



MINIATURE OF JOHN WESLEY,

Painted on Ivory ; in the Collection of Mr. A. M. Broadley.

THE CORRESPONDENCE OF THE
REV^D. BRIAN BURY COLLINS, M.A.,
(FROM JANUARY 1800 THE REV^D.
BRIAN BURY), WITH JOHN, CHARLES
AND SARAH WESLEY, THE REV^D.
DR. WITHERSPOON, THE REV^{DS}.
ROWLAND HILL, JOHN NEWTON,
WALTER SHIRLEY, H. VENN AND
OTHERS, DR. BEILBY PORTEUS,
BISHOP OF CHESTER, THE COUN-
TESS OF HUNTINGTON AND LADIES
DARCY MAXWELL & A. A. ERSKINE;
1773-1797.

EDITED AND ANNOTATED BY

A. M. BROADLEY,

Author of *Dr. Johnson and Mrs Thrale, The Royal Miracle, etc.*

Member of the W. His. Soc.

The interesting parcel of Wesley-Collins MSS now in my possession was recently discovered by Mr. George Gregory, the well-known Bath bookseller, in the library of a Cornish parsonage. The wife of the clergyman to whom they belonged was connected with the Bury family (the name is pronounced Bury and not Berry), and it seems that after the death of the Revd Brian Bury his surviving daughters continued to reside in Bath, with which city their father had been associated during the greater part of his career. The *Bath Directory* of 1811 shows that

Miss Elizabeth Jane Bury was living at 17, Walcot Buildings, and in 1833 we find the Misses Bury mentioned as occupants of 8, Richmond Hill. Their names, however, are omitted from the *Directory* of the following year. The majority of the letters addressed to Mr. Bury Collins relate directly or indirectly to the early history of Methodism in the City of Fashion so often visited by John Wesley, but at the same time they throw new and interesting light on the life-story of Collins himself and on his relations, not only to Wesley, but to the pioneers of Methodism in England.

For many of the notes and identifications of persons and places mentioned in these remarkable letters I am indebted to the valuable assistance cheerfully rendered me by Mr. R. F. Scott, M.A., Master of St. John's College, Cambridge, the Revds Canon Mayo, Alfred Leedes Hunt, E. L. Treffrey, J. C. Natrass, T. E. Brigden, and F. F. Bretherton, Mr. George Stampe, Mr. Alfred M. Brewis of Newcastle, Mr. George Gregory and Mrs. Hammond, of Kingsleigh, Saltash. To all of them I desire to tender my heartfelt thanks. Mr. Stampe has reason to believe that the late Revd L. Tyerman was aware of the existence of these letters, but never succeeded in either seeing them or discovering their whereabouts. This fact explains the inaccuracy of the account of Revd B. B. Collins, which will be found in his work *The Life and Times of the Rev. John Wesley*, iii 335. It is as follows:—

“The Mr. Collins mentioned in the above extract was Brian Bury Collins, of the University of Cambridge, who, without ever receiving a regular appointment, continued to assist Wesley in various parts of the kingdom until Wesley's death in 1791. A number of his manuscript letters, all written in 1779 and 1780, now lie before us, from which we learn that he regarded himself as having ‘an unlimited preaching commission,’ and that one of his great objects was to unite Wesley's and Whitefield's followers. ‘I could freely die,’ says he, ‘to see the Tabernacles and Foundery reconciled.’ He began the year 1779 in the North of England, where he sometimes preached five or six times a day. In May, 1780, he was among his relatives at Linwood, and wrote: ‘I am not yet recovered from my late illness, though I am much better than I have been. My relations here receive me with more cordiality than I expected. I find the Divine presence in the churches where I preach; but what the Lord designs to do with me I cannot tell. Lately, I have thought of spending a few weeks at Cambridge. I have also had fresh desires of being in full orders.’ In pursuance of this, Mr. Collins went to St. John's College, Cambridge, where, in July, 1780, he took his Master of Arts degree. By advice of the two Wesleys, he sought ordination; and the dowager Lady Townsend gave him a recommendatory letter to the Bishop of Chester, requesting that the rite might be administered in private; but the bishop having heard of his irregular preaching, hesitated until he had time to confer with his brother bishops. Ordination was ultimately obtained; Collins married, and for a time was assistant to David Simpson at Macclesfield; after this, he again became a

rover, and preached in Wesley's and Lady Huntingdon's chapels, and wherever else he had a chance. He writes: 'I wish to do good unto all. I do not love one and dislike another. I can unite with all who are united to Jesus. I care not for names in the least.' Of Collins' subsequent career we know nothing, except that its close was not as bright as its beginning. A son of his lies interred in the burial ground of the new chapel in City Road."

The data collected by Mr. R. F. Scott enable me to furnish many more details about John Wesley's enthusiastic assistant. Born in St. Michael's Parish, Stamford, co. Lincoln, on 17 June, 1752 (See *N. and Q.*, 3rd Ser., i, 427a), Bury Brian Collins at the age of seven lost his father, a painter. He had, however, wealthy relatives living at Linwood Grange, in the parish of Blankney, near Sleaford, in Lincolnshire, and received sufficient education from Mr. Head, a schoolmaster of Richmond, Yorkshire, to enable him to be admitted a sizar of St. John's College, Cambridge, on 8 Feb., 1771, going into residence on the following day. He was evidently staying with his mother's brother in Lincolnshire in the autumn of 1773, when the first letter of the series was written. It is as follows:—

The Rev. Thomas Robinson¹
to Mr. B. B. Collins at
Wm Bury's Esq² Linwood Grange,
to be left at the Green Man³ on
Lincoln Heath.

Witcham,
Sept. 21st, 1773.

My dear Friend

I thank you sincerely for your letter, tho' I cannot help murmuring at the shortness of it. I have not Time at present to say all I wish to say to you, but I hope soon to have a better opportunity. I purpose, with God's Leave, to set forward for Yorkshire on Monday, y^e 4th of Octob^r; and intend to make Sleaford in my Road. My Stay there cannot be long, but I sh^d rejoice to meet you there, if it was only to spend one Hour. Tell me, dear Sir, where I must find you. Mr Jobson and Mr Edmonson, I expect will be with me. I fear we cannot reach Sleaford on Monday night, but probably we may breakfast there

1. Vicar of Saint Mary's, Leicester. Trinity College, Cambridge, B. A., 1772, and M. A., 1775. He became a Fellow of the College and wrote several books.

