

WESLEY PORTRAITS.

It has been generally believed that Sir Joshua Reynolds painted a portrait of John Wesley. This belief rests alone on the well-known passage in Wesley's Journal contrasting the time occupied in their work by Reynolds and Romney respectively. If this portrait ever existed it has eluded all efforts to discover it up to this time. Careful search and enquiry seem almost to justify the belief that Reynolds never completed a portrait of Wesley.

During the last few years not a few portraits have turned up for which the honour has been claimed of being "the lost Sir Joshua"; but not one of them has stood the test of investigation. Another somewhat remarkable case has recently occurred, but again investigation will show that the quest is not yet successful.

At the recent Conference in London a portrait in oils was exhibited in the Morning Chapel at City Road, purporting to be of John Wesley painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The Revd. J. S. Pawlyn was its owner, and expressed his conviction that it really was what was claimed for it. By its side hung the painting by John Williams, R.A., belonging to Didsbury College, which, so far as is known, is the earliest, as well as the most life-like, presentment of Wesley on canvas. An article by the Rev. G. Beardmore appeared in *The Recorder* of July 20th, describing the former portrait, giving its history, and ascribing it to Sir Joshua in his younger days. The apparently authoritative and confident tone of Mr. Beardmore's statement is not unlikely to lead some to conclude that "the lost Sir Joshua" has at last been discovered, especially as Mr. Beardmore is thought to be an expert in these matters. But he does not advance a shred of evidence either of its being Sir Joshua's work, or even that it is a portrait of Wesley at all. All that is said of its history might be said of any portrait, and what is affirmed of its authorship is pure supposition. Mr. Beardmore writes that the portrait was painted "from sittings given during Wesley's frequent and dramatic visits to the west

of England, and while Reynolds at twenty-two years of age was living, &c." He does not say on what authority this statement is made. If the statement could be accepted at all, Wesley must have been forty-two years of age at the time. Williams's portrait represents him when thirty-nine years old, so that the two portraits, executed about the same time, by two skilled artists, should in all essential points be alike, without room for doubt. But no one could look at the two portraits as they hung side by side, and conclude they represented the same person. In some respects there was a slight resemblance. The mouth and the chin are not unlike; but the eyes and the cheeks differ considerably, while the small Wesley hand of the Williams painting is in great contrast.

Mr. Beardmore's own conclusion as to all the portraits of Wesley hitherto purporting to be by Reynolds, that "of them all not one had a shred of internal evidence that it was from his hand," would equally apply in this case; and his belief in the genuineness of this portrait can only be accounted for by the assumption that (again in his own words) "the faculty of recognition was clouded by prepossession." What evidence indeed could there be? The world's knowledge and judgment of Reynolds' paintings are based on "those full-toned chromatic splendours, and masterly elements of power," which distinguished his great genius. In his "novitiate period" doubtless Reynolds was at least equalled by many good artists, and there does not seem to be anything in this painting to suggest Sir Joshua rather than any other fairly skilled artist. The supposition that Reynolds executed the portrait when he was only twenty-two years of age does not appear to have any sufficient basis. It is hardly probable that Wesley would have made any comparison between the work of an artist of Romney's reputation and experience, and that of a young man forty-seven years younger, before his reputation was established, and long before he became "Sir Joshua."

My conviction is that this is not a portrait of Wesley at all, but of the Rev. John Cennick, a young preacher of the Gospel who became Wesley's first master of the Kingswood School. This view is strongly supported by the fact that in my collection there is a mezzotint portrait of that young preacher, which bears such a striking general resemblance to Mr. Pawlyn's painting as to suggest that the two represent the same person. A close comparison reveals some differences, from which it may be inferred that the painting is not the original of the engraving, but most probably a copy from that original by Brandt with the not unfrequent artist's license. The general impression of each is alike.

