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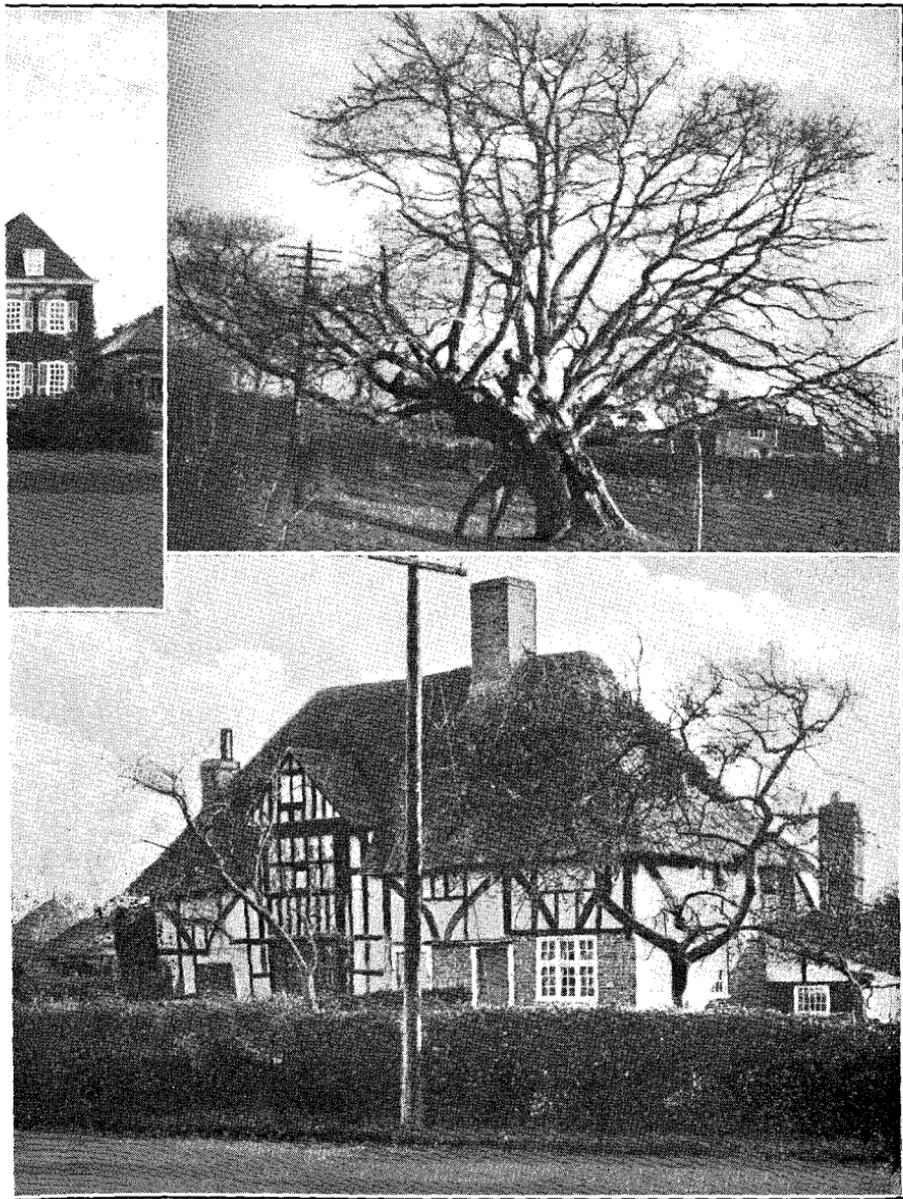
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THE PURITANS' OAK, ROLVENDEN.  
WESLEY HOUSE, ROLVENDEN (THE LAYNE FARM HOUSE)



GREAT MAYTHAM, ROLVENDEN.  
ROLVENDEN CHURCH.

## JOHN WESLEY AND THE MAGISTRATE AT ROLVENDEN, KENT.

### THE CONVENTICLE ACT

In Wesley's *Journal* we have the following entry relating to the above :

" Dec. 5. 1765—I rode back to Faversham. Here I was quickly informed that the mob and the magistrates had agreed to drive Methodism, so called, out of the town. After preaching I told them what we had been constrained to do by the Magistrate at Rolvenden ; who perhaps would have been richer by some hundred pounds had he never meddled with the Methodists ; concluding, ' Since we have both God and the law on our side, if we can have peace by fair means, we had much rather ; we should be exceedingly glad ; but if not, we *will* have peace.' "

Wesley and his helpers from the very commencement of their itinerancy met with serious opposition and bodily injury from infuriated mobs. In many cases on applying to the local magistrates for protection, not only was their request insolently refused, but encouragement was given to the mobs to continue their opposition. This necessitated appeals to higher Courts of Justice for redress. Wesley therefore, at the Conference of 1749, advocated the raising of a Special Fund to meet the expenses connected therewith. In reviewing the position he said :

" Is there no way to quell riotous mobs, even when magistrates will not do their duty ? There is one, and only one way : move the King's Bench for an information against them. This is a way which has never failed us yet. No, not in a single instance. The only objection is the expense : a suit in the King's Bench usually costs fifty or sixty pounds. But if we all join hand and heart together, cannot we make this easy too ? Cannot we raise a common stock, which shall suffice for this ? By the blessing of God we can. And who would not gladly contribute towards it. ? " <sup>1</sup>

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1. In the Index to the *Standard Journals* Canterbury, Wrangle, Stalbridge and Liverpool are mentioned in connection with appeals to the King's Bench.

Very racy is Wesley's record for 20th April 1752. I rode by Hainton to Coningsby. The next day I preached at Wrangle, where we expected some disturbance but found none. The light punishment

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

There is abundant evidence that the appeal met with a generous response, for Wesley on several occasions provided considerable sums of money in fighting for the rights of freedom of worship for his preachers. The affair at Rolvenden is a case in point, and we shall see later on, the tremendous importance attached by Wesley to the result of those proceedings.

Rolvenden—the scene of the drama—is situated on the top of a hill about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Tenterden, and is considered to be one of the prettiest villiages in the Weald of Kent. It consists of one long wide street of old fashioned houses, and at the extreme east-end, standing, as if on guard, is the ancient parish church,—its lofty tower, a prominent land mark for many miles round.

In spite of its isolated position, Rolvenden in the XVIIth Century was a stronghold of Protestantism. During the reign of Queen Mary the then Vicar, the Rev. John Franketh, for refusing to subscribe to the doctrine of transubstantiation was burned at the stake with three others on July 12, 1555, at Canterbury. His near neighbour, Richard Thornden, Vicar of Tenterden, treacherously gave information against him. During this period Sir John Baker—who earned the unenviable sobriquet of Bloody Baker—lived at Halden Place, a mansion in the parish. He was a savage persecutor of the Protestants, several of whom, by his orders, were flogged to death in his own house.

Another reminder of the religious independence of the Rolvenden folk, is the venerable oak tree—now fast decaying—which still stands near the parish boundary, under whose shade in Puritan times, the people frequently gathered for worship.