2. William Bury Collins died 1790, and was buried at Blankney. His will was proved at Lincoln during the same year "by Thomas Irwin Bury or Berry, the natural and lawful brother, and Susanna Bury, a widow, of Linwood." The property was sworn as under £2,000 in value.

3. The "Green Man" and Linwood Grange are now both farmhouses.

on Tuesday Morning. Write immediately & believe me to be with much affection

Yr's sincerely

T. Robinson.

Two years later, on Nov. 5 1775, Collins was admitted at St. John's College, a scholar on Dr. Thimbleby's Foundation, taking his B.A. degree in Lent Term of the following year. On 7 March, 1776, he was ordained a Deacon by Dr. John Green, Bishop of Lincoln, in St. Paul's Cathedral, of which he was the Dean. His Letters of Orders form part of the MSS in my possession. He is described in them as B.A. of St. John's College, Cambridge, but no title is mentioned. A year later (if an inscription on the next letter can be trusted) he was at Road, near Frome, in Somerset, where he received the following communication from one of his brother collegians :—

Hy Wm Coulthurst⁴ to
Rev^d Mr Collins at Road near Frome

Dear Collins,

I have many Thanks to offer you my good friend for the very Act of friendship which you have just now shewn me. Your disinterested Recommendation of me to Sr James Wright and the peculiar circumstances attending that recommendation has convinced me more fully than ever that you are one of my best Friends. There was something which I may even call affectionate in your behaviour to me on this occasion. As Recommend^s are very dangerous things, for the Judgment and sometimes even the Character of the Recommend^r are at Stake. Your Generosity too is the more valuable as it was unsolicit'd and unask'd for. These are not vain compliments I assure you. You and I know one another too well to deal in insignificant ceremonies.

I have wrote to S^r James Wright by this Night's Post and have told him that from a variety of important engagements I cannot do myself the Honour of undertaking the office. The Proposals, the Family, the Character of the person, in short everything on S^r James's part were perfectly agreeable ; it was

4. William Henry or Henry William Coulthurst, b. St. Michael's, Barbadoes. Educated at Skipton School, Yorkshire. Admitted pensioner of St. John's Coll., Camb., Dec. 3rd, 1770, and a Scholar on Ashton's Foundation, 5 November, 1771 ; B.A., 1775 ; M.A., 1778 ; B.D., 1785 ; and D.D., 1791. Fellow of Sidney Sussex College. Vicar of Halifax, 1790—1817. There is an engraving extant of his portrait by Westaby and his tomb by Westmacott. Although he entered St. John's as William Henry, he was ordained in 1776 as Henry William.

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nothing but a long Train of intimate Engagements on my part which brought on the Refusal—S^r James appears by his letters to be a man under whose Protection one could not but be happy. He is generous, affable, good-natured, and anxious to oblige, and seems to be one of those few characters now remaining amongst us who knows how to enjoy the rational and substantial Pleasures of a good Fortune, without sinking under the Temptations of it.

Your former letters on this occasion have been duly received. I am ashamed to say how long since, for it proves my Inattention (you will call it, I think, my Ingratitude) in not answering them sooner. Yet somehow or other, at one Time, I forgot your Direction, at another I demurred concerning the proposal and often was indolent, and, as is usual with me you know, had no Inclination for writing Letters. These, I assure you, have been the only Reason you have not heard from me before and this very letter would have been wrote sooner had I not been out of College when your last arrived.

Once more let me tell you I shall always esteem you for this kind office.

I often remember with pleasure the many cheerful Hours of Friendship, the many agreeable tête-à-tête which you and I had together at St. John's. You was the warmest and sincerest friend I ever had in College; and I wish with all my heart that I had a few more such as you. Pray write to me often. You will find me a better correspondent in the future.

I am, dear Collins,

Your most sincere friend

H. G. W. M. Coulthurst

St John's Coll: Camb:

July 28th 1777

P.S. Mr Puddycombe⁵ and I are still intimates. I have for your sake, as well as my own, supplied him with all the Arguments etc which he has wanted, and shall continue to do so. He is now in Dorsetshire.

In the course of the year 1779 Collins was at Tabernacle House, Moorfields. We know that it was in 1779 that he preached in Wesley's West Street Chapel "an excellent sermon" on the occasion of the inauguration of "The Naval and Military Bible Society," which is still in active operation, and was the

5. Probably John Newell Puddicombe, of Pembroke Coll., Cambridge. B. A., 1778, and M. A., 1781. He published poems and sermons of a somewhat flighty character. There are several anecdotes about him in Nichol's *Literary Anecdotes*, Vol. viii, 138.

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pioneer of all similar associations. In Sept. of this year he received the following letter from the Revd John Berridge:—

Revd John Berridge⁶ to Revd Mr.
Collins, Tabernacle House,
Moorfields, London.

Everton, 28th Sept^r 1779

Dear Sir

Your Letter came duly to Hand, but could not be answer'd, till I had wrote to Mr. Keen, and received a Letter from him. The cause, as follows. I am growing old, bulky and feeble, and durst not undertake another journey to London, unless the Trustees could be satisfied with preaching only twice in a week. Mr Keen informs me they shall be contented with this; and now I can acquaint you, that I heartily accept your offer to supply my Church; and some extra parochial cures too, if you please. You may ramble about, or stay at Home, as you please. I usually go to London in the first or second week of January; and, if no accident prevents arrive at Tabernacle House about 4 in the afternoon, where I hope to see you, where also you will sleep; and the chaise which brings you up will wait upon you next morning to take you down, and the Lord come with you. Mr Keen will give you timely notice of the Day, I set out for London, and Mr Venn will exchange with you on Sacrament Days. *In Xto vive, et valebis.* Grace and Peace be with you and your affectionate Brother,

John Berridge.

