Wesley preached at Fleet Marston on a Sunday morning and at Upper Winchendon in the afternoon.<sup>89</sup> But never, after he set out on his half-century of ceaseless travel in his great life's work, did he re-visit the scenes of his first preaching, or indeed the Vale of Aylesbury.

E. RALPH BATES.

[The Rev. E. Ralph Bates was formerly Warden of the New Room, Bristol.]

<sup>87</sup> See his letter to John Bennet, dated 3rd November 1749 (*Letters*, iii, p. 23).

<sup>88</sup> Quoted by L. F. Church: *The Early Methodist People* (1948), p. 13.

<sup>89</sup> Green, *op. cit.*, p. 136 n.

## NEWS FROM OUR BRANCHES

[All dates refer to 1974 unless otherwise stated.]

To coincide with the **Bristol** Conference, an exhibition was staged at the City Council House by the City Archivist.

Members of the branch met at the New Room on Saturday, 12th October, to hear the Rev. Dr. Maldwyn Edwards lecture on "Women in the life of John Wesley"—almost his last engagement before his untimely death two days later.

*Bulletin* : No. 14 received.

*Secretary* : Mr. G. E. Roberts, 21, Ormerod Road, Stoke Bishop, Bristol,

*Membership* : 79. [BSG 1BA.]

THE Annual Meeting of the **Cornish** branch was held at Truro on Saturday, 21st May.

Arranged and led by the Rev. and Mrs. Thomas Shaw, a very pleasant and interesting pilgrimage was enjoyed by members in the month of June. They visited our chapels in the Chapel Amble-Port Isaac area, and also (under the guidance of the vicar, the Rev. Prebendary W. J. P. Boyd) the parish churches of St. Kew and St. Endellion.

A recent acquisition has been a chest of drawers which once belonged to Billy Bray, the back of one of its drawers being inscribed with his name and the date, 1848. The chest will be of service in affording storage-space for many items of interest, as well as being in itself a somewhat unusual museum-piece.

*Journal* : Vol. IV. Nos. 5 and 6 received.

*Secretaries* : Rev. Baynard P. Evans, Orchard Meadow, Tremarne Close, Feock, Truro, Cornwall.

Mr. C. J. Tromans, M.A., 17, Knight's Meadow, Carnon Downs, Truro.

*Membership* : 360.

THE **East Anglia** branch met twice during the year. In May, the spring meeting was held at Brandon, when the Rev. Dr. Frank H. Cumbers gave a lecture entitled "John Wesley, Publisher".

The autumn meeting was held in October, at Carlton Colville, Lowestoft. The Branch President, the Rev. G. Thackray Eddy, lectured on "A Methodist Minister's Journal, 1837-1857". The journal was that of William Richard Rogers, and dealt with the period of his missionary service in the Caribbean. Both Rogers's granddaughter (who has possession of the journal) and his great-granddaughter were present at the meeting.

*Bulletin* : Nos. 31 and 32 received.

*Secretary* : Rev. William D. Horton, M.A., 28, The Croft, Sudbury,

*Membership* : 86. [Suffolk, CO10 6HW.]

THE spring meeting of the **Lancashire and Cheshire** branch was held in April at Cheadle Hulme, when the Rev. Donald H. Ryan gave an illustrated talk on Methodist pottery.

In June, members toured Methodist sites in South Cheshire, ending with tea at the historic Wesley Chapel in St. John Street, Chester.

The board-room of the Division of Property, Manchester, provided an opulent setting in October for the Annual Meeting, which was followed by an excellent address on the eighteenth-century revival by the Rev. Dr. A. Skevington Wood of Cliff College.

## 18 PROCEEDINGS OF THE WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Journal* : Vol. II. No. 10 received.

*Secretary* : Mr. E. A. Rose, B.A., 26, Roe Cross Green, Mottram, Hyde,  
*Membership* : 130. [Cheshire, SK14 6LP.

IN the spring the **Lincolnshire** branch met at Horncastle, when Mr. J. Courtenay Marshall, a vice-president of the branch, spoke on Methodism in Horncastle.