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The pose, the dress, the position of the hands on the book, and the finger pointing to the text, "We preach Christ crucified," are also alike. The eyes, the mouth, the details of the neck-cloth, the precise arrangement of the fingers on the book, and the details of the back-ground differ somewhat. The one striking difference is that in the painting only half the book is shewn, clearly one double-column page of a larger book, suggesting that the artist worked on a canvas too small to embrace the whole of the book.

It has hitherto been uncertain whether the painting now at Didsbury College or the one at the Book-room was the older, and really Williams's work. I have recently had an opportunity of making a careful examination of these two paintings, and find inscribed on the back of the canvas of the one at the Book-room the following—"John Wesley, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln Colledge. John Harley pinxt. 1745. Copied from the original canvas." This settles the question as between the two paintings. The Didsbury one has no inscription on it, and there is no reason for doubting its being Williams's original.

On the back of the painting at the Mission House is inscribed the following—"John Wesley, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln Colledge, Oxf. John Harley pinxt." Who John Harley was is not known; he was probably a pupil of Williams. If his painting is an exact copy of "the original canvas," there must be somewhere (unless it has been destroyed) another original by Williams, as this painting has an oval frame round the portrait, which the Didsbury portrait, with the hands on a book, has not. The date of execution of this "original canvas" is a point of considerable interest.

JOSEPH G. WRIGHT.

DR. ANNESLEY, FATHER OF SUSANNA WESLEY.

Whilst in the Rochester circuit I was one day conning over the pages of Dr. Clarke's Wesley Family, and met with this rather interesting statement: "Dr. Annesley had several children—no less than twenty-five! Dr. Manton baptizing one of them, and being asked how many children Dr. Annesley had, he answered, he 'believed it was two dozen, or a quarter of a hundred.' The reckoning children by dozens is a singular circumstance, an honour to which few persons ever arrive." On comparing the above with Stevenson's Memorials, I obtained additional light. On page 157 the information is conveyed in this form: "Susanna Wesley was the twenty-fourth child by her mother and the twenty-fifth child by her father."

Knowing that the village of Cliffe in Kent was the first parish in which Dr. Annesley laboured, I took the liberty of writing to the present rector, the Rev. W. H. Grove, M.A., asking him whether there were any entries in the old registers, or monumental tablets or inscriptions of any kind, relative to Dr. Annesley's first wife and child. Subjoined are copies of the two letters courteously sent by him.

Cliffe Rectory,
Rochester, 22 Jan. 1897.

Dear Sir,

I had overlooked or forgotten the important and interesting fact, that Cliffe had the honour of being for a time the home of an ancestor of the Wesleys. Dr. Annesley seems to have been put into possession in ¹1640, in place of a Dr. Griffen Higges who was ejected. As far as my memory goes the registers were not regularly kept about the period in question, but I will take an early opportunity of seeing whether there is any record of the

1. This date is corrected in the next letter.

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marriage of Dr. Annesley, of the burial of the first Mrs. Annesley and her child, and especially whether there is any entry relating to Susannah Annesley (afterwards Wesley). I do not know of any tablet monument, but I will make search, and let you know the result.

Yours very truly,

W. H. GROVE.

Cliffe Rectory, Rochester,
25th Jan. 1897.

Dear Sir,

The register is imperfect in Dr. Annesley's time, and what remains is in part so faded as to be illegible except to an expert. It appears that the spelling of his name varied. What purports to be his signature was in one place, 'Nov. 1645. Samuel Anesly, Rector.' In another place he wrote, 'Samuel Annely, Min., Anno Domin. 1646.' Under date 1646, Dec. 2, appears the entry, 'Mary Annely (Rector's wife) was buried.' These were all I could find. The sexton, who knows every inch of the church yard, knows of no stone, bearing the name of Annesly or Annily, nor does the clerk. There are one or two old stones which I will examine more closely, when the weather is favourable.