In November, 1779, Collins accompanied John and Charles Wesley and Dr. Coke to Bath, where John Wesley had solemnly opened a new chapel on the previous 11 March. It was on the occasion of this visit that a sentence of exclusion was pronounced on Mr. McNab for resisting John Wesley's authority. (See Tyerman, iii, pp. 310, 315.) In 1780 Collins proceeded to the degree of M.A. at Cambridge, and on 8 June of the same year, in his letter concerning the Gordon Riots, John Wesley writes to his brother Charles: "Mr. Collins is not under my direction; nor am I at all accountable for any steps he takes. He is not in connection with the Methodists. He only helps us now and then. I will suffer no disputing at the Conference." (Wesley's *Works*, xii, letter 97.)

6. John Berridge [1716-1793] M.A., Clare Hall, Cambridge, 1742. Later a fellow of his College. In 1755 he was presented by the College to the living of Everton, Bedfordshire, where he remained until his death. Three years later he made the acquaintance of Wesley and Whitefield and began preaching first in the neighbouring counties. (See *Dic. Nat Biog.*, iv, 393.) There are frequent references to Berridge in Wesley's *Journal* and other writings.

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There are other earlier references to Collins, *Works*, xii, letters 597, 598). A week later we have the first of the letters of John Wesley to Collins:—

Rev^d John Wesley to
 Rev^d Mr. Collins
 at Everton near
 Biggleswade.

London, June 14,
 1780

Dear Sir,

Your coming to town now and then if it were only for a day, I believe wou'd be much for the advantage of your health and I doubt not but that God wou'd make it a Blessing to the People many of whom are truly alive to God : and many others are just emerging into light, being deeply sensible of their wants. If you at any time let me know two or three days beforehand we will give notice to the Congregation.

But I am not half pleased, with your being so far from me when you are in Town, you may almost as well be at Everton as Flower-de-luce Street, you are almost as much out of my reach, but there is no manner of necessity for it. We have Rooms enough and to spare in my House ; and you may be as private as you please. You need see no human Creature but at meals. Besides I do not think it has a good appearance : For a Preacher to lodge anywhere but in my House, seems to show some dislike or prejudice. And I am not assured that there is not a little of this in the case. I doubt you have heard strange things of the Preachers, and altho' you could not cordially receive them, yet they made some impression upon you. But come and see, and that impression will vanish away. You will see as quiet a Family as any in England, and a Family every individual of which fears God and works righteousness.

A few years ago the People at and around Everton were deeply alive to God and as simple as little Children. It is well if you *find* them so now. Perhaps you may by the help of God *make* them so now. Mr. Hicks,⁷ in particular, *was* a burning and a shining light, full of Love and Zeal for GOD. I hope you will see him as often as you can, and (if need be) lift up the hands that hands that hang down (*sic*); and encourage him to set out anew in y^e great Work, and to spend and be spent therein.

7. Mr. Hicks : Rev. William Hicks, Vicar of Wrestlingworth, 4 miles from Everton. See Tyerman ii, 310-312 ; W. H. S. *Proc.*, iii, 144 ; Wesley's *Journal* after date 29 June, 1759, &c., Whittingham's *Life of Berridge*, 13-14, 50-51

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You have seen very little of the choicest part of London Society. I mean y^e poor. Go with me into their Cellars and Garrets and then you will taste their Spirits. I am,

Dear Sir

Your affectionate Friend and Brother

J. Wesley

A fortnight later Collins was in residence at St John's Cambridge, probably for the purpose of taking his M.A. degree, and while there the following letter from the Rev. John Newton reached him :—

Revd John Newton^s to Revd Mr
Brian Collins, St. John's
College, Cambridge.

Charles Square, Hoxton,
28 June 1780.

Dear Sir,

I was glad to hear from you, tho' the contents of your letter rather surprized me for a minute or two. I once earnestly wished to see you in full orders, and on the regular plan, it will please me still, if the Lord by his Spirit and Providence should so appoint, direct and accomplish. I pray Him to guide you and manifest himself to you at every step.

Methinks I could wish for an hour's conversation with you now, you love me I know and would open your mind to me with respect to the reasons which have led you to think of a change in your line of conduct. Your languid state of health may be a sufficient reason yet I think it is not the only one. I take it for granted that if you seek a closer connection with our Church, your judgment now leads you to prefer a more circumscribed and pastoral line of service, even if your health and strength (agreeable to my prayers for you) should hereafter be renewed. Otherwise I see not what could purpose it would answer. And if experience, observation, deliberation and prayer, have brought you to this resolution, I shall assuredly wish you success.

I said I was a little surprized *for a minute or two*. I soon recollected that the change of sentiment your letter seems to intimate, is no more, than in our former correspondence, I hinted once and again might possibly in time take place. It was then my

8. John Newton [1725—1807] well known as the friend of William Cowper. Began to have strong religious experiences in 1748 which were increased under the influence of Wesley and Whitefield. He was curate of Olney till 1779, and in 1780 became incumbent of St. Mary Woolnoth, London. (See *Dic. Nat. Biog.*, XL, 395.)

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wish and will now give me pleasure, supposing what I have already supposed.

If I could have restrain'd you from the itinerant circle I would have done it. But you judg'd for yourself as you had a right to do. And as I had reason to believe that your eye was single, and the Lord was in the main with you, and gave you success in it, I soon submitted. I hope He will be with you still, and preserve you in the same simplicity of spirit. But I have seen so much of the danger of reverting from one extreme, sometimes by insensible degrees to its opposite, that my friendship prompts me only to remind you of it. I hope the Lord will not permit you to be influenced by any motives, but such as He himself approves, and will fix you, if he favours your present design, in the golden mean. I have in my eye, the case of one or two whom I have formerly thought had more zeal than prudence, and proportionately too little real zeal for God and souls.

I know not that it will be in my power to serve you, and my good will and endeavour shall not be wanting. I have forgotten my uncle's name and therefore direct my letter for you at Mr Gardiner's and I beg you to mention our respects to him, Mrs Gardiner and y^r brother. Mrs Newton joins me in love. I remain,
y^r affect^e friend and serv^t

John Newton

When I wrote the last paragraph I forgot (with your letter lying by me) that I was to direct to Cambridge.

The question of Collins taking full orders has engrossed alike the attention of himself and his friends, John Wesley amongst them. Mr. Collins went to Margate, and there Wesley wrote him as follows :

The Revd John Wesley to the Revd
Mr. Collins at Mr. Stevens's,
High Street,
Margate, Kent.