The autumn meeting was held at Scunthorpe, when Mr. A. Armstrong spoke on the churches' response to the growth of the town.

*Journal* : Vol. II. Parts 7 and 8 received.

*Secretary* : Mr. H. Jubbs, 3A, Church Road, Upton, Gainsborough, Lincs.  
*Membership* : 84, plus 12 libraries.

SUMMER and autumn meetings of the **London** branch were held at our Hinde Street chapel. In June, the Rev. Dr. Frank Baker, who was in this country at the time, addressed a well-attended gathering on the new edition of Wesley's *Works*, explaining the objects to be achieved and the techniques involved in realizing them.

The autumn meeting was held on Saturday, 5th October, when the Rev. Kenneth B. Garlick spoke on the story of Methodist Ministerial Training.

*Secretary* : Mr. J. A. Pendry Morris, 118, Elgar Avenue, Tolworth,  
*Membership* : 78. [Surbiton, Surrey.

THE spring meeting of the **Manx** branch took the form of a conducted ramble round the north-west of the island, visiting the Barregarrow chapel with its former Wesleyan day-school, now a cottage, and hearing from the village headmaster, Mr. Tom Cashen, of the various buildings erected there and in the next village of Kirk Michael by both Wesleyan and PM connexions. Balleigh, Lionten (now corrupted in name to Little London) and Orrisdale were visited before tea was taken at Kirk Michael, arranged by the ladies of Barregarrow.

The August meeting was of great importance, its purpose being to discuss suitable arrangements for celebrating the bicentenary of Methodism in the island in 1975. Arrangements in hand include an historical pageant to be produced by the four circuits jointly, and an approach has been made to the Manx postal authority for the issue of a special postage-stamp.

*Secretary* : Miss A. M. McHardy, Zeerust, Clayhead Road, Baldrine,  
Isle of Man.

TRINITY Methodist chapel, Barnard Castle, was the venue for the spring meeting of the **North-East** branch, held on Saturday, 30th March, when Miss Joanna Dawson talked in a highly entertaining and informative way on "Finding out the local history of Methodism". Her illustrations were based largely on Nidderdale.

The Dales theme was continued in June, when a party toured Weardale and considered the history of Methodism in that dale in its social context. Tea was taken at High House chapel, rich in Wesley associations, and Mr. Len Dawson reminded members of these in a paper read in the chapel.

The branch had anticipated for some months a visit from Dr. Maldwyn Edwards on Saturday, 19th October. However, Dr. Edwards had at length considered the journey from Bristol too great, and arranged for a tape recording to be sent. In the event, he died a few days before the meeting, but it was decided to proceed with the arrangements, encouraged

by Mrs. Edwards. As members listened to Dr. Edwards's voice, it was a particularly poignant experience.

*Bulletin* : Nos. 21 and 22 received.

*Secretary* : Mr. Geoffrey E. Milburn, M.A., 8, Ashbrooke Mount,

*Membership* : 115. [Sunderland, SR2 7SD.

FOR their spring meeting, the **Plymouth and Exeter** branch visited an exhibition of Methodist material at Axminster.

In the autumn, Dr. Allan Brockett of Exeter University delivered a lecture on Nonconformity in Exeter, taking as his examples George Trosse and John Bowring, two eminent Exeter Dissenters. The meeting was held in the Friends Meeting House—a reminder that Nonconformity stretches much further back than Methodism.

*Proceedings* : Vol. III. No. 2 received.

*Secretary* : Mr. M. E. Thorne, 29, Anne's Crescent, Barnstaple, N. Devon.

*Membership* : 100.

THE third meeting of the **Scottish** branch was held on Wednesday, 4th September, at the Central Hall, Maryhill, Glasgow. Bailie R. Devon gave a talk on the origins of Lanarkshire Methodism.

*Journal* : Nos. 3 and 4 received.

*Secretary* : Dr. D. A. Gowland, Department of Modern History,

*Membership* : 143. [The University, Dundee, DDI 4HN.