I am not altogether surprised that the people of Cliffe did not welcome the Dr., of whom of course they knew nothing, seeing that he was intruded upon them in the place of the Rector, Dr. Griffen Higges, whom they knew and probably valued. [He] was ejected for no fault, so far as appears, but being faithful to the church in which he was ordained, and to the conditions under which he was appointed,—conduct not acceptable to the powers that then were. That the people showed their resentment by violence is of a piece with the character they bore till comparatively recent times of having very little regard to law and order. There was a little excuse for their hostility, though none for their way of showing it. He was clearly a remarkable man, and I thank you very much for the information you have given me about him, to which I wish I had been able to add something.

I am, dear sir,

Yours very truly,

W. H. GROVE.

W. H. CORADINE.

WESLEY'S VISITS TO SALISBURY.

The published Journals of John Wesley show that he paid forty-one visits to Salisbury. The first of these was on March 27th, 1738; the last was on September 27th, 1790. These recorded visits therefore spaced over a period of fifty-two years.

Under the date of October 5th, 1789, Wesley writes, "We set out at four, and hiring post-horses reached Mr. Whitchurch's at Sarum before dinner." This is the only instance in which the name of Mr. Whitchurch is mentioned.

I have in my possession a letter written by Mr. H. Mooring Aldridge, of Bournemouth, and dated July 4th, 1887. The writer is connected by marriage with a descendant of the Mr. Whitchurch mentioned by Wesley. He states that "an old book," kept by the family, contains "entries" which show that Wesley was entertained by Mr. Whitchurch on ten different occasions. These visits extend from October 1775, to October 1790, a period of fifteen years. Four of the dates given from the "old book" correspond with dates given in the published Journal; but in six other instances there is no record of such visits in the latter. The visits not recorded in the Journal, but entered in the "old book," took place on the following dates:—March, October, and December, 1776; January, 1779; September, 1785; and October, 1790. It is believed that Wesley made the house of Mr. Whitchurch his head-quarters, from which he took journeys to the neighbouring towns and villages. A grand-daughter of Mr. Whitchurch, Mrs. Kemp-Welch, well remembers the bedstead Wesley was said to have slept on at her grand-father's house.

Mr. Mooring Aldridge says in the letter referred to, "A bust of Mr. Wesley was given by my late father-in-law, Dr. Kemp-Welch, of Downton, to the late Mr. Thomas Wood [or Ward; I cannot decipher which is meant], a schoolmaster there, which I understood was made while in Mr. Whitchurch's house?" Can any member of the Society throw any light on this statement? Is there any bust known to have been made in Salisbury? Are there any other family records similar to the foregoing known to exist?

THOMAS BRACKENBURY.

THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY, JUNR.

In the Bodleian Library at Oxford are some volumes containing manuscript collections of notes and letters in reference to certain men of renown at Oxford in the last century. There is a note in reference to Samuel Wesley, from which it appears that he was the eldest son of the Rev. Samuel Wesley, and was born in "Spittlefields" on February 10, 1690. His father shortly afterwards received his first preferment to South Ormsby. In 1707 young Samuel entered the college of Westminster "by Bishop Spratt's favour," thence he went to Christchurch, Oxford. He received his deacon's orders in King Henry vii.'s Chapel, Westminster, from the Bishop of Rochester on December 23, 1716. He was ordained priest by Bishop Atterbury on March 9, 1717. This Atterbury, bishop of Rochester, by the way was at this time chiefly engaged in less innocent undertakings than ordaining deacons and priests. He was strongly attached to the Jacobite cause, and intrigued with the Pretender throughout George I's reign, till in 1722 he was deprived of his see and banished by Act of Parliament.

S. Wesley himself tells us that he went to Westminster school "the day after the high wind" in 1703. Westminster school and Westminster college seem to have been different institutions in those days. "At Queen Anne's funeral in 1714," S. Wesley became an usher in Westminster school, and as shown above he was made a priest whilst so employed. He remained an usher over nineteen years, and in 1734 was elected headmaster of Blundell's school at Tiverton, in Devonshire. Here he would probably receive a fixed salary of £20 per annum, £14 from boarders, of whom the number varied from ten to twenty, and some £60 or £70 made up in other ways. It is interesting to remember here his kindness to his family. From the time he was an usher in Westminster he shared his income with his parents, and it was chiefly due to his generosity that John and Charles were kept at Oxford.