It was in this congenial soil that the Methodist seed was sown by John Wesley himself ; it speedily took root and produced a rich and abundant harvest. He spent a portion of two days at

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inflicted on the late rioters, (though their expense was not great, as they submitted before the trial) has secured peace ever since. Such a mercy it is to execute the penalty of the law on those who will not regard its precepts ! So many inconveniences to the innocent does it prevent, and so much sin in the guilty.

It is worth while in connection with this subject to recall a letter which I published in my "*Early Methodism in and around Chester*"

Writing in 1756 Wesley said :

If our brethren at Chester purpose ever to prosecute, they cannot have a fairer Opportunity : provided they have a sufficient number of Witnesses whose Depositions will come home to the point ; Particularly with regard to those words, You shall have no Justice from me. Those Depositions might be drawn up in the country, and sent up to Mr. P'Anson in New Palace Yard, Westminster. The sooner the better : for Term will begin shortly. Delay does much hurt in cases of this kind.

F.F.B.

## PROCEEDINGS.

Rolvenden during his first visit to South East Sussex, making the following record in his *Journal* :

“October 11. 1758. I rode to Rolvenden, about 10 miles from Rye, and preached at five to a large, serious congregation. A few drunkards stood in the road at some distance, and took some pains to divert their attention ; but it was labour lost. October 12.—It was a rainy morning, so that the house contained the congregation. Many of them were in tears, being deeply convinced that they were as yet ‘ without God in the world.’”

The actual spot was at Rolvenden Layne, a small hamlet about a mile beyond the church. The services were held in the ‘Layne’ farm house which is still standing and is known as “Wesley House.” It is a fine old half-timbered building with massive oak beams and thatched roof. Wesley preached in the large middle room of the second story, and from the projecting window spoke to the crowds gathered beneath. We have every reason to believe that the owner and occupier of the house at this time was Thomas Osborne, and the services inaugurated by Wesley continued to be held there for many years.

It was in connection with one of these services that Wesley came into conflict with the Rolvenden magistrate. On the evening of March 13, 1760, sixteen Methodists (including preacher and the family) met together in the house for religious worship, regarding which, as one of them said, “they think it more profitable after the labour of the day, than to be at an ale house, or spending their time in idle amusements.” We are recording the names and description of the worshippers who were present on that occasion, believing they are worthy to be ever held in grateful remembrance : Thomas and Jane Osborne—Philip Norris, yeoman—Thomas Reeve the elder, shoemaker—Thomas Reeve the younger, shoemaker—Henry Bigg, thatcher—Joseph Bigg—John Bigg, labourer—George Pike, servant—Betty Vine, spinster—Mary and Elizabeth Bigg, spinisters—Hannah Young, spinster—Ambrose and Hannah Buckland. With the exception of the Bucklands, who came from Benenden, they all belonged to Rolvenden. The service was conducted by John Morley, one of Wesley’s travelling preachers, then stationed in the Sussex Circuit.

A neighbouring farmer, a yeoman, named Thomas Witherden (of Devenden) gave information respecting the meeting to Mr. Robert Monypenny, a magistrate residing in the parish at Maytham Hall. He thought fit to put into execution an old law made in the reign of Charles II to prevent and suppress

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conventicles, and accordingly summonses were issued against "the vagrant itinerant Methodist preacher," and his hearers to appear before him two days afterwards on March 15. The hearing probably took place in the Justice Room at Maytham Hall.

The original mansion, with chapel attached, was owned in the XIII century by Arabel de Maytham. No trace of either building now remains. The property was at one time in the possession of Sir Thomas Wyatt, the Kentish rebel. It passed into the hands of the Monypenny family in 1714, and James Monypenny—(father of Robert), in 1721 built a house on the same site in the Georgian style. It was partially destroyed by fire in 1893, when the present owner, Mr. H. J. Tennant, M.P., practically re-built the mansion as it appears to-day.

Through the courtesy of the Clerk of the Peace for Kent we have been permitted to examine the original records containing the declaration of Mr. Monypenny as to the proceedings before him. We find that the defendants were charged under the Conventicle Act of 1670—

"that they, being persons above the age of 16, and there being more than 5 people in the house (besides those of the household of the said Thomas Osborne) were then present assembled together, under pretence of the exercise of religion in other manner than according to the Liturgy and practice of the Church of England, against the form of the Statute in such case made and provided."

Two witnesses appeared for the prosecution namely, Thomas Apps, Yeoman of Rolvenden and his servant Thomas Buss. In reply to the charge John Morley said—

"that he was not a Protestant Dissenter, but a member of the Church of England, and that he belonged to the Methodist Society in London—members of the Church of England in connection with the Rev. Mr. Wesley. That his intent and meaning was to instruct his brethren in a godly pious manner according to Scripture. That he exhorted them to go to Church and not to keep from thence, and he prays for His Majesty King George and would take the oath if necessary. He further said, he followed no occupation or business, other than a travelling preacher, and that he had no settled habitation nor any goods or chattels upon which distress could be made."

All the defendants were convicted. John Morley was fined £20. Thomas Osborne, the master of the house £20, and the remaining 14 hearers 5/- each. The total penalties amounting to

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£43 10s., were the maximum amount in each case. Under the provisions of the Conventicle Act, "in case the preacher could not be found, or being found was unable to pay" the fine was to be levied on others who were present at the meeting—as also were the fines on those who were adjudged too poor to pay. Thus the liability in some cases mounted up to a considerable amount.

As John Morley was unable to pay, nor had any goods or chattels that could be distrained on, his £20 fine was levied on Philip Norris and Thomas Reeve, junior, in £10 each.

The three defendants Osborne, Morris, and Reeve having refused to pay the fines, a distress was levied on their goods and chattels on March 27 and the amount recovered.

As the fines exceeded the sum of 10/- each the defendants had, under the Act, the right to Appeal to the Quarter Sessions. Accordingly notices of Appeal against the convictions were lodged with the magistrate on April 3.

The Quarter Sessions were held at Maidstone on April 15. The Court was presided over by Mr. Charles Whitworth, M.P. for Minehead, supported by a full bench of magistrates. The appellants attended, and through their Counsel applied for an adjournment until the next Sessions, in order to have time to prepare their case. On this being refused, their counsel protested and declined to put forward any defence. Ultimately the Justices unanimously concurred with the jury in confirming the convictions, and ordered the payment of £8 treble costs in each case. The appellants being advised that the proceedings were not according to law, applied to the Court of King's Bench for writs *certiorari* to remove the several convictions, appeals, and orders of Sessions into that Court, to have the judgment of the same Court thereupon.

Accordingly in Trinity term, 1760, the writs were granted, and on June 3 the case was argued. After hearing Counsel on both sides, the Court quashed the convictions,—not only the proceedings of the Sessions, but also the convictions of the magistrate, and so the matter ended.

The result must have been a bitter pill for Mr. Monypenny,—evidently it was effective! as Wesley, referring to the matter in a sermon some years afterwards, declared that the Rolvenden Methodists *ever since then* had been permitted to worship God according to their conscience.