Bristol August 1 1780

Dear Sir

It is not all surprising, that the Bishop, tho' a Good man, shou'd scruple to ordain a Field-preacher, and I apprehend his Brethren will neither endeavour, or desire to remove his scruple : Unless it shou'd please God to touch some of their hearts, and employ Them to soften the rest. Perhaps that humane man may aim at a middle way, namely, to ordain you *upon conditions*. And if such conditions were proposed as wou'd not intangle your Conscience, I shou'd have no objection. But in this case you

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will have need of all the Wisdom from above, that you may yield far enough, and not too far. I do not think that Presbyterian Ordination wou'd add anything to what you have already. And it seems we need not consider the matter further till we know the Bishop's Final Determination. This we know already, that He who rules over all, will order all things well. To his wise Disposal I commit you, and, I am,

Dear Sir,

Your most affectionate Brother,

J. Wesley.

Another clerical friend addressed him on the same all-important subject.

Revd Henry Venn⁹ to Revd Mr Collins
at Mr Stevens,
High Street,
Margate, Kent.

Dear Sir

Your's of the 27th I received and heartily wish I knew how to put you in a way of being ordained to full orders. I do suppose that nothing less than a promise of regularity in future would be sufficient. Perhaps that might if you can *ex animo* give it. The dissenting line is attended with so many difficulties, that I think it much more eligible to be in any living, and perhaps it is much better for a Pastor's own soul to be fixed than to be itinerant. And an active indefatigable application to fulfill our office, will certainly be attended with much success to both Preacher and Hearer. Mrs. V. desires her best respects. Remember me to my Brother Gambier and Family.

From yours affectionately,

H. Venn.

If it be your determination to be regular, I will try, and you should yourself let all your friends know.

Collins's Cambridge and other clerical friends bestirred themselves, and in the result the following certificate was forwarded to Dr. Beilby Porteus, the liberal-minded and sympathetic Bishop of Chester.

9. Rev. Henry Venn. Born at Barnes, 2 March, 1724/5. Educated at Mortlake, Fulham and Bristol. Entered St. John's Coll., Cambridge, but migrated to Jesus; B.A. 1745. Became Fellow of Queen's and M.A. 1749. Deacon 1747. Priest 1749. A famous cricketer. {Curate of Clapham 1754. Vicar of Huddersfield 1759-1770. Rector of Yelling 1770-1797. Buried in the old churchyard at Clapham, See *Admissions to the College of St. John the Evangelist* by R. F. Scott, M.A., part iii. 528. *Dic. Nat. Biog.* lviii. 207.

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To the Right Rev Father in God,
Beilby, Lord Bishop of Chester.¹⁰

Whereas the Reverend Brian Bury Collins, Master of Arts of St. John's College in the University of Cambridge, desiring to be admitted to the Holy Order of Priest, hath requested our Letters Testimonial of his Laudible Life and integrity of manners to be granted to him:

We whose names are under written do testify by these present that the aforesaid Reverend Brian Bury Collins for the three years last past, having been personally known unto us, hath led his life, piously, soberly, and Honestly, hath diligently applied himself to the study of good Learning and hath not (so far as we know) held or published any thing but what the Church of England approves of and maintains, and moreover we think him worthy to be admitted to the Holy order of Priest. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names. Dated the thirteenth of July in the year of our Lord one Thousand seven hundred and eighty.

Charles Brown, Curate of Ancaster.

Robert Bell, Rector of Wilksby.

Thomas Robinson,¹¹

Vicar of St. Mary's, Leicester.

The miniature portrait, on ivory, of John Wesley, which forms the frontispiece to our present issue, was given by him to a family in Bath, in whose possession it remained as an heirloom until shortly before it was purchased by Mr. Broadley. The artist is not known. It remains in its original red morocco case.

10. Beilby Porteus, D.D. [1731-1808] Bishop of Chester 1776-1787 and Bishop of London 1787-1808. The *Diaries and Letters of Fanny Burney* shew that Bishop Porteus was visiting Bath in 1780-81. He was "the first Bishop to show any favour to the Evangelicals" (Balleine's *Hist. of the Evangel. Party*, p. 87.)

11. See letter and note on p. 27.

“THE FIRST FOUR VOLUMES OF WESLEY’S SERMONS.”

The Manchester District Synod, in May, 1895, sent the following “Suggestion” to Conference: “In the judgment of this District Synod it is desirable that the Conference should determine authoritatively to what particular sermons reference is made in the phrase, ‘Mr. Wesley’s Notes on the New Testament, and the first four volumes of Sermons,’ which describes our doctrinal standards, and the Synod respectfully asks the Conference to do so.” This “Suggestion” owed its origin to the doubts which had arisen in the minds of some persons concerning the “Standard Sermons,” and to the conviction of competent experts that the time had come when the question should be settled. The Conference referred the consideration of the question to the ministerial members of the General Committee of the Theological Institution, who, in their turn, referred it to a Sub-Committee consisting of those members of the General Committee who were members of the General Discipline Committee, requesting them to take into their counsel the other members of the General Discipline Committee. The Sub-Committee met, and, after spending a considerable time in discussion, came to the conclusion that the evidence produced was not sufficient to support the contention of Rev. Richard Green that the “reference” in the phrase “the first four volumes of Sermons” was “to certain forty-three Sermons contained in four volumes published by Mr. Wesley in the years 1746, 1748, 1750 and 1760, and not to fifty-three Sermons contained in the first four volumes of his collected *Works* published in 1771.” The decision of the Committee, which amounted to a verdict of “not proven,” was a disappointment to Mr. Green and to those who were convinced by the arguments he advanced.

The most valuable result of the investigation of the Committee was Mr. Green’s *précis* of his case. In all respects it is admirable. In it the facts are skilfully marshalled, and the conclusion is forcibly driven home. We have used the document in our own examination of the problem, and have been impressed by its impartiality and the accuracy of its statements. We have thought, however, that the time has come for a reconsideration of

the interesting question raised by Mr. Green, and that our own investigation should be guided by evidence gathered from an examination of original documents and an independent study of the case.