WE are glad to learn of the formation of a new branch in **Shropshire**. The inaugural meeting was held at Minsterley on Saturday, 30th March, when members heard about the origins of Primitive Methodism in the area and inspected a splendid exhibition of historical items.

In July, and again in October, meetings were held at Madeley: the first visit was to places of Methodist interest, including John Fletcher's vicarage, whilst the second was to Ironbridge Gorge Industrial Museum. Approaches have been made to the Museum Trust suggesting the possible purchase of the Madeley vicarage as a museum for small exhibits and a home for the library being built up by the branch.

*Bulletin* : No. 1 received.

*Secretary* : Rev. J. Christopher Ledgard, RAF, 20, Dawson's Rough,

*Membership* : 38. [Shawbury, Shrewsbury, SY4 4PF.

THE **West Midlands** branch did not meet in the spring as in previous years, and so the Annual Meeting was delayed until October. This meeting was held at Selly Oak, following a very informative lecture by Dr. David Mole of Queen's College on "The Evangelical Movement in Birmingham", dealing in particular with the part played by the Anglicans.

The death of the Branch President, the Rev. Dr. E. Benson Perkins, was reported at the Annual General Meeting, and it was felt that time was needed to consider the appointment of a new President, as also that of a new Editor in place of Mr. David Eades, who expressed his wish to retire after seven years' service.

*Bulletin* : Vol. II. No. 9 received.

*Secretary* : Mrs. E. D. Graham, B.A., B.D., 34, Spiceland Road,

*Membership* : 93. [Northfield, Birmingham, B31 1NJ.

IN May, the **Yorkshire** branch met at Otley Trinity, when Mr. W. F. Seals gave a most interesting and informative talk on Elizabeth Ritchie (1754-1835), a native of the town and a friend of John Wesley. Afterwards, led by the vicar of Otley, a visit was made to the ancient parish church, where graves of early Methodists, recently restored, were inspected, along with John Wesley's signature in the parish register.

The modern Huddersfield Mission was the venue for the October meeting, when the Rev. Ross Peart lectured on "Hugh Price Hughes and the Forward Movement", seeing this movement as a reaction against the peace which followed the "Fly-Sheets" controversy.

During the year, the death took place of the Rev. Thomas M. Morrow, Chairman of the West Yorkshire District and an active co-President of the branch. The Rev. W. Stanley Rose, relinquishing the position of Secretary-Treasurer after twelve years, was appointed Chairman.

*Bulletin* : Nos. 24 and 25 received.

*Secretary* : Mr. D. Colin Dews, B.Ed., 4, Lynwood Grove, Leeds,

*Membership* : 120, plus 5 libraries.

[LS12 4AU.

### MORE LOCAL HISTORIES

We acknowledge, with many thanks, the following handbooks and brochures which have reached us recently. We give the prices where stated.

Manchester Road, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, centenary brochure (pp. 20) : copies, price 30p. post free, from the Rev. Colin C. Colclough, 6, Ellesmere Road South, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester, M21 1TE.

*Methodism in the Otley Circuit, 1744-1974*, by W. F. Seals (pp. 44) : copies, price 40p., from the Rev. W. Stanley Rose, The Manse, 45, Main Street, Menston, Ilkley, Yorks, LS29 6NB.

St. David's, Craig-y-Don, Llandudno, golden jubilee brochure (pp. 12) : copies, price 15p., from the Rev. Ian S. Duncan, 8, Roumania Drive, Llandudno, N. Wales.

Central, High Street, Lincoln, centenary brochure (pp. 16) : copies from the Rev. Frank H. Inger, 60, Lennell Street, Lincoln, LN5 7TB.

Birch Vale Zion centenary brochure (pp. 8) : copies from the Rev. George B. Middleton, Wesley Mount, Spring Bank, New Mills, Stockport, Cheshire.

*Methodism in Addingham* (pp. 12), price 20p., and *The Story of an Addingham School* (pp. 12), price 25p. (plus 5p. postage in each case) are both by Mr. William Lemmon, from whom copies may be obtained at 12, Springfield Mount, Addingham, Ilkley, Yorks.