The informer, Witherden, must also have been disappointed in not receiving one third of the amount of the fines inflicted by the magistrate, to which he would have been entitled under the Act.

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

These proceedings evoked tremendous interest throughout the country, and were the subject of much comment in the newspapers, and current literature. A heated controversy was waged in the columns of the *London Magazine* during the year (1760) between the opponents and sympathisers of Methodism. It is gratifying to notice, however, not a single word was written which reflected in the slightest degree on the personal character of John Morley, the preacher. He is simply referred to as "a raw rustic lad," who, when he was brought before the magistrate met with no insulting language or terrifying threats, but was received with that civility and politeness which is so natural and essential to the gentleman! In fairness to the editor, it may be said that he allowed ample space for replies to be made to the scurrilous attacks on Wesley and his followers. Naturally, the decision of the King's Bench gave great satisfaction to John Wesley. In writing to his brother Charles a few days afterwards (on June 23, 1760) he says:

"It is of more consequence than our people seem to apprehend. If we do not exert ourselves, it must drive us to that bad dilemma—leave preaching or leave the Church. We have reason to thank God it is not come to this yet. Perhaps it never may."

We think it is probable that the King himself—George II—was interested in the Rolvenden affair. Although he made no profession of religion, and was surrounded by profligate courtiers, yet, according to the testimony of John Wesley, he ever championed the rights of the Methodists for freedom of worship, and gave orders of a personal nature to the magistrates to uphold the law in their favour. A short time before the case came on for hearing, a person in high authority approached the King, begging that he would take steps to stop these run-about-preachers. The King sternly replied:

"I tell you while I sit on the throne, no man shall be prosecuted for conscience sake."

We have no doubt therefore, that George II would be gratified to learn of the success of Wesley's Appeal. This would be about five months before the close of his reign on October 25, 1760.

The *Minutes of Conference* provide the only other information we have respecting John Morley. We find him stationed at Canterbury in 1765, the following year he is reported as being "laid aside" and in 1767 (probably through continued illness) he "desists from travelling." Owing to the *Minutes* not being published during the years 1750-64, we do not know the date

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when John Morley entered the ministry, nor where he travelled between those dates (excepting the year 1760, when in the Sussex Circuit.)<sup>2</sup>

Robert Monypenny died at Maytham Hall on the March 29, 1772, and was buried in accordance with his Will in the north Chancel of the parish Church of Rolvenden; he also requested his funeral to be 'as private as decency will permit.'

Thomas Osborne was laid to rest in Rolvenden church-yard on May 28, 1776. After his death the farm was sold, the widow remaining there for several years as tenant.

Wesley continued to be hampered in his work through proceedings being taken against him and his preachers under the Conventicle Act.

This Act, which had harassed the Dissenters during the reign of Charles II, still remained on the Statute Book, but relief was granted in the first year of William and Mary by the passing of the Toleration Act which enabled the Dissenters to procure licences for their Meeting houses and preachers. But Wesley and his preachers were not Dissenters, but members of the Church of England, and as such, were supposed to worship at the parish church, therefore they were debarred by the Courts from sheltering under the Toleration Act. Wesley was thus placed on the horns of a dilemma. In explaining his position to a Member of Parliament he says :

“Methodists can have no relief from the Act of Toleration because they go to Church, and that as long as they do so, the Conventicle Act is executed upon them. Now, Sir! what can the Methodists do? They are liable to be ruined by the Conventicle Act and they have no relief from the Act of Toleration. If this is not oppression, what is?”

This state of affairs led Wesley to review his position seriously, and we find a reference in his *Journal* to a consultation with his Solicitor (Mr. Clulow) on “that execrable Conventicle Act.” Both were clearly convinced that it was the safest way to license all the Chapels and all the travelling preachers, not as Dissenters, but simply “Preachers of the Gospel,” and that no Justice or Bench of Justices has any authority to refuse either licensing the house or the preachers.

But even these precautions did not entirely remedy the evil.

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2. Myles: *Chronological History of Methodism*, 1812, says John Morley entered the work in 1751, and “desisted” in 1769. No obituary appears in the *Minutes*, or *Magazine*.

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Some magistrates and bishops still refused to give licences. Wesley wrote a pathetic letter to a bishop who had refused one of his preachers. He charges him with driving the Methodists out of the Church in the most cruel and disingenuous manner.

“They desire a licence to worship God after their own conscience. Your Lordship refuses it, and then punishes them for not having a licence! So your Lordship leaves them only this alternative. Leave the Church or starve!”

The hardships under the Conventicle Act were not finally removed until 1812.

It is a strange irony that the Church—which in the XVIIIth century tried its utmost to drive Wesley from its Communion—should in the XXth century acclaim him as one of her greatest heroes and emphasize with pride that he lived and died a loyal member of the Church.

EDMUND AUSTEN.

Those who desire to pursue further the general question of Wesley's attitude towards the licensing of Methodist Chapels will find helpful information in Dr. Simon's *John Wesley and the Advance of Methodism*, pp. 57 and 179.

Many references are to be found in the New Edition of the *Letters*, notably 19 July, 1750, to Mrs. Gallatin, and 25 November, 1765, to George Gidley.

An elaborative volume entitled *Early Methodists under Persecution* by Josiah Henry Barr was published by the Methodist Book Concern, New York in 1916. For an interesting case of Methodist conflict at Maldon, see page 17 of this volume of the *Proceedings*

F.F.B.

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## SIDELIGHTS UPON THE “NEW ROOM” IN THE HORSEFAIR, BRISTOL.

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We receive regularly an exchange copy of *The Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*. On page 56 of vol. 28 there is a reference to William Dyer of Bristol, who was born in 1730. A statement that he had kept diaries for fifty years led me to make inquiry as to the possibility of finding anything relating to Methodism. Dr. Norman Penney, the Friends' editor, kindly applied on my behalf to the present owner of the diaries, Mr. Edward Gregory, of North Weston, Somerset. The latter gentleman, with a readiness and promptitude that I much appreciate, kindly furnished the following extracts. Mr. Gregory says that Mr. William Dyer kept a diary annually for about fifty years, and at the close of his life made extracts from all of them, and then destroyed all the originals except 1762. The extracts are in two large volumes.

In the *Friends' Journal* it is stated that Mr. William Dyer was a Methodist. Mr. Gregory says that this statement is not correct. He was an Anglican who took considerable interest in the Methodists.

I have added notes where such seemed desirable.

F.F.B.

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### JOHN WESLEY.

1753, Aug. 26. Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock Mr. John Westley read prayers and preached at the Room in the Horsefair, St. James Church not yet being open.

This service is not mentioned in the *Journal* or in the *Sermon Register*, but the record is consistent with the particulars therein recorded.

The Room in the Horsefair is near St. James's, designated by Wesley "our parish Church."

1753, Sep. 28. My dear Wife having some uneasiness in her mind (no doubt from the grand tempter of souls) relative to Dress, she was desirous of Mr. John Westley's sentiments and wrote him a letter on the subject which I delivered into his hands at the Room about 7 o'clock this morning. He thereupon read it & obligingly gave me a verbal answer which was in her favour, dispelled her fears, & I believe she became easy in her mind.