Why did John Wesley prepare and publish his four volumes of sermons? An inspection of the trust deed of one of his Preaching Houses erected before the first volume of his sermons was issued suggests the answer. In Stamp's *Orphan House of Wesley*, in Appendix A, there is a verbatim copy of the first trust deed of that building. It is dated 5th March, 1745. On the back of the deed someone has written "the year 1746 began 25th March." So the deed belongs to the year 1746. In it there is a provision which is easily detected as the precursor of the well-known "doctrinal standard" clause. The deed gives to John and Charles Wesley power to appoint preachers to the Orphan House; but, after the death of the survivor, that power is transferred to the trustees for the time being. They have the right to appoint one or more fit person or persons "to preach and expound God's holy word in the said House" on the condition that the preaching and expounding of the appointed persons must be "in the same manner, as near as may be, as God's holy word is now preached and expounded there," (p. 269). It does not need a mind sharpened to legal subtlety to detect the ineffectiveness of this clause. It does not provide any fixed doctrinal standard by which the preaching can be tested; and the phrase "as near as may be" reduces it to absurdity. It was a makeshift arrangement which had to do duty until a better one could be devised.

The unsatisfactory clause in the Orphan House deed probably weighed on John Wesley's mind. We know that he felt it necessary to shew what was the "manner," or, at any rate, the "matter" of the preaching of himself and his brother, so that, when they died, there might be no doubt on these questions.

Henry Moore, his intimate friend, tells us that Wesley saw "the necessity of composing a form of sound words, comprising the essential truths of the Gospel, from which all men might know the doctrines which he taught, and which might remain with his associates in the work, as a concise but clear and full 'body of divinity,' in keeping which they could not greatly err; while the people who were raised up by their labours might, if they should continue one body, hear the same truths, and mind the same things." (*Life of Wesley*, ii, 403). After weighing the matter Wesley made a beginning. He retired to the house of his friend Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell, at Lewisham, and there, at several visits

he composed his first volume of *Sermons on Several Occasions*, under the circumstances which are described with such beauty of language in the Preface which still holds a secure place among Methodist classics.

The first volume of the Sermons was published in November, 1746, about eight months after the Newcastle deed was signed. From its title-page we see that it was Wesley's intention to issue his Sermons in three volumes. After the publication of the first, Wesley paused. He did not issue his second volume until 1748. Then, on 30th October, 1749, he retired to Kingswood in order that he might write part of the volume he had promised to publish that winter. On 11th December, 1749, he secluded himself in Newington, and on Saturday, 16th December, he finished the third volume. (*Standard Journal* iii., 445, 449.) Each of the three volumes contained twelve discourses.

Wesley had now accomplished his original purpose. He had published thirty-six sermons shewing the "matter" of his teaching. But he was not altogether satisfied; so, in 1759, we see him busy once more. Under the date Monday, October 1st, 1759, he writes "All my leisure time during my stay at Bristol I employed in finishing the fourth volume of *Discourses*; probably the last which I shall publish." (*Standard Journal*, iv., 355). This volume is not wholly made up of sermons. With seven sermons are associated several tracts which seem to have been included in order to bring the book up to the size of its predecessors. Having said all that he had to say in the final seven sermons, Wesley put in the tracts. He is not the author of all of them, and they vary considerably in merit. Dr. Osborn, in his *Outlines of Wesleyan Bibliography*, p. 36, says, "Although so small a portion of this volume consisted of Sermons, it was numbered and sold as a fourth volume of Wesley's Sermons." The book is entitled *Sermons on Several Occasions*, like the volumes that preceded it, and Wesley, in the extract from his *Journals* which we have quoted, calls it "The Fourth Volume of Discourses." First editions of the four volumes are in the Didsbury College Library, and have been consulted.

Wesley had now gathered together his four volumes of sermons. Henry Moore says of them:— "His first four volumes contain the substance of what he usually declared in the pulpit. He designed by them to give a view of what St. Paul calls 'the analogy of faith; viz., the strong connection, and harmony between those grand fundamental doctrines, Original Sin, Justification by Faith in the Divine Atonement of the Son of God, the New Birth,

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Inward and Outward Holiness. They are written with great energy and, as much as possible, in the very words of the inspired writers." (*Life of Wesley*, ii., 405). Wesley considered that his sermon-publishing, at least in book form, was done: and so he could turn his attention to the glaringly defective clause in some of the trust deeds of his preaching houses. Calling to his aid three eminent lawyers, a model deed was prepared. In this deed it was provided that, after the death of John and Charles Wesley and William Grimshaw, the trustees should permit such persons as were appointed by the "Yearly Conference of the people called Methodists" to have and enjoy the premises on the condition "that the said persons preach no other doctrine than is contained in Mr. Wesley's Notes upon the New Testament, and four volumes of sermons." (*Minutes of Conference*, vol. i., pp. 608, 610-1862, 8vo. ed.) Dr. Osborn, whose knowledge of certain departments of Methodist History and Literature was unparalleled, says that the words of the deed must have referred to the volumes published in 1746, 1748, 1750 and 1760 (*Wesleyan Bibliography*, p. 36.). The "Model Deed" was inserted in the *Large Minutes*, published in 1763, and, at that time, no other volumes of sermons by Wesley were in existence. The correctness of Dr. Osborn's assertion is incontestable. It follows, therefore, that the number of *Standard Sermons* in 1763 was not fifty-three.

In 1770 the "form" of the Model Deed was somewhat altered, but the clause concerning the "Notes" and the "Sermons" was not touched. As a matter of fact the clause remained inviolate in all subsequent "forms" of the Model Deed published in the *Minutes* during Wesley's lifetime.

When Wesley finished the fourth volume of his sermons in 1760, he thought that it would be "probably the last he would publish." But, in 1771, he began to issue his prose *Works* in a collected form, and his sermons could not be omitted from such a publication. These *Works* appeared at intervals until 1774, the collection extending, at last, to thirty-two volumes. In his "Preface" to the first volume he says that it had been his desire "for several years" to print in one collection all that he had before published in separate tracts. These he wished to see printed together, "but on a better paper, and with a little larger print than before." He desired also to methodise his publications, placing those together which were on similar subjects, and in such order that one might illustrate another. This he considered would be of service to the serious reader, who would then "readily observe that there is scarce any subject of importance, either in

practical or controversial divinity, which is not treated more or less, either professedly or occasionally." (*The Works of the Rev. John Wesley*, vol. i., Preface to the Reader, pp. v, vi, 1771 ed.) The first place in the *Works* is taken by the Sermons. They, together with certain tracts, occupy the first four volumes. The original preface to the 1746 volume of the Sermons is printed without any attempt to bring its statements up to the date of republication. Wesley still says "The following Sermons contain the substance of what I have been preaching for between eight and nine years last past. During that time I have frequently spoken in public on every subject in the ensuing collection." That language was in harmony with fact when it appeared in the Preface to the four volumes of Sermons that were standards of teaching in the Methodist Preaching Houses, but, as employed in 1771, it is open to criticism.