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After he had been at Tiverton two years, he published (in 1736) "Poems on Several Occasions," in a quarto volume. They were dedicated to Edward, Earl of Oxford, through whose influence he had entered at Christchurch. He seems to have lived a lonely and secluded life at Tiverton. In a letter to John Wesley when the latter was in America, Samuel wrote, "I am in a desert as well as you, having no conversable creature but my wife, till my mother came last week." This letter was written in 1739. He had considerable renown as a scholar, and the following lines seem to show that he was not unknown as a disciplinarian. They were written by a contemporary.

Wesley alone (curst with excessive pride),
Wesley alone shall want me for a guide ;
To him I leave dry puns in scales to poize,
And wield a birch, the terror of all boys.

If however there were many boys at that time at Blundell's of the stamp and character of Bampfylde Moore Carew, then doubtless Wesley found the birch essential. This Carew ran away from school, joined a band of gypsies, and lived a roving life for fifty years, becoming known as "king of the gypsies."

The following remarks from a letter of S. Wesley's written in 1739 are interesting: "My two brothers [John and Charles] are at age, tho' alas! I doubt hardly at years of discretion. I'll spirit them up if I can to answer for themselves, . . . and I shall thank you for the occasion, if it can but slacken their pace a little in the wrong way they are so fond of, as falsely and foolishly called Methodism." Samuel Wesley died in November, 1839, and was buried at Tiverton. During the last two or three years of his life he seems to have suffered from general ill-health.

JAMES T. LIGHTWOOD.

THOMAS LEE.

Thomas Lee was a Methodist preacher from 1748 to 1787. His manuscript Diary is in the possession of the widow of a local preacher who used to labour in the Bingley circuit; and although it contains necessarily little more than an account of Lee's preaching engagements and of the state of his soul, yet it has its historical value as it enables us to fix with approximate certainty the different localities which formed the rounds or circuits. The spelling is that of an illiterate man, but the spirit is that of a man thoroughly in earnest. I should be glad to hear whether our friends are of opinion that this Diary should be printed.

After a devotional introduction or preface, Thomas Lee commences thus:—"1755, March 12. I have this day set down some of the Lord's dealings with my soul: for of three months my way to the kingdom hath been through manifold tribulation, so that indeed I have had such trials as I never expected from those they have come from; which has made me ready to say with David, 'If it had been an enemy that had done it, I could have born it; but it was thou my familiar friend, in whom I trusted,'—so that through reason¹ and other things it is with great difficulty that I continue to preach, sometimes thinking I shall give over, being so overcome by reasoning, so that I scarce know whom to trust, finding so much deceit in many professors. At other times I find my evidence brighter for heaven and my soul more drawn with love to souls; and then I think I shall go on preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. But at the present my trials are such that I scarce know how it will be; only this word at times seems to pierce my heart, 'A dispensation being committed to me, woe is me if I preach not the Gospel,'—which times, with other inward movings, make me say to God, 'Lord, if thou wilt, keep me from all sin that I may never give

1. Thomas Lee uses the words "reason" and "reasoning" in the sense of perturbation of mind.

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offence to or hurt thy cause, and that thou wouldst fill my heart with thy power and love, and bless the word to the souls of the people, that good may be done by me : then, Lord, I would go from cross to cross, from trial to trial, if it be but for Christ's sake.'

"*Thursday, 13th.* Was in great reasoning this day about giving over preaching as a travelling preacher ; came to Calverley this noon, where the Lord enabled me to speak his word ; came this evening to Windhill, had some freedom in speaking, and I believe God was with us. Blessed be God, another day is over.

"*Friday, 14th.* I still had the cross to carry ; but, blessed be God, he gave me strength to bear it, and freedom in speaking the word to the people at Idle where I was at noon. Came to Yeadon at night ; the Lord enabled me to preach, and his spirit so applied it as made it truly profitable to the people.