There are no details in the *Journal* for this date.

1754, Jan. 3rd. Mr. John Westley arrived after a bad fit of sickness & now took up his abode at Mr. Dolman's at the New Hotwells for the recovery of his Health, and the 26th of March was the first time of his preaching since his illness.

This is in harmony with the *Journals*, but the name Dolman is an addition to the information given therein.

1755, Mar. 31st. Mr. John Westley Read a Letter (among other Letters) at the Room of a remarkable preservation of a Man & his son in a Stone Quarry in Cornwall where five men lost their lives. But the above man & son were preserved by some apparent incident calling them away previous to the Quarry giving way & burying the five men they had left. The man & his Son were miraculously preserved, & t'was remarked they both feared God.

The letter here referred to is printed in the *Journal* under date February 16, 1755.

1755, Oct. 9. Thursday Evening, Mr. John Westley drank Tea at our House—afterwards I went to the Room.

Wesley preached at Pill earlier in the day.

A footnote in the *Journal* at this point states that he preached at Bristol on the morning of the 10th.

1760, Oct. 25th. Drank Tea with Mr. Jno. Westley & Mr. Willm. Lee at Mrs. Marstons.

This was the Saturday on which King George II died. "King George was gathered to his fathers. When will England have a better Prince?"

Wesley's *Diary* records tea at Sister Marston's in Bristol, 20 September 1783 and 22 September 1790.

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

1762, March 29. Rose this morning about 5 in order to carry a letter to ye Gloster Stage Coach for Cryer of Newport, but no person being up I went to the Room and heard Mr. John Wesley's farewell sermon he having sat out hence for Ireland this morning, and afterwards I was vexed to find the stage coach sat out at 7 o'clock so I did not send the letter.

The *Journal* record is: "I came to the New Passage a little before nine."

1762, August 25. Rose this morning between 4 and 5 Went to Room and heard Mr. John Wesley.

In the *Journal* Wesley simply records that he arrived in Bristol on the 24th and spent two days there.

1760, July 21st. Poor Mr. Norton now returned Mr. Laws letters, I had lent him & made very unworthy remarks thereon: He was attached to Mr. Westley, & at one time had the care of Mr. Westley's bookroom in The Horsefair which renders his remarks the less surprising since Mr. Law had mentioned Mr. Westley's unfair Treatment of him & Mr. Westley richly deserved all that Mr. Law had said.

1774, Sept. 12th. Heard John Westley's curious distinction of 4 Justifications & Sept. 19th he asserted there were 4 kinds of Faith viz that of the Heathen who believe in one God—2 that of the Jew 3rd That of John the Baptist who believed in a Messiah already come 4th that of a Christian—But of what use could this be to his Hearers. Sept. 26th Jno. Westley borrowed some of Mr. Laws very words, yet could despise that divine writer.

1777, March 16th. Sunday afternoon (tho' I was not present) Mr. John Westley Preached at St. Werburgh's Church probably the only time of his preaching in a Church in Bristol during the course of 30 years past.

March 16, 1788. Sunday Mr. John Westley Preached before the Mayor at the Mayors Chapel a proof of the Moderation of the present time as 50 years ago it would not have been admitted.

For details of this service see *Journal*, at date.

1790, Mar 8. Mr. John Wesley at the Room in the Horsefair mentioned a set of young men who had undertaken to relieve the needy; They are stiled the Stranger's Friends.

In the *Standard Journals* (vol. viii, p. 49) an interesting account of this Society is given.

Wesley met the Stranger's Society, "on business" at 6 in the morning as part of a very full Sunday's work on March 14th.

Mar. 2nd, 1791. Died about  $\frac{1}{2}$  P 10 o'clo in the Forenoon

## PROCEEDINGS.

Mr. John Westley at his House in London. He would have attained 88 years of age had he lived till June next.

The following references in Wesley's *Journal* for the year 1783 may be noted.

Sunday 16 March, 4, tea Sister Johnson's, Mr. Dyer.

5 August. With Mr. Dyer.

This was apparently early in the morning. Wesley was very ill that day.

21 Aug. 1783, 1 at Sister Dyer's, dinner, conversed, prayed.

### CHARLES WESLEY.

Aug. 5, 1753. Sunday Mr. Charles Wesley read prayers & preached in the Forenoon at the Room in the Horsefair there being no service at St. James Church. It is said this is to be continued every Sunday during the time this Church is shut up.

Oct. 20th, 1753. Sunday morning with my dear Wife & a Mantua maker a person of piety, who lived in the same house with Mrs. Hopkins at Mrs. Brooms in St. James, at Kingswood School or Chapel which we reached on foot about 8 o'clock & heard Mr. Charles Westley preach, who afterwards administered the Sacrament. But as Strangers were not admitted, the Mantua Maker who was of Mr. Westleys Society applied, & we were permitted to partake & communicate with those of that community.

Records of dining with Mr. Hopkins appear in John Wesley's *Journal* thirty years and more after this date. One conjectures that the host was a son of the lady mentioned in this extract, but this cannot be stated for certain.

1755, 25th & 26th June. Rachael Tucker appeared to be on the brink on Eternity, exulting & praising the Lord although in extreme pain from convulsions that shook the bed & the room. Mr. Charles Westley at the Room mentioned Rachel Tucker as at the point of death about this time, yet she lived a painful life for the long space of near 44 years afterwards.

The Editor of Charles Wesley's *Journal*, published in 1849, says, "It is to be regretted that from August 13th, 1754 to September, 1756 no record of Mr. Charles Wesley's labours has been preserved."

Rachel Tucker, presumably the same person, was visited by John Wesley March 3, 1753, see *Standard Journals*, viii, 160.

Her name does not occur in the *Magazine* obituaries, but there is recorded in 1839 the death of Benjamin Tucker whom Wesley appointed a Leader in Bristol.

1761, Nov. 5. This evening with Henry Davis made a visit to Mr. Charles Westley at his dwelling House (I think) in Charles St. where we heard his Wife sing & play some hymn tunes on the Spinnet. She being noted for singing & for music—one of their children, a child in Petticoats (a boy) was a kind of Prodigy for

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

music being able to play a tune on the Spinnet without having learned the Notes, but would hit upon a tune merely by a surprising natural genius for music.

1764, April 20th. Heard a Sermon with much satisfaction from Mr. Charles Wesley asserting the Universal Love of God from these words "And I, when I am lifted up will draw all men unto me.

1774, Jan. 23rd. Sunday Forenoon Mr. Charles Wesley Baptised two Africans at the Room in the Horsefair & preached from Psalm 103 v. 1-2. They were both young men who had experienced a Remarkable Providence in their favour whereby they were brought to the Knowledge of Christianity. They were brothers sons of the present King of Oldtown, Old Calabar, Cape Town. Jones of the Barton who had the care of them attended & gave the name of Ephraim to one (probably the elder) and Ancona to his Brother. The Service was solemn and edifying. They were sent by Capt. Jones by the first ship to their own country.

For further particulars see a letter by Charles Wesley published in *Proceedings*, xvii, 182.