In looking over the first four volumes of the *Works* we see what Wesley means when he informs the Reader "that he desired to print in one collection all that he had before published in separate tracts, and to arrange these tracts under proper heads, placing those together which were on similar subjects." Indulging his genius for methodising he begins with the Sermons. He alters the order in which they appear in the volumes published from 1746 to 1760. Not only so, he introduces ten other sermons. As we have reached the crux of the controversy raised by Mr. Green, a list of these additional Sermons, with their dates, will be serviceable.

1. The Witness of the Spirit, Discourse II. (1767).
2. Sin in Believers. (1763).
3. Repentance of Believers. (1767).
4. The Great Assize. (1758).
5. The Lord our Righteousness. (1765).
6. Wandering Thoughts. This Sermon appeared in an undated second edition of the volume of "Sermons on Several Occasions" published in 1750. It is not included in the first edition.
7. The Scripture way of Salvation. (1765).
8. The Good Steward. (1768).
9. The Reformation of Manners. (1763).
10. On the death of Mr. Whitefield. (1770).

The action of Wesley in putting the additional Sermons into his *Works* has had a remarkable result. It has led to the supposition that he intended thereby to supplant "The four volumes of Sermons" from their unique position, and to substitute for them

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four volumes differing in the number of sermons they contained, as a Standard of Methodist teaching. This was the theory that Mr. Green attacked, and which we must now examine.

If Wesley had desired to improve, by extending, the standard he had set up we should have supposed that such improvement and extension would have been effected in harmony with his original design. That design was simple. He intended that "the four volumes should enable all men to know the doctrines which he taught," and, when he had finished the fourth volume in 1760 he was satisfied that he had accomplished his object. In his well-known Preface he says, "I am not conscious that there is any one point of doctrine, on which I am accustomed to speak in public, which is not here, incidentally, if not professedly, laid before every Christian reader. Every serious man, who peruses these, will, therefore, see in the clearest manner, what those doctrines are which I embrace and teach as the essentials of true religion." (*Sermons on Several Occasions*, vol. i., Preface iii.-iv., 1746 ed.) It is impossible to glance over the added sermons in the *Works* without doubting whether they increase the sum of "the essentials of religion." What does Wesley say of one of them—"The Lord our Righteousness?" In his *Journal*, under date 24th November, 1765, he writes, "I preached on those words in the lesson for the day 'The Lord our Righteousness.' I said not one thing which I have not said, at least fifty times within this twelve-month. Yet it appeared to many entirely new, who much importuned me to print my sermon, supposing that it would stop the mouths of all gainsayers. Alas for their simplicity! In spite of all I can print, say, or do, will not those who seek occasion find occasion?" Wesley was well aware that in this discourse he had only repeated what he had already printed in "The four volumes of Sermons." By its oral utterance he added nothing new to "the body of Divinity," he had composed. The appearance of this sermon in the *Works* suggests that the added sermons were included in order to preserve discourses that had produced special impressions on the public mind, and, for that reason, were worthy of preservation. This explains why the discourse "On the death of Mr. Whitefield," was re-printed. The ingenuity of mind which can discover in that sermon an additional test of Methodist orthodoxy is remarkable.

The principal point to be remembered in this discussion is that "The four volumes of Sermons," published in 1746, 1748, 1750 and 1760, had acquired a permanent legal value by reason of the clause in the trust deeds executed

between 1763 and 1771. That clause, as we have seen, had exclusive reference to the volumes printed in the years 1746 to 1760. The standard was fixed. It could not be varied by Wesley at his sole will and pleasure. He was bound by the terms of the trust deed, and so were the trustees. The latter were obliged to receive men appointed by Wesley, provided they preached "no other doctrine than that which was contained in 'The Notes on the New Testament' and in 'The Four volumes of Sermons.'" That was the compact between Wesley and the trustees, and its terms could not be varied, even by mutual consent, without an alteration effected by legal process. If Wesley altered his standard in 1771, he would have created a great difficulty in the case of the Preaching Houses which had been settled on the trusts of his Model Deeds of 1763 and 1770.

Let us look at this matter. In Myles's *Chronological History of Methodism*, we find a list of the Methodist Chapels that were in existence in 1812. The dates when they were built are given (pp. 427-445, 4th ed.) Confining our attention to England, we note that, in 1771, there were one hundred and twenty-six Preaching Houses in this country, of which ninety-five had been erected from 1760 to the end of 1771. There were two great epochs of chapel-building during this period. In 1766, nineteen were erected; and, in 1770, thirty were built. We have seen that the first form of the Chapel Model Deed was introduced into the "Large Minutes" in 1763, the second appears in 1770. The conclusion is inevitable. The overwhelming majority of the Chapels, in 1771, when the *Works* were published, were settled on deeds in which "The four volumes of Sermons" are mentioned; that is, the volumes published from 1746 to 1760. In the very year when the outburst of chapel building fervour took place (1770) Wesley republished his "Model Deed," and maintained the standard he had set up in 1763. Is it credible that at this precise period he suddenly determined to compose another standard? If so, did he give any warning of the change?

In 1772, Wesley published in his *Works* the fourth edition of the *Large Minutes*, and it contained the third form of the Chapel Model Deed. If we examine the clause concerning the standards we find that it is precisely as it appears in the deeds of 1763 and 1770. There is no warning, even in a friendly footnote, that the reference to the Sermons is to those contained in the *Works*, and not in the well-known four volumes. The chapels built after 1771 are to be settled, in this particular at least, on the same trusts as

those which were already in existence. It is interesting to notice that the clause relating to the standards in the "form" of deed contained in the *Works* is printed in italics, as if to attract special attention. Deliberately, Wesley maintains the supremacy of "the four volumes of Sermons," published from 1746 to 1760.