"*Saturday, 15th.* Had this morning, in some measure, an awful sense of God upon my soul ; went and visited some of my friends, conversed of the things of God. In the evening stood up between the living and the dead, and, as God enabled me, declared to them the counsel of God, and I hope the divine presence was with us. Lord, take thou all the glory.

"*Sunday, 16th.* Almost as soon as I awoke, I found the enemy very busy, but through mercy I was upholden above my trouble. Preached this morning at Farsley, where there was a great outpouring of the Spirit of God, which some will have reason to remember in time and in eternity : glory be to God for the same. At noon I preached to a large and well behaved congregation at Whitcoothill [i.e. Westgate Hill] ; had great freedom in speaking, and the Lord lifted my head above my sorrow ; and I believe God searched the hearts of the people by the word, so that the seed sown this day was, I trust, so watered by the divine blessing that it will be found at the last day. In the evening I preached at Bramley, and though my body was so weak, yet God enabled me so to speak to their ears, and his Spirit to the hearts of the people, that, &c."

CHARLES A. FEDERER.

EARLY METHODISM AT GILLINGHAM.

A short time since an old book was given me in which an interesting episode of early Methodist history is contained. The book is entitled "An Epistle to the Inhabitants of Gillingham in the County of Dorset, wherein there is a Looking-Glass for the Faithful, to show them their names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world : with a variety of similes typical of Jesu's blood." It is written by Mr. John Cave, who at the time of the publication of his work was a glover living in the town of Brecon. The book itself is of slight interest. The preface however is an autobiographical note dealing with the beginnings of Methodism in the little town of Gillingham. It runs as follows :—" To the Reader. Whereas, by the Providence of God, this epistle hath made its way into the world, my readers might be anxious to know the efficient cause of its being written : therefore I would wish to inform them, that I was born in Gillingham, in Dorsetshire, brought up a churchman, and by occupation a glover ; after which I commenced an officer of excise, and was ordered to Talgarth, in Breckonshire ; and having Trevecka under survey, had frequent opportunities of attending the ministry of Mr. Howell Harries [Harris], who lived there ; under whose efficacious doctrine I was convinced of sin ; after which the Lord was graciously pleased to reveal himself unto me. Some years after I was favoured with an amiable wife ; and having now left the excise, we judged it proper to go to Gillingham to settle : and being a native of that town, was received with much affection, and lived exceeding happy for some time ; but seeing the people quite ignorant of the true knowledge of God, was grieved for want of Christian fellowship ; I therefore endeavoured to exhort my neighbours to seek the Lord, as they really stood in need of some one to teach them : for on a sabbath day as I was passing from church, I heard some of them boasting to each other, saying, ' What a famous scholar our minister is, his learning is so great that we do not understand the half what he says.' I asked them

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what advantage his learning was to them, if they did not understand him, and also how many knew their sins forgiven in his congregation? They all declared that in this life there was no such knowledge to be obtained. I then insisted upon the necessity of men's knowing it ; or at least to have a well-grounded hope, through grace ; and that the constitutional doctrine of the church of England agreed thereunto. This new opinion, as they called it, soon spread about, which caused the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Society from Shaftesbury to come to see me.

"The town by this time began to be alarmed at seeing so large a company of Methodists, as they called them. Therefore when preaching began, it being out of doors, the Riot Act was read, and from that time persecution commenced against me throughout the whole town ; and the minister every Sunday railed against the Methodists. And as my house was opened for all enlightened ministers, therefore Satan's revenge was all the more against me, till at length the people withdrew all their custom. After this I removed and came back to Wales ; but have often wondered why the Lord suffered me to go to Gillingham to experience so much trouble ; but as our Lord must needs go through Samaria to talk to the woman at Jacob's well, who brought the whole city to hear and believe on him ; so there was a needs-be for me to go to Gillingham for a foundation to write this epistle ; and I trust that more than the whole city of Samaria will see the Lord Jesus in it, and worship him no more on the mountains of ignorance, but worship God in spirit and in truth."