1774, June 13. Capt. Floyd with the two Africans who sailed in the "Maria" from Bristol the 8th. of March last were now brought back again in a ship from Barbados, the "Maria" being wrecked and totally lost off Cape Verd Islands—the Crew saved.

The loss of this vessel must not be confused with that of the "Maria" Mail Boat lost off the Island of Antigua in 1826. Five Wesleyan Missionaries perished. Dr. Hannah wrote a story of the wreck, embodying a memoir of Mrs. Hincksman the only survivor.

But the coincidence of name is certainly remarkable.

### PETER BÖHLER.

1774, Sept. 4. Heard Peter Böhler, a Moravian Bishop, at their Chappel Maudlin Lane.

The intercourse between Wesley and Böhler thirty years before this is well known.

Böhler was paying an official visit to England at the date mentioned above. In the spring of 1775 he was smitten with paralysis, and on April 27th of that year he died being in the 63rd year of his age. See *Memorials of the Life of Peter Böhler*, by Rev. J. P. Lockwood, 1868.

### GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

1752, Aug. 3. Heard Mr. Whitfield preach at the Smith's Hall in the Fryars at 6 o'clock this morning.

1753, July 13. Friday morning at 7 o'clock went to Smith's

## PROCEEDINGS.

Hall, from whence the Preacher and congregation repaired to the old orchard where he laid the first stone of a building now to be erected, afterwards named the Tabernacle. My Diary states the above Preacher to be Mr. Meredith of Plymouth but if I do not mistake it was Mr. Whitfield. I was present.

Mr. Dyer must be mistaken, however, in his conjecture. Whitefield reached Newcastle-upon-Tyne on July 14, 1753 having preached frequently throughout his journey from the South. Mr. Meredith is mentioned in *Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon* as being "in connexion with Mr. Whitfield."

1753, Novr. 25. Sunday morning heard Mr. Whitfield preach the first time, this being the day of opening the new built Tabernacle in the old orchard, his text taken from I Kings Chap VIII and latter part of V. II "For the glory of the Lord has filled the House of the Lord." The windows were as yet unglazed but the lowermost windows had oyled paper pasted thereon for the present purpose—a large Congregation attended. But in the evening when I again heard Mr. Whitfield a greater concourse of people than the House could contain. Galleries were not then erected. Mr. Whitfield now mentioned the Flourishing State of Religion in Yorkshire that at Mr. Grimshaws his Church had been 4 times filled at administering the Sacrament when 35 Bottles of Wine were expended at only one Sacrament.

For an account of the erection of the Tabernacle in Bristol see Tyerman's *Whitefield*, ii, 317.

Almost from the commencement of their career, the followers of Whitefield and of Wesley had held separate services at Bristol. Wesley had had a Chapel there ever since the year 1739. Up to the present Whitefield had none.

1756, May 23rd. Sunday Evening I heard Mr. Whitfield preach in King Square.

1758, May 15. Monday Morning 6 o'clock Brother James & I heard Mr. Whitfield at the Tabernacle (London) then Brother & I went to Greenwich & took an outside view of its elegant Hospital reached Bishopsgate at 6 in the evening then I repaired to Mr. Haynes at White Chapel Hospital where I took part of his Bed & took a comfortable nights rest.

1758, May 28. Sunday morning 7 o'clock heard Mr. Whitfield Preach in the New Square i.e. King Square & also again at the same place about 6 in the evening.

1759, June 6th. Mr. Whitfield laid the first foundation stone for a Keywall & Dwelling House for the Preachers near the Tabernacle in Old Orchard.

1761, Jan. 27. Heard an excellent discourse from Mr. Whitfield from Gen. I. 2 "The Earth or Chaos was without form

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

& void" to which he compared the Soul of Man, since his Fall & departure from God.

1762, November 18. Thursday. Dipped into Bishop Warburton's Treatise on the Doctrines of Grace wherein he falls upon Mr. Law and Mr. Westley. At 5 home, returned to office and near 7 called on Mr. Penney, then to Tabernacle and heard Mr. Whitfield who is lately come to Town--and home--Lord have mercy on me pardon all my sins and do for me as I need.

The Tabernacle was in Penn Street.

### THOMAS WALSH.

1753, July 23. Heard at the Room in the Horsefair Mr. Walsh from Ireland. He had been in Bristol about 14 days. Was I think a Roman Catholic Priest, but from conviction left the Church of Rome and became a Protestant Methodist Preacher. He was the most extraordinary Scripturist ever heard being able to quote both Chapter and verse from beginning to end of the Bible. He had however his failings, was one of those that assiduously recommended an entire separation from the Established Church. He was many years a zealous Methodist Preacher, but at length laboured under a great bodily infirmity which long continued and ended in dissolution. It appears by an account of his life published by Mr. Morgan a man of great Piety, that Mr. Walsh endured much anguish and suffering in his mind during his long illness.

This is an interesting confirmation of Wesley's well-known testimony concerning Walsh. "I knew a young man who was so thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, that if he was questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the Old, or any Greek word in the New Testament, he would tell after a little pause, not only how often the one or the other occurred in the Bible, but also what it meant in every place. His name was Thomas Walsh. Such a master of Biblic knowledge I never met before, and never expect to see again."

### CAPTAIN WEBB.

1781, Feb. 21. Capt. Webb preached at the Room in the Horsefair. It was a Public Fair Day. He said much concerning the Americans that they were sunk into luxury, that Arminianism prevailed among them, that they were not ashamed to deny the Lord that bought them. But this I believe is properly Arianism.

### HOWELL HARRIS.

1757, Aug. 20. Saturday Evening Henry Davis & I at Mr. Symes met Rev. Mr. Brown and Howell Harris from Brecknockshire & staid to the late hour of 11 o'clock hearing Howell Harris

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relate the many remarkable Providences which had attended his Pilgrimage so exceedingly interesting that I could have staid the whole night, had it not been for making my dear Wife uneasy at Home.

In a list of clergymen to whom Wesley addressed his circular letter in 1764 we find:—Richard Symes, of St. Werburgh's, Bristol.

James Brown, Rector of Portishead.

Mr. Brown was apparently Vicar of Kingston at the same time as he was Rector of Portishead. Dr. Coke became his curate (*Standard Journals*, vi, 119).

It does not seem hazardous to conjecture that this is the Mr. Symes who was host, and the Rev. Mr. Brown who was a guest, at this interesting gathering.

1761, June 2nd. Saw Howell Harris pass thro' Bristol for Exeter with the Breconshire Militia. He was to my great surprise, either an Ensign or Adjutant. It seems he was overpersuaded to this office & undertook it upon condition that he should have liberty of Preaching to the Regiment.

“Towards the end of the year 1759 the nation was again alarmed with a threatened invasion from France, and Mr. Harris was appealed to for assistance once more in raising men for the defence of the kingdom. . . . Before the close of the year all the leading gentlemen of Breconshire exerted themselves in forming a County Militia; and as several of them intended acting as officers, they pressed a commission on Mr. Howell Harris as well, requesting him at the same time to bring with him a contingent of his men to serve in the ranks. The offer was entirely foreign to the bent of Harris's mind and his life-long pursuits; but as he was by no means deficient in martial courage, and was still haunted by fear for the welfare of Protestantism, and had already, as he writes ‘imperilled his life for many years in preaching the Gospel, he was not now to be intimidated by the prospect of having to die if occasion required in the defence of it; at the same time if he undertook as a soldier to fight for King George, he must have the liberty to preach the Gospel of King Jesus.’”