*Buckland Methodist Church, Portsmouth, 1858-1971*, by George Love (pp. 28) : copies, price 7p., from the Rev. H. Seymour Tonkin, 18, Selsey Avenue, Southsea, Hants.

*A History of Wesley Methodist Church, Stoke-on-Trent, 1799-1851*, by Agnes Curtis and Eva Beech (pp. 20) : copies, price 20p. post free, from Mrs. Agnes Curtis, 220, Princes Road, Hartshill, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs, ST4 7JW.

The 70th Jubilee edition of *Contactus*, the magazine of Nettlestone chapel in the East Wight circuit, contains an interesting account of the Bible Christians in the Isle of Wight. Copies from the Rev. P. Kenneth Parsons, 14, Garfield Road, Ryde, Isle of Wight.

## BOOK NOTICES

*John Wesley and the Bible: A Psychological Study*, by Thorvald Källstad. (Nya Bokförlags Aktiebolaget: Stockholm, 1974.)

Any book which "makes entirely new contributions" to Wesley studies must attract attention, especially when it is backed by the erudition which is obvious in Dr. Källstad's—*John Wesley and the Bible*.

After reviewing various trends in Wesley studies, the author concludes that the psychological aspects of the subject have been neglected, and seeks to remedy this omission by examining Wesley's biblical faith in the light of two main psychological theories—Hjalmas Sunden's "role" theory and Leon Festinger's "cognitive dissonance" theory. To these are added insights from three subsidiary theories—Kelly's "psychology of personal constructs", Lazarus's view of the "coping process", and Kurt Lewin's "field" theory.

In the light of these theories, Dr. Källstad shows how Wesley's biblical frame of reference was formed during his childhood when he received a profound religious education and a sense of being elected to fulfil a divine mission. This sense of election made him view the world around him in the light of divine providence, and he reacted to it by playing out a number of biblical roles. As Dr. Källstad explains,

Wesley passed from the intellectual and polemical use of the Bible and discovered the Bible's range of disciple roles and other patterns which fitted his situation and helped him to structure it so that it acquired a meaning.

The author's contribution to the study of Wesley is genuinely new. What Dr. Dimond did for Wesley studies with the tool of psycho-analysis Dr. Källstad has done with a theory of roles which forms the basis of Sunden's laminal model of man. The book abounds in flashes of insight which can sweep the reader away on a wave of unquestioning admiration.

However, once released from Dr. Källstad's magnetic enthusiasm for his subject, the reader is aware of the criticisms which can be levelled at the work. Some of these criticisms are minor. It is a pity that the author has been served so indifferently by those who produced his book. Although Mr. Fox's translation is, on the whole, impeccable, there is a printed list of unpardonably careless errata which by no means exhausts the errors that appear in the text.

The psychological acumen of the book is less easy to assess, especially since the work of Dr. Källstad's chief authority, Sunden, is comparatively little known outside Sweden; elsewhere it is the names of Fromm, Sullivan and Allport that dominate the sphere of "roles". There are many experts in the field of psycho-dynamics who would feel that, in pressing into service so many theories, Dr. Källstad is guilty of "hedging his bets": if one theory will not fit, another one is somewhat arbitrarily imposed.

From a theological point of view, a major criticism must lie in the author's treatment of mysticism, which is centred upon a comparison between the teachings of the mystics and those of Sunden. From a psychological point of view, Dr. Källstad's concern with the elements of ecstasy and stillness in mystical experience may be valid; however, the book is entitled *John Wesley and the Bible*, yet there is no real attempt to come to terms with the biblical concept of mysticism. Christian mysticism must be defined in terms of the Christian Mystery. Jesus *is* the mystery of God—God's hidden person and purposes made known and active in the

world. The mystery-revealing relationship with God is offered to all men by the power of the Spirit through faith. It is arguable that it was this authentic New Testament mysticism which Wesley rediscovered for himself and his followers.

Although these and other criticisms may be levelled at Dr. Källstad's work, they cannot diminish the basic significance of an argument which is worked out with such impressive thoroughness and scholarship. Here are new insights into the person and work of John Wesley which cannot be ignored.