The little town to which this interesting note refers now stands with Shaftesbury as the head of a circuit, and upon it Methodism to-day has an exceedingly strong hold.

J. ALFRED SHARP.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

79. In regard to Mr. Federer's paper on Thomas Lee, I should greatly like to see the portion of the Diary, which gives an account of Lee's work in Ireland, to which he came, I believe, in 1761, and probably left the following year.—*Rev. C. H. Crookshank.*
80. In the Minutes of the Conference of 1824 it is recorded that a committee of preachers and others had recommended a plan for "the celebration of the approaching centenary of the Rev. John Wesley's entrance into the work of the Christian ministry," and the Conference accordingly agreed that September 19th, 1825, should be "devoted to solemn religious services." They also approved that subscriptions should be solicited and public collections made that day "for the purpose of erecting some building which may serve as a monument to the memory of that apostolic man." The erection of "a new Wesleyan Mission-House, and of other suitable offices for the transaction of the public business of the Connexion" was specifically commended. The Minutes of following years make no reference to this matter, and 77, *Hatton Garden*, remained much as it was until the Centenary Hall was built. Is there any other record of this proposal, or any reference to its abandonment?—*Mr. W. Symons.*
81. The observations in *Proceedings*, vol. ii. pt. 2, p. 38, to the effect that the date and place of the marriage of John Wesley with Mary Vazeille are unknown, led me to the following researches. The register of Wandsworth is printed, and the only relevant entries appearing therein are:—"16 Jan, 1744, Charles son of Anthony and Mary Vazeille, christened; 30 Jan, 1744, Charles infant son of Mr. Vazeille, buried." Thus it appears the Vazeilles were at that time living at Wandsworth. Being under the impression that the name Vazeille was Huguenot, Dutch, or French, I searched the register of

the Dutch Reformed Church of Austin Friars, situated a few minutes walk from Threadneedle Street, but did not find any reference to the name. I have searched also the printed lists of Marriage Licenses for Canterbury and London, which would take in the whole of London and the surrounding country, but I did not find any reference to Wesley or Vazeille. Threadneedle Street is in two parishes, St. Christopher-le-Stocks at the Royal Exchange end, and St. Martin Oatwich at the Bishopsgate Street end; both these churches are now pulled down. I have searched their registers, also that of St. Helen's, Bishopsgate, an adjoining parish; but I could not find any reference to the names. There is another adjoining parish, St. Peter-le-Poer; but I have been unable to search its register. The register of the chapel of the French Hospital, that was at 17, Threadneedle Street, and formerly in Spitalfields, but was pulled down in 1841, when the congregation removed to Founders' Hall Chapel, I have searched from 1707 to 1752, and from 1716 to 1753, which covers the period of the marriage, but I could find no relevant entry. I am inclined to think the Vazeilles must have removed from Wandsworth to some other suburb.—*Mr. W. J. Gadsden.*

82. It might be worth while to consider whether more prominence should not be given in these days to the writings of John Wesley, quite apart from the purely official, and therefore very restricted, employment of them—or rather, of certain of them—as standards of doctrine. Would it not be well, for example, that there should be a thorough editing of the incomparable Journal by one who should be competent to explain all obscure allusions—obscure only because of the passing away from our ken of what was formerly familiar enough to every reader; who would be able to correct, or supplement, earlier expressions of opinion by the light of later statements; and who might further set in relief those shrewdnesses of observation, those dexterities of reasoning, and those almost peerless qualities of style, which, taken together with other qualities, should make this work one of the best read classics of our literature? At the same time, it should be published in a handy form, and in a style abreast of the most improved methods of to-day. Quite as important, perhaps, would be a thorough editing of the Notes on the New Testament—an anticipation, in many respects, of the revision of 1881 by one who, in this as in other matters, was a full century ahead of his own time.