The liberty was granted. He was invested at first with the office of an ensign, from which he was soon promoted to the rank of Captain. He and his men were quartered in the summer of 1761 in the West of England.

“After he had been three years in the militia a treaty of peace was concluded, and Captain Harris laid down his commission. During the whole of that period his character for sanctity was rigidly maintained, and his influence for good was of the highest order.” (*Life of Howell Harris, the Welsh Reformer*, by Hugh J. Hughes, 1892).

### MR. SOUTHCOTE,

#### MASTER AT KINGSWOOD SCHOOL.

1761, Jan. 31. Took Mr. Southcote Master of Mr. Westleys Kingswood School to visit Nancy Thrawl, & though he meant well yet his discourse not being tempered with that degree of tenderness & Christian Kindness to be expected towards a languishing & weak fellow mortal it hurt my mind exceedingly though he did it with a design to awaken & alarm a soul now on

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the brink of Eternity, who at the same time possessed divine breathings, & finally I verily believe departed hence in a state of safety without experiencing the horrors which some have passed through, & which the Methodists were too apt to lay down as absolutely needful for every soul to experience.

1777, July 3. Died Mr. Southcote in Broadmead formerly Master of Mr. Wesley's Kingswood School.

Little appears to be on record concerning Mr. Southcote. *The History of Kingswood School*, the *Standard Journals*, and Tyerman have been referred to in vain.

John Wesley refers to him twice in the New Edition of the *Letters*. One reference is too slight to quote. The other reveals Mr. Southcote as an author, though there is no mention in Osborn's *Bibliography*. Writing to Charles Wesley on November 3, 1775, John Wesley says: "Pray tell Brother Southcote I like his treatise well—I am writing something nearly on the subject."

The *Arminian Magazine* for 1785 contains the following:

Bristol, Jan. 9, 1772.

Dear Sir,

We thank you for those blessed men, Mr. Murlin and Pawson. Their labours cannot be in vain in the Lord. We are at present, like a city which is at unity with itself. Not the least misunderstanding having happened among the Preachers. What a token for good!

I have been at Kingswood twice lately; and stayed all night. I met the children each time, and the last, while I was speaking, former times occurred to my mind, and made a deep impression on me.

At present I feel a secret hope for the little ones. If the Masters should again recover their strength, we shall see greater things. We took sweet counsel together. S. H. is athirst for the living God. How different is this woman!

O! what a mercy, that the Lord should have begun with me, even with me, a poor backslider; and that he should have engaged my soul and body to serve him! Blessed be his name, I still love him! Wishing you more than I can express.

I am, Rev. Sir, your dutiful Son and Servant,

J. SOUTHCOTE.

### JOHN NELSON.

1753, Novr. 13. This evening heard John Nelson preach at the Room, a plain honest and useful man, as a Methodist preacher.

1753, Decr. 13. John Nelson and Mrs. Edwards breakfasted at my house.

1754, Jan. 1. New Year's day I attended this morning and also last Christmas day at 4 o'clock when service began at the Room in the Horsefair (Upon each of these mornings John Nelson preached) which has been the practice during some years and continued to be so, if I mistake not, until the death of Mr. John Westley in March 1791. Soon after which the Methodists, after many debates and some divisions, separated from the

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Established Church of England, yet it is believed they possessed more of the spirit and Life of Christianity before than since this separation.

This opinion about the relationship of Methodism to the Church of England is set down for what it is worth. Our readers will know where to turn for a considered judgment on the complicated story. A useful chapter on the Churchmanship of Wesley will be found in Mr. Telford's *Life* of the evangelist.

### BRISTOL.

1751, May 12th. My habitation was then in the Horsefair in the vicinity of "The Room."

Dec. 5th, 1751. We now lived in the Horsefair, but how long since is not mentioned. Here I used to get up at 4 or  $\frac{1}{2}$  Past & repair in my great coat to Mr. Westley's Room, & sometimes especially on a Sunday have heard four Sermons a day at different places of worship, the Holy Spirit being at that time no doubt operating in my soul though I knew not, or very little attended to the still small voice of that only true Instructor & Shepherd of my soul.

1758, Dec. 25th. Monday, Christmas Day started this morning at  $\frac{1}{4}$  before three o'clock & repaired to the Room in the Horsefair where a multitude assembled as usual & some of the attendants were riotous and disturbing.

1754, Jan. 27th. Sunday morning at 5 o'clock attended preaching at the Room in the Horsefair which had been my practice ever since soon after my marriage & frequently afterwards attended preaching at seven o'clock the same morning at Smiths Hall & in the forenoon & afternoon at some church, & in evening at Mr. Morrish's where he read & related his own experience to a roomful of men & women, some his neighbours & others from distant parts of the City.

1754, Oct. 4th. For the first time attended a watch night at the Room in Horsefair until 12 o'clock. I suppose it began about 8 in the evening.

1779, Sep. 21. An account read at "The Room" in Horsefair of 6 men preserved in a boat at sea by dipping their shirts and clothing in the salt water and then putting the same on wet which served as meat and drink to these men. The heat of their bodies acting as an Alembic sucked in the fresh water, the salt remaining on their flesh like scales. This they found remarkably refreshing; and they had no other kind of nourishment during four to six days when they arrived safely on land. The hint it seems was suggested in a treatise written by Dr. Loble.

## THE MANCHESTER CONFERENCE OF 1765.

(NOTES BY THE LATE REV. MARMADUKE RIGGALL).

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The late Rev. Marmaduke Riggall became the possessor of a paper relating to the Manchester Conference of 1765, which was in the Collection of the late Mr. George Stampe.

Mr. Riggall was most deeply interested in it, and considered it to be of great importance. He bestowed an immense amount of trouble upon an endeavour to identify all the persons mentioned in it. The result of his labours is in my hands. The references, gathered from the wide fields of history and biography which he had explored so diligently for many years, are too numerous and detailed for publication. But the reproduction of the document and a statement of Mr. Riggall's most important identifications will certainly be of interest to our readers. The preparation of this article is a labour of love, and its publication is a memorial to one who served our Society most worthily.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Riggall left an article practically ready for the press, but, in addition to its length, there is a further consideration standing in the way of publishing it just as it stands. Mr. Riggall changed his mind as to the meaning of the list of names, and wrote to me to say that the whole article would require revision in many important respects. The revision was never completed, so far as I know, but I shall be able to indicate the earlier and later opinions formed by our friend.