D. DUNN WILSON.

*The Fourth Lesson in the Daily Office*, Book Two, edited by Christopher Campling. (Darton, Longman & Todd: pp. xx, 448, £3 95p.)

In volume xxxix, page 56 of these *Proceedings* we noted a publication entitled *The Fourth Lesson*. This was the first volume of a series of readings for each weekday arranged according to the liturgical year. Some of the readings in that volume were taken from Wesley's *Journal*. Now we have the second volume, which supplies a second year's cycle of readings, and once again the selection is taken from "outside scripture" with a wide choice of authors—Harvey Cox, C. S. Lewis, Paul Tillich, Von Hügel, John Bunyan, Pope John, Michael Ramsey, to name but a few. We warmly commend this book of devotional readings.

JOHN C. BOWMER.

Conference this year will meet in Liverpool, and in addition to our own Society's Annual Meeting and Lecture, we would draw attention to an event which should command the interest of all our members and friends, whether representatives to the Conference or not—the Fernley-Hartley Lecture, to be delivered in Oakfield Road chapel, Anfield (Liverpool North-East circuit), on Thursday evening, 26th June, commencing at 7.30. The lecturer is our Editor, the Rev. Dr. John C. Bowmer, and his subject "Church and Ministry in Wesleyan Methodism from the death of John Wesley in 1791 to the middle of the nineteenth century"—the period when Methodism was moving from "society" to "church", and its itinerants from "preachers" to "ministers".

The Epworth Press are to publish the lecture in book form under the title *Pastor and People*, and it is expected that copies will be available at the meeting.

A.A.T.

We gratefully acknowledge the following periodicals, which have come to hand since the publication of the list in our last issue. Some of these are received on a reciprocal basis with our own *Proceedings*, and we appreciate the continuing friendly contact with our contemporaries in this field of study and research.

*Transactions of the Unitarian Historical Society*, October 1974.

*The Journal of the Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church of Wales*, October 1974.

*The Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society*, December 1974.

*The Baptist Quarterly*, January 1975.

*Heritage*, a journal of the Methodist Historical Society of Victoria (Australia) and Tasmania, October 1974.

*The Local Historian*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (November 1974).

*Cirplan*, Michaelmas 1974.

## NOTES AND QUERIES

### 1269. CAPTAIN THOMAS WEBB.

Thomas Webb was not only a dramatic and colourful personality: he was also a pioneer Methodist preacher and the founder of a number of societies on both sides of the Atlantic. Surprisingly, no detailed account of Webb's life exists, but that gap will shortly be closed. Following the unusual circumstances surrounding the identification and re-interment of the remains of Webb and his second wife in 1972, the Rev. E. Ralph Bates, formerly Warden of the New Room, Bristol, has made a further study of the Captain. Based on a careful examination of hitherto unused records at the Public Record Office, the Methodist Archives Centre, the New Room and elsewhere, his book provides an account of Webb's career that is both scholarly and readable.

The study is to be published this spring by the British Section of the World Methodist Historical Society. Its price will be 60p. plus postage, but members of the Wesley Historical Society living in the British Isles are invited to give it their support by taking advantage of a special pre-publication offer (otherwise only available on bulk orders) and ordering copies at the special price of 45p. plus postage. Orders (*without* remittance) should be sent to me by 30th April; invoices will be sent out with the book.

In America the book will be available from Dr. John H. Ness, jun. at the World Methodist Headquarters, Lake Junaluska. Details will be published in *Methodist History*, or may be obtained from Dr. Ness.

JOHN A. VICKERS (87, Marshall Avenue,  
Bognor Regis, Sussex).

### 1270. DIARY OF VALENTINE WARD.

Dr. Alan J. Hayes of 31, Liberton Brae, Edinburgh, EH16 6AG writes:

I am anxious to trace a manuscript diary kept by the Rev. Valentine Ward (1781-1835). In 1863 this diary was transcribed by Luke Tyerman into a journal, the first part of which is in the City Road Archives. It is known that the diary was in the possession of Ward's son-in-law, the Rev. John Tindall, in 1863. John Tindall's last charge was Oxford Road, Manchester (1875), and he died in 1891. If any reader is in possession of either the original diary or the Tyerman transcript, or knows their whereabouts, I should be most grateful to hear from him.