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Such an edition should have scrupulous regard to Wesley's own principles of revision, as expressed in the preface, but should introduce whatever emendations are required by the fuller critical knowledge of recent years. The original version, wherever displaced by corrections, might be indicated in foot-notes. If this work were well done, Wesley's Revised New Testament would be welcome to multitudes of readers, and would also help to dispel the stubborn prejudice against alterations of the misnamed Authorised Version, which so greatly hinders the hearty adoption of the 1881 revision.—
Rev. T. F. Lockyer.

83. Circuit plans, when were they first used, and who was the inventor? I have heard this question put, but never heard a satisfactory answer. From the following copy of an original letter by John Wesley, it would seem that the preacher who introduced circuit plans into Methodism was the Rev. C. Hopper. The letter is addressed to "Mr. Hopper, at the Preaching House in Coln, Lancashire," and reads thus—

Near London,
Feb. 16, 1780.

My Dear Brother,

I do not know that there is any matter of *Dispute* between us, unless it be, whether you should do what I desire or no? You are assistant in Coln circuit. I desire you to send me a plan of the circuit. You send me an answer, but without the plan. I write again, you send a second answer, telling me you have been very diligent for many years, and that you was the very person who introduced plans among us. Very good: But you send me no plan still: and till this comes, everything else is wide of the mark.

I am,
Your Affectionate Friend and Brother,

J. WESLEY.

Can any one throw any further light upon the origin or early history of plans?—*Mr. E. Crawshaw.*

84. MRS. SUSANNA WESLEY'S ACCOUNT OF THE EPWORTH FIRE.—The following letter is copied from a small MS. volume in the possession of the Rev. C. H. Kelly. It is in the handwriting of Samuel Wesley, junr. It appears to be a collection of letters from his father and mother, the latter of whom suggested to her son that he should transcribe their letters as they might be useful to him.

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Dear Sammy,

When I received your letter wherein you complain of want of shirts, I little thought that in so short a time we should all be reduced to the same, and indeed worse condition. I suppose you have already heard of the firing of our house. By what accident we cannot imagine, but the fire broke out about 11 or 12 o'clock at night, we being all in bed, nor did we perceive it till the roof of the corn-chamber was burnt through, and the fire fell upon your sister Hetty's bed, which stood in the little room joining upon it. She wak'd, and immediately ran to call your father who lay in the red chamber, for I being ill he was forc'd to ly from me. He says he heard some crying fire in the street before, but did not apprehend where 'twas till he open'd his door. He call'd at our chamber and bid us all shift for life, for the roof was falling fast, and nothing but the thin wall kept the fire from the stair-case.

We had no time to take our cloaths, but ran all naked. I call'd to Betty to bring the children out of the nursery. She took up Patty and left Jacky to follow her. But he going to the door and seeing all on fire ran back again. We got the street door open, but the wind drove the Flame with such violence that none could stand against it. I try'd twice to break through but was driven back. I made another attempt and waded through the fire, which did me no other hurt than to scorch my leggs and face. When I was in the yard, I look't about for your father and the children, but seeing none concluded 'em all lost. But I thank God I was mistaken! Your father carry'd sister Emly, Suky and Patty into the garden, then missing Jacky, he ran back into the house to see if he could save him. He heard him miserably crying out in the nursery, and attempted several times to get up stairs, but was beat back by the flame; then he thought him lost and commended his soul to God, and went to look after the rest. The child climbed up to the window and call'd out to them in the yard; they got up to the casement, and pull'd him out just as the roof fell into the chamber. Harry broke the glass of the parlour window, and threw out your sister Mally and Hetty, and so by God's great mercy we all escap'd. Don't be discouraged, God will provide for you.

Epworth, Feb. 14,

1708^g

SUSANNA WESLEY.

Dr. Adam Clarke, the Rev. Henry Moore, and others have given accounts of the fire, but I do not remember seeing Mrs. Wesley's letter in print.—*Mr. Thos. Hayes.*