It is fortunate that the legal standard was not changed in the deed of 1772. In that year eight chapels were built in counties as wide apart as Westmoreland and Devon. What confusion would have arisen if two standards had existed! In most parts of the country a Methodist preacher might have had "the use and enjoyment" of the chapels because his teaching harmonised with that which was contained in the "Four Volumes of Sermons"; but if his itinerant wanderings led him to Appleby or Sidmouth, where chapels had just been built, and he preached another doctrine than that which is contained in the discourse "on the death of Mr. Whitefield," he would have run the risk of exclusion from the chapels!

With all the evidence before us we have no hesitation in saying that we find no reason to doubt the correctness of Mr. Green's judgment when he declined to accept the additional discourses contained in the *Works* as extensions of the Methodist standard. But we must go a little further than Mr. Green did in order that we may see the bearing of the question on the standards which govern us in the present day.

After Wesley completed his *Works* he found better opportunity of publishing sermons to which he desired to give permanent form. In 1778, he issued the first number of the *Arminian Magazine*. In this periodical he published an original sermon every two months. (Moore's *Life of Wesley*, vol. ii., p. 405). As the years passed these discourses increased in number and he determined to make a selection from them, and bring them into association with "The Four Volumes of Sermons." He carried out his intention, and in 1787-1788 he issued "Sermons on several occasions," the last edition of his sermons. That edition comprised eight volumes. Let us closely examine them. A pathetic interest attaches to them because Wesley refers to them in his will. He says, "I give to each of those travelling preachers who shall remain in the connexion six months after my decease, as a little token of my love, 'the eight volumes of sermons.'" (Whitehead's *Life of Wesley*, vol. ii., p. 461). We can imagine how these books would be cherished by those who received them. What do we find in the final edition of sermons published by Wesley? The last four volumes contain what have

been called his "Magazine Sermons," and they have no legal significance; but what of the first four? If Mr. Green had been wrong in his contention we should have found that the fifty-three discourses contained in the *Works* would have appeared in them intact. But such is not the case. The sermons added in 1771, with one exception, are not to be found. The old order of succession is restored to that which obtained in the original four volumes. From beginning to end the first four volumes of 1787 are a reproduction of those issued in 1746, 1748, 1750, 1760. The Rev. T. E. Brigden has pointed out to us an interesting fact. In the *Works* there are certain omissions of sentences in the sermon on "Salvation by Faith." It differs from the sermon as it appeared in the first edition of 1746. In 1787 we find that these omitted words are restored, a fact which shews that John Wesley was determined to maintain the integrity of the standard he had set up at the first in "the four volumes of sermons."

We have spoken of the solitary survivor of the sermons added in 1771. It is on "Wandering Thoughts," and we have shewn that it was included in an undated second edition of the 1750 volume. What may be called a third edition was published in Dublin in the year last mentioned; so that we may conclude that the sermon had gained a place in "the four volumes" before they were "legalised" by being specified in the deed of 1763. One other point may be mentioned. It is a significant fact that the "tracts" that were included in the 1760 volume are also restored to their original condition in the fourth volume published in 1787, the changes made in the *Works* being discarded. The evidence all points to the fact that John Wesley never lost sight of the unique position occupied by his original "four volumes of sermons."

After the publication of the 1787 edition a change was made in the term "the four volumes of sermons." In speech, and then in trust deeds the phrase assumed the form of "the first four volumes of sermons published by the late Rev. John Wesley." (Myles's *Chronological History*, p. 416).

Dr. Osborn, speaking of "the four volumes of sermons," says, "When other sermons, which had been published in the Arminian Magazine, were collected into another four volumes, the phrase used in the Trust Deeds was necessarily altered to the 'first four volumes.'" (*Wesleyan Bibliography*, p. 36). In interpreting the phrase the choice lies between first in a series, and first in point of time of publication. We prefer the latter explanation.

In the present Chapel Model Deed the clause of the older deeds is altered. The provision is "that no person or persons

whomsoever shall at any time hereafter, be permitted to Preach or Expound God's Holy Word, or to perform any of the usual acts of Religious Worship in the said Chapel who shall maintain, promulgate, or teach any Doctrine or Practice, contrary to what is contained in certain Notes on the New Testament, commonly reported to be the Notes of the said John Wesley, and in the First Four volumes of Sermons, commonly reported to be written and published by him." (*Summary of Methodist Law*, p. 560, Third edition.) It is fortunate that the word "published" was introduced into the clause. It compels us to rule out all editions of the sermons that were not published by Wesley. The last edition of the four volumes was published by him in 1787. It contains forty-four discourses, and we submit that they are the standard of teaching referred to in our trust deeds.

It has caused us considerable research to discover the 1787 edition of *Sermons on several occasions: in Four Volumes*. They are in the possession of Rev. J. Alfred Sharp, through whose courtesy we have been able to examine them closely. It is difficult to over-estimate their value.

We cannot close our review without expressing our regret that Mr. Green's contention did not meet with a happier fate. The difficulty of the question is considerable, and the evidence is technical, and makes its greatest appeal to experts. If our discussion leads to a reconsideration of the case, we shall feel a sense of satisfaction in having done some sort of justice to the opinions of one to whom the Wesley Historical Society is indebted for priceless work.

JOHN S. SIMON.

WESLEY'S JOURNEYS IN MID- WALES.

1, WEDNESDAY, 25 July, 1764:—Leaving Shrewsbury at 4 a.m. Mr. Wesley would arrive at Llanidloes about noon, and preach under the old Market-Place at two. The old building in the centre of the town is still standing in all its ancient simplicity, and the inhabitants point out with pride the very stone upon which the preacher is said to have stood.

The journey from Llanidloes to Ffair Rhos (Roes Fair) at

that time would be one of the most difficult, perplexing and dangerous. The road via Belan, over Steddfa and through Ponterwyd to Aberystwyth was not made. The population was sparse, and to find their way was not an easy task for the travellers.