The paper contains simply a list of names written very carefully and, for the most part, in clear caligraphy. There is no head-line, no signature, and no indication of what it means. It is a single foolscap sheet, rather rough in texture, yellow with age, written on both sides. Mr. Riggall furnishes an extract transcription, without any alteration of spelling or other particulars. He endeavoured to reproduce the style of letter formation, but in this we cannot imitate him, obviously. He followed carefully with magnifying glass every letter and stroke of the pen. There is a slight curve or flourish in the little letter "r" above the line in many cases, which might lead a transcriber to take Mr. for Mrs. In the two instances of Mrs. Thornally and Mrs. Seddon the "s" is quite clear, and is written from the bottom upwards by the pen-stroke.

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W <sup>m</sup> Broclehurst	=	Jn <sup>o</sup> Nelson	
Tho <sup>s</sup> Boardman	=	Tho <sup>s</sup> Carlile	
Rob <sup>t</sup> Pickford	=	Mr Roddah	= Mr Murry
Jn <sup>o</sup> Bickersteth	=	Tho <sup>s</sup> Briscoe	= Mr Glazebrook
Ab <sup>m</sup> Briarley	=	Mr Atley	= Mr Longbotham
Jn <sup>o</sup> Earnshaw	=	Jn <sup>o</sup> Pool	= Geo Hudson
Nancy Boardman	=	Jn <sup>o</sup> Furz	= Jn <sup>o</sup> Mayson
W <sup>m</sup> Norton	=	Mr Rankin	= Mr. Stevens
Peter Kennerley	=	Jn <sup>o</sup> Pawson	= Dan <sup>l</sup> Bumsted = Mr Smith
Jn <sup>o</sup> Holt	=	Tho <sup>s</sup> Westell	
Cilily Randall	=	Tho <sup>s</sup> Newall	
Jn <sup>o</sup> Cartwright	=	Jn <sup>o</sup> Easton	= Tho <sup>s</sup> Tobias
Joseph Clegg	=	Matthew Mayer	= Jn <sup>o</sup> Oliver
— Howarth	=	Bar <sup>s</sup> Thomas	= Ja <sup>s</sup> Bromfield
W <sup>m</sup> Greatrix	=	W <sup>m</sup> Darney	
David Yates	=	Rob <sup>t</sup> Constedine	
Abram Clegg	=	Mr Shanks	= Mr Shent
Mrs Thornally	=	Jacob Rowell	= Jo <sup>s</sup> Thompson
Arthur Clegg	=	Tho <sup>s</sup> Lee	= Mr. Anson
Widdow Burtan	=	Sam <sup>l</sup> Lavick	= W <sup>m</sup> Orp
Mr Ogden	=	Mr Jaco	= Mr Colbeck
Mrs Seddon	=	Mr Hampson	= Mr Lain

This line is struck out.

Ja <sup>s</sup> Marler	=	David Evans	=	Moses Dale
Jn <sup>o</sup> Boon	=	Richard Booth	=	Mr Taylor
Marg <sup>t</sup> Crossdale	=	Jn <sup>o</sup> Shaw	=	Jn <sup>o</sup> Turnough =
	=	J. Whitehead	=	Eben Pirah = Tho <sup>s</sup> Taylor
James Davies	=	W <sup>m</sup> Brammall & Wife		
Tho <sup>s</sup> Shires	=	Mr. Swannick	=	Mr. Davenport
Tho <sup>s</sup> Harwood	=	Mr Roe	=	Mr Davies = —
Tho <sup>s</sup> Philips	=	Mr. Oliver & wife	=	Mr. Colney = Chris <sup>t</sup> Hopper
Geo Webster	=	Mr. Rook & wife	=	Mr. Waldron = Mr. Barker
Ad Oldham	=	Mr. Wesley	=	Mr. Henderson =
	=	Mr. Davies	=	Fran <sup>s</sup> Gilbert = Mr. Gibbs = Duncan Wright
Rich <sup>d</sup> Barlow	=	Mr. Fenwick	=	Mr. Smith = Mr. Oddies

Here ends the first page. The last eight lines are in much smaller writing than the preceding, as if the writer had tried to get all his material on to the one side.

Sam <sup>l</sup> Hey	=	Tho <sup>s</sup> Hanby	=	Mr. Roberts = Mr. Lean = Mr. Hampson
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W <sup>m</sup> Fazackerley	=	Mossley Cheeck	=	James Clough
Mr Hill	=	Paul Greenwood	=	J <sup>n</sup> ° Beanland =
				Jer <sup>v</sup> Robertshaw
Tho <sup>s</sup> Woolfinden	=	Mr Murlen & Wife	=	Joseph Guilford & Wife
Joseph Davenport	=	Isaac Brown	=	John Morley

The sheet has been folded twice, and in James Everett's handwriting is the statement : "This is evidently a list of Preachers at the Conference of 1765." It could not be earlier, for J. Longbotham began to itinerate that year, and he is represented as *present*, as a preacher. Mr. Stampe, who was familiar with the handwriting, has added, in pencil, at the end of the statement, ("Jas. Everett"). Mr. Riggall also compared the endorsement with autograph letters of Everett. He says that, so far as he knows, Everett does not mention the paper in any of his publications.

It is of interest, by the way, to note, according to information supplied by Mr. Arthur Wallington, that the paper was once in the possession of the Rev. Luke Tyerman, and was listed by him in vol. iii of three folio volumes of Everett's letters and papers, as "1 MS. List of Preachers present at Manchester Conference, 1765." It does not appear that Tyerman made any use of it in any of his writings.

Mr. Riggall at first took the title which Everett bestowed upon the paper very literally, and concluded that all the laymen and women named were actual members of the Conference. This led him to a number of deductions and reflections upon the constitution of the Conference. He thought there stood revealed a most significant experiment, the repetition and development of which would have had great results, amongst which might have been the averting of some of the "splits" from which Methodism subsequently suffered.

The idea seemed to me very precarious. Surely if the document could sustain such arguments, both Everett and Tyerman would have been alive to its significance. The mere fact, also, that Wesley's name is in the middle, and not at the head of the list, struck me at once. The late Rev. J. Robinson Gregory wrote in our manuscript journal : "It seems scarcely possible to regard the list as recording the members of a formal Conference. Would there not be some other account of so remarkable a gathering? With all respect to Mr. Riggall and Mr. Eayrs [who had given his approval to Mr. Riggall's arguments] the constitutional deductions, in my humble judgment, appear to have a very slender basis. This does not detract from the value of the notes on persons."

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Further reflection and research led Mr. Riggall to the conclusion (with which I entirely agree) that the list was one of the *hosts* of persons attending the Conference, with their guests. So regarded it is of very great interest to students of the early days of Manchester Methodism. It also sheds valuable light upon the size of the Conference at that date. A paper by J.K. on "The Conference of 1765" published in the *Magazine* for 1865, says "Had we attended the . . . assembly just a hundred years ago, we should have found John Wesley sitting at a small table in some private room, surrounded by not more than twenty of his helpers" Such a statement cannot stand.

Mr. Riggall examined very thoroughly :

1. Account Book . . . Manchester Round (1752—1763)
2. Circuits Stewards' accounts (1763—1799)
3. Manchester Society account Book (1763—1789)

The two later books reveal beyond all possible doubt the fact that Samuel Hey<sup>1</sup> wrote the paper now under consideration.