### 1271. INFORMATION WANTED ABOUT THE SHUM FAMILY.

Mr. Noel Goss of 157, Gipps Street, East Melbourne, Victoria, 3002, Australia writes:

I am editing a diary and letter-book now in the La Trobe Library, Melbourne. The writer was Arthur Hall Shum, who migrated from Bath to Bendigo in 1852. I am interested in any information descendants may supply about the distinguished Methodist family into which he was born. In particular, I would like to trace diaries kept by the founders of the family in England, the brothers Schumm, of Niederstettin, Germany, who came to live in Bath in the latter part of the eighteenth century, and pew-rent books and other documents of the New King Street chapel, Bath, from its foundation by John Wesley and others in 1777. "M.S.W." (i.e. Mary Shum White) refers to the diaries in the *Methodist Recorder* in 1893; and from a later issue it appears that the chapel papers were in the possession of—or accessible to—a certain Mr. G. B. Capel in the early years of the present century.



## 1272. CHARLES KINGSLEY AND JOHN WESLEY.

In view of the centenary of the death of Charles Kingsley on 23rd January this year, it may be of interest to recall a letter written by him to Dr. James H. Rigg on 16th December 1865, recorded in Mrs. Kingsley's *Charles Kingsley: Letters and Memories of his Life*:

I shall be very glad to see Wesley's Journals or anything which explains him to me. He has long seemed to me a true son of Oxford; possibly the precursor of the late great Oxford Movement. Had he been born fifty years ago, and under the influences which he himself originated (*qu. e. imposs.*) he would have been a great high churchman, the fellow but the superior of Newman and Pusey. It is these thoughts which make a man liberal—when one considers how man is the creature of circumstances, and we have nought but what we have received. Only to circumvent atheism and despair, let us remember that the Creator and Ordainer of the circumstances is not chance or nature, but the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of us.

It is interesting to speculate whether, if he had had fuller knowledge of Wesley earlier in his life, Kingsley would have presented such a picture of Nonconformity as he did in *Alton Locke*—which made Hugh Price Hughes say that he ought to re-appear in some visible form to apologize for it! (*Life of Hugh Price Hughes*, p. 95)

J. KINGSLEY SANDERS.

## 1273. AN UNUSUAL WESLEY PLAQUE.

Wesley plaques in pottery are common—or at least not uncommon—whether they be the fine Wedgwood or Adams “jasper” medallions or the simple Staffordshire or Sunderland stoneware pottery.

But a plaque of another sort has recently come into my possession, and I am not even able to say of what material it is made. It is of thin metal, not “white” enough to be tin or pewter, but not (one would think) “red” enough to be copper: presumably some alloy? It measures  $4\frac{1}{2}$  by  $7\frac{1}{2}$  in., and is a high-relief reproduction of the Romney portrait—a very good reproduction too. But it is not, as one would at first imagine, the result of being pressed between two dies, a negative and a positive, which between them squeeze a thin sheet of metal so that the required relief portrait is thereby produced. For whilst the plaque is of thin metal, the reverse side shows no sign of having been pressed in a die. To be sure, the reverse is concave whilst the face is convex, but the surface of the reverse is rough, with a very large number of little “bubbles” of metal adhering; clearly nothing has ever been applied to the reverse to press the relief portrait out.

Has it been produced by casting the liquid metal into a mould and quickly pouring off the excess liquid to achieve lightness? But how then is the high finish of the portrait to be accounted for? No doubt someone technically qualified can explain the process—which to me is at present entirely puzzling.

The only indication of workmanship on it is, at the foot, the stamped mark “RP [i.e. Registered?] 527632”. Can any member give any clue to its date, place of origin, method of manufacture, and scarcity? It is mounted, picture-wise, in an oak frame, but that is obviously of no significance. In many ways it is the most intriguing piece of Wesleyana I have come across.

OLIVER A. BECKERLEGGE.