When Wesley left Llanidloes he would follow the Severn as far as Glan Hafren, leave Belan on the left, pass through and beyond Llangurig, then swerve to the left and cross the river Wye, then climb the high rugged mountain in a south westerly direction and descend into Cwm-Ystwyth on the other side, where he would find the main road from Aberystwyth and North Cardiganshire to Rhaiadr, Breconshire and South Wales. After travelling westerly some distance on this road he would come to a small hamlet called Penffynon (Fountainhead). Wesley was for lodging the night there ; but " Mr. B.—being quite unwilling," they decided to go on. They had probably travelled already about sixty miles and crossed two high mountains.

About seven they mounted again travelling westerly till they came to Mynyddbach. They should have turned south, but they had not noticed the lane and had gone a short distance out of their way. They were directed to turn south and find their way to Ponrhydygroes (Crossford Bridge), the only bridge over the river Ystwyth in that neighbourhood. The population was scanty, shy with strangers and very Welshy. They would find it difficult to understand an Englishman's pronunciation of these place-names, and more difficult still to answer any questions. Moreover, it would not be easy to find in any part of the country a journey of nine or ten miles more perplexing and tiring than that from Mynyddbach to Ffair Rhos. They soon missed their way, came to the edge of a bog and were in need of another guide. They were directed to a little house near the bridge, where they met an honest man. Probably this would be the innkeeper and it is likely that he could speak English. This honest man directed them to Yspytty-Ystwyth, the next village, about a mile up in a curvature on the slope of the mountain. The outlook is wildly grand. The Ystwyth below runs through a deep majestic gorge, mid projecting rocks and massive boulders, and all around there are rugged, craggy hills, high mountains, bogs and precipices. And the winding roads are perplexing and dangerous. Once more they have taken the wrong turn and are obliged to return to the little Inn by the bridge and seek for a guide. " It was vain to think of rest there, it being full of drunken, roaring miners ; besides that there was but one bed in the house, and neither grass, nor hay, nor corn to be had."

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One of these drunken miners was hired to walk to Ffair Rhos. The fall of the miner into a purling stream brought him tolerably to his senses, and between eleven and twelve Mr. Wesley reached the Inn at Ffair Rhos.

The treatment he received at the Inn here was in keeping with the reputation of the place. Rhos, which means 'moor,' or 'coarse highland,' was a place where periodical fairs were held, which were attended by the drinking and fighting men from many parts of the County. It is probable that one of these fairs had just been held before the arrival of Mr. Wesley.

2. MONDAY, 1 August, 1768 :—Mr. Wesley probably undertook the same journey ; though certainly, it may be assumed, by a more direct route, and although he makes no reference to anything special on this occasion it is fairly certain that he preached on the way, either at Newtown or Llanidloes, and at the Abbey, Strata Florida, Cardiganshire, with Nathaniel Williams.

3. WEDNESDAY, 10 August, 1769 :—He again took the same journey. He left Shrewsbury on the 9th, failed to have an opportunity to preach at Welshpool, then went on to Newtown, where he was disturbed by a drunken man. His name was Evans, and he was the landlord of the New Inn. Mr. Wesley retired to the Lower Bryn farmhouse where he finished the service. Mr. Hardcox, the farmer, was in sympathy with Mr. Wesley, and Mrs. Corbett, his housekeeper on this occasion, became the first member of the Methodist Society in that town.

The same evening he preached at Tyddyn Hall, the home of the Bowns. One member of this family Wesley had probably known at Oxford. On a pane of glass in this house he wrote the words, "In the name of Jesus, peace be to this house." Some years ago this pane of glass was in the possession of Mr. David Hamer, Corner House, Llanidloes. Mr. Wesley spent the night at Tyddyn.

He preached at Llanidloes next morning, and in the evening at the Abbey, Strata Florida, Cardiganshire. I have failed to find out much about Nathaniel Williams, but I believe he was the minister of the Church at Pontrhydfendiged, near the Abbey, and about a mile distant from Ffair Rhos.

DAVID YOUNG.

Nathaniel Williams. The following is from the *Alumni Oxonienses*: "Williams, Nathaniel, son of John, of Conway, co. Carnarvon, St. Mary Hall, matriculated 13 May, 1728, aged 20."

There are interesting accounts of adventures in this district a few years

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after, in H. Penruddocke Wyndham's *Tour through Monmouthshire and Wales*, 1774; and in Borrow's *Wild Wales*, 1850, chaps. 89-90. Cary's *Survey*, 1794, and Dodsley's Map of 1764, give a good idea of the broken character of the road, the branching valleys, and perplexing forked paths which connected the villages. Borrow gives an account of "The Abbey" mentioned by Wesley. T.E.B.

PERSONALIA.

The *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for May contains an admirable portrait of our Treasurer, Mr. George Stampe, with an excellent article by Rev. Nehemiah Curnock descriptive of the unique collection of Wesley and other Methodist documents and antiquities which Mr. Stampe possesses. The Wesley Historical Society appreciates the honour thus done to it in the person of its Treasurer. The Methodist Publishing House has recently issued an interesting and valuable work by our esteemed contributor, Rev. Henry Bett. It is entitled "*The Hymns of Methodism in their Literary Relations.*" Some of the contents are reprinted from our *Proceedings*.

CORRIGENDA ET ADDENDA.

Itinerary of Wesley's Journeys. Preface p. xix.; Taddington 3. 7. 73, should be 3. 7. 53. For details of 18, 19 July, 1784, see *Proc.* viii., p. 127. To 9 June, 1788, add Barnard Castle, see *Proc.* viii., 128.

Proc. vii, Index to Obituaries, p. 35: Lions, Catherine, 84.137, should be 86.137.

Proc. viii. p. 27, additional letters of Rev. Jacob Chapman to Wesley, see *Arminian Mag.* 1786, pp. 113, 387.

Proc. viii., pp. 155-156; for further particulars concerning Lampe, see Jackson's *Life of Charles Wesley*, i. 432: *Standard Journal* iii. 226 (note): *W. M. Mag.* 1897, p. 27.

Proc. viii. *Index: Delamotte, Life of Mrs.*, should be *Delaney, Life of Mrs.* Saunderson, Joseph; should be Saunderson, Hugh: concerning whom see *Journal* 1 June, 1774, 21 May, 1780, 15 Aug., 1782, Wesley letters, Nos. 95 and 441, and Tyerman iii., pp. 42-44.