The position held by Hey appears from a statement on the first page of the last book :—

This Book was begun July 9th, 1763

Saml. Hey	} Stewards Elected by the Revd. Mr. John Wesley
Saml. Swire	
John Morris	

A year later are the signatures of the three Stewards

## SOME NOTES ON THE TRAVELLING PREACHERS MENTIONED.

Atley. John Atlay, who "desisted" in 1788.

Anson. Probably Thomas Hanson (1760—1804)

Thomas Briscoe or Brisco, named in Wesley's will.

James Bromfield, probably intended for James Brownfield  
(1764—1770)

William Brammall, William Brammah (1762—1780)

Mr. Colnley. Probably Joseph Cownley (1744—1793)

Mossley Cheek. The Rev. Moseley Cheek, who was admitted into full connection in 1765. He afterwards withdrew and became minister of St. Stephen's, Salford.

Mr. John Hampson. This is John Hampson, senior, Father of John Hampson, junior, who became Rector of Sunderland, and published in 1791 a three volume *Life of Wesley*.

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1. The name, as written by the man himself, has two dots over the last letter. This feature is not reproduced, being typographically difficult.

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- John Mayson. Probably John Mason (1764—1810)  
Mr. Murlen. John Murlin (1753—1799)  
Mr. Oliver. Thomas Olivers (1753—1799)  
Mr. Oddies. James Oddie (1746—1771)  
Mr. Rook and wife. Probably Thomas Rourke or Roorke  
(1762—1770) is intended.  
Mr. Stevens. Probably James Stephens (1765—1772)

Turning now to the names of those who are to be regarded as hosts, it is interesting to note that several of them recur in a letter written by Wesley in 1789 to Richard Rodda then stationed in Manchester. He desires that the following persons amongst others should be asked for their interest in one whom he desired might be appointed master of the Manchester Workhouse. Barlow, Byerley [sic], D. Yates, T. Phillips, Mr. Brocklehurst.

In 1787 the *Journal* reveals that a Mr. Brocklehurst entertained him. There is a story, recorded on the authority of Dr. Osborn, in the Winter Number of the *Recorder* for 1906, of a discussion with Wesley, on the use of money, in the vestry of Oldham Street Chapel, at its opening. Mr. Brocklehurst, *who built the Chapel*, is recorded as one of those who took part in the conversation. Was he the builder or architect or both?

Mr. Riggall found in the British Museum, *The Admission Register of the Manchester Grammar School*, and extracted the following facts, by way of description:—

William Fazackerly, Flour Merchant, Manchester

Abraham Clegg, hatter, Oldham

Thomas Boardman, tradesman, Manchester. Constable of  
Manchester 1764.

Thomas Shiers, mason, Manchester

Baines *History of the County of Lancs*, furnished an interesting note. Under the heading "Some distinguished Manchester men," he mentions Dr. Henry Clarke, Professor at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, who was married in 1766 at the Collegiate Church, Manchester, [now the Cathedral] to Miss Martha Randle of Manchester, who bore him a family of seventeen children. *His wife was one of the early followers of John Wesley*. (In one respect also a follower of Susannah Wesley!). The name Cilily in our list is peculiar; it may be an attempt to reproduce a pet name.

To have the name of Wesley's host is very interesting.

His course in Methodism appears to have lacked consistency. Charles Wesley dined with him in 1756 and says, "The first was become last, but is now, I hope, becoming first again. I re-admitted both him and his wife into the Society, with several

## PROCEEDINGS.

others, who were fallen off." These charitable hopes were fulfilled, for a letter which Oldham wrote to Wesley in 1763 (*Mag* 1782) reveals him as an earnest class-leader.

References to him, however, at a later date, seem to justify Tyreman's description of him as a rich backslider.

*Journal* 6 April 1772 "In the afternoon I drank tea at A[da]m O[ldham's]. But how was I shocked! The children that used to cling about me, and drink in every word, had been at a boarding school. There they had unlearned all religion and even seriousness, and had learned pride, vanity, affectation, and whatever could guard them against the knowledge and love of God."

*Journal* 18 July 1787. "I then retired to a little house of Mr. Brocklehurst's two miles beyond Manchester. Here Adam Oldham lived. O what did riches profit him! How strange the providence which put me in his place."

Mr. Riggall's notes are carefully preserved amongst our papers and are available for inquirers. They will be very valuable when some one arises to write the history of early Methodism in Manchester incorporating the story which Everett told as far as 1749, and bringing it down to at least the death of Wesley.

F. F. BRETHERTON.

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## METHODISM'S EARLIEST HEADQUARTERS IN LONDON

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The eastern section of the Methodist Historical International Union has set itself a task of cherishing the landmarks of our history in London. On Whit Monday, 1926, the nearest appropriate spot to the Aldersgate Street room was marked by a tablet placed on St. Botolph's Church. In 1928 it was the turn of West-street, Seven Dials. If London Methodists, in their journeys up the crowded Charing Cross Road, turn aside to that old Chapel which was for years the headquarters of Wesley's societies in Westminster, they will find the tablet of the Historical Union there. Another memorable Wesley Day service was held in 1930, when a tablet was placed in the old Marylebone Parish Church, where Charles Wesley worshipped in his later years and in the graveyard of which he is buried. Since then the tomb has been moved nearer the railings and is visible from the

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Marylebone High Street. By the thoughtful attention of Mr. Cyril Eastman and the Hinde Street trustees, this memorial of the poet of Methodism is kept from the sad appearance of decay which is apt to invest London graveyards with gloom.

This year a tablet was placed as near as possible to the site of the original headquarters of Methodism in the City. It was unveiled by Mr. Isaac Foot, M.P.

Wesley seems to have purchased the Foundery towards the end of 1739, and made it his London headquarters after the final breach with the Fetter Lane Society in July, 1740. It was in a ruinous state when he bought it, but after £800 had been spent on it, it was made into a commodious meeting-house that could accommodate 1,500 people. It stood in Windmill Street, (now called Tabernacle Street), in Upper Moorfields, just at the back of the present Book Room. For about forty years it was the chief gathering place of London Methodists until City Road Chapel, near by, took its place.

The tablet to mark the site of the Foundery was placed on the new buildings of the Book Room. The actual site is on the other side of Tabernacle Street, but our own building is so near that it was thought fitting that a Methodist centre like the Book Room should remind Methodists for generations to come, by this memorial tablet, that this is sacred ground.

A. W. HARRISON.

The above article, abridged and adapted, is reprinted from the *Methodist Recorder*.

The International Union is able to undertake work that our Society has not attempted to include within the scope of its activities. Dr. Harrison is one of the Secretaries, and thus a link with us.

The Union has no literary organ and it is a pleasure to give permanent record in the *Proceedings* to what they do in the interests of world-wide Methodism.

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## ANNUAL MEETING OF W.H.S.

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The Annual Meeting of the Wesley Historical Society will be held in the Board Room, at the Y.M.C.A. Building in Peter Street, Manchester, on Thursday, July 14, at 2-15 p.m.

The officers of the Society will be pleased to see any of the members whether they are members of the Conference or not.