

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_whs\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_whs_01.php)



Who taught my infant lips to pray,  
And love God's holy book and day;  
And walk in wisdom's pleasant way?  
My Mother.

*Sarah Hall, the Diarist. The handwriting is that of her daughter, Mrs. Shum.*

Original kindly lent by Miss R. Withers.

THE WESLEYS AND ANGLESEY  
METHODISM

## PART I

For the most part the evangelising work of the Wesleys in Wales was confined to the southern counties, and with the exception of three brief visits to the town of Mold they never went on a special preaching tour to North Wales. It is true that they preached occasionally in a number of localities in North Wales, but only because they happened to pass through those places on their way to some other destination. This is particularly true of Anglesey. We have records of sixteen visits by John Wesley and of four by Charles to Anglesey, and in every case they visited the island because they had to pass through it on their way to or from Ireland. On only five of these occasions did they preach in Anglesey, and they did so then only because they had to spend some time there waiting for the boat to sail from Holyhead across the Irish Channel. Even so, John Wesley's sermons had often to be translated into Welsh before many of the islanders could understand his message, and under such circumstances he would hardly have been able to gather together flourishing societies in the island, had he desired to do so. But we can safely assume that he had no such desire, inasmuch as the Welsh (Calvinistic) Methodists were already labouring successfully in Anglesey, and Wesley's sole purpose in preaching there at all was to strengthen the hands of Howell Harris and his fellow-workers.

A complete and satisfactory account of the beginnings of Methodism in Anglesey has not yet been written, and many obscure points still await elucidation. At the beginning of the eighteenth century there was probably no dissenter of any kind throughout the whole island, the inhabitants being all devoted adherents of the Established Church. Early in the year 1741 Howell Harris heard that there was not a single dissenter there, but it is doubtful whether his information was quite correct, because the family of Ty Gwyn, near Llangefni, already had some connection with non-conformity at that time. The father, Thomas Pritchard, had been deeply affected by a sermon he had heard at his parish church, and his changed behaviour soon influenced his whole household. His children attached themselves to the non-conformist church

at Llangybi in Caernarvonshire from about 1730 onwards, whither they went once a month, in spite of the long journey, to the monthly communion. Two of the children, Thomas Thomas of Rhydyspardun and Howell Thomas of Trefollwyn Goed,<sup>1</sup> are mentioned in John Wesley's *Journal*. Both of them had registered their houses as dissenting places of worship, and Wesley preached at both places.

We have already referred to Llangybi, where there was an old established non-conformist cause. In this district lived a zealous Christian called William Pritchard, who was the tenant of a farm called Glasfryn Fawr, and a member of the non-conformist church at Pwllheli. It was at his house that Jenkin Morgan kept school for some time from the end of 1740 onwards. Morgan was probably a native of Neath Valley in South Wales, and an old member of the non-conformist church at Blaengwrach. His old minister, Henry Davies, was one of the early friends and supporters of Howell Harris, and two members of his church figure prominently in the early history of North Wales Methodism.—Lewis Rees, who was minister of the non-conformist church at Llanbryn-mair in Montgomeryshire, and Jenkin Morgan. It was Lewis Rees who first invited Howell Harris to Montgomeryshire, and who was also probably responsible for bringing Jenkin Morgan to the same district as schoolmaster. From Llanbryn-mair, Morgan migrated *via* Merionethshire to Llangybi, and it was he who acted as Howell Harris's guide on his first visit to South Caernarvonshire early in 1741, when he stayed with William Pritchard at Glasfryn Fawr. As we have said, Morgan was officially a schoolmaster, under Griffith Jones of Llanddowror, but he also acted as a Methodist exhorter, and ended his days as a dissenting minister. In those days, South Caernarvonshire was no peaceful paradise for dissenters or Methodists. Harris was so severely persecuted there on his first visit that he barely escaped with his life, and could not gather up enough courage to return there for six years. Jenkin Morgan and another Methodist exhorter, Richard Tibbot, were sent home from Caernarvonshire in 1742, as common vagabonds, from gaol to gaol, and in the same year William Pritchard had to quit his farm and seek refuge in Anglesey, where he became again an object of cruel

---

1. It was customary in Wales in those days for the sons to adopt their father's Christian name as their own surname; hence Thomas Pritchard's sons were surnamed Thomas.

## PROCEEDINGS

persecution, and had to move from one farm to another until William Bulkeley, the broad-minded and tolerant squire of Brynddu, let him the farm of Clwch Dernog, near Llannerch-y-medd, about the year 1749. After Pritchard's removal to Anglesey, Jenkin Morgan soon followed him. They gathered a non-conformist congregation in the island, had Jenkin Morgan ordained as their first minister in 1746, and in 1748 built their first chapel at Rhos y Meirch, in the parish of Llangefni.

These men, although they were officially dissenters, were also the pioneers of Methodism in Anglesey, and Harris himself was the first to acknowledge that it was the Dissenters who 'were y.e first that came here.' Who was the first Methodist (as distinct from methodistical-nonconformist) preacher to visit Anglesey, we do not know for certain. It is quite possible that Daniel Rowland preached here during his journey to North Wales in 1742. but we cannot be certain. In July 1745, William Morris of Holyhead wrote to one of his brothers;

This country, which some few years ago might be said not to have six persons within it of any other persuasion than that of the Church of England, is now full of Methodists or Independents or Presbyterian, or some other sect, the Lord knows what, I believe they don't themselves. (*The Morris Letters*, ed. by J. H. Davies. Oxford, 1907, i. 83.)

His words are significant, inasmuch as they prove that there was a large number of Methodists in Anglesey by 1745 and that it was difficult for an outsider, like William Morris, to distinguish between the various sects.

One of the leaders of the Methodist movement in the island was William Jones of Trefollwyn, the "second son to a gentleman of property, and who had been enlightened by the preaching of Mr. Howel Harris," according to the description of him by Peter Williams.<sup>2</sup> It is from his letters that we learn much about Anglesey Methodism during the next few years.<sup>3</sup> From about the year 1747 onwards, Methodist exhorters regularly visited Anglesey: in May of that year three exhorters were appointed at an Association held at Tyddyn, in Montgomeryshire, to visit Caernarvonshire and Anglesey, and it was during that summer that Peter Williams also preached

---

2. *The English Works of Eliezer Williams*, (London, 1840), clxxix.

3. See *Calvinistic Methodist Historical Journal*, xi. 69 sqq.

there for the first time.<sup>4</sup> Subsequent Associations made arrangements for other preachers to visit the island at regular and frequent intervals, and their labours were by no means fruitless. Early in the year 1747, Methodism had become such a force in Anglesey that Thomas Ellis, curate of Holyhead, deemed it his duty to publish a Welsh pamphlet against the "Schismatics", which was reissued, in a considerably enlarged form, a few months later, in reply to a criticism of the first edition written by William Bulkeley of Brynndu, and distributed in manuscript form in the county.<sup>5</sup>

In October of the same year, an appeal was made to the Calvinistic Methodist Association to take the souls in North Wales under its care, and Howell Harris was asked to go there to settle the converts in societies. In the very same month Harris visited Anglesey for the first time, and he gives an account of his journey in his Diaries: "I was opening about the Nature of Societies & proposed about settling the Societies in this Country, Sure the Lord came wonderfully down indeed & opened a work for us."<sup>6</sup> In the following July, William Jones reports that there were five societies in the county, although William Richard in 1749 could only count four. The latter mentions Llanddaniel and Llanvihange in particular as places where the Methodists were "very zealous," and he also names William Jones (of Trefollwyn) and Hugh Griffiths, a Caernarvonshire Methodist who had escaped from persecution and had settled down at Llanddaniel, as exhorters.

This development of Methodism in Anglesey was not without its difficulties, however. William Jones from the first had shown clear signs of antipathy towards dissent, although the pioneers of Methodism in his own county had been dissenters. Harris had been asked by the Association to urge the Methodists of North Wales not to secede from the Church of

---

4. In July, 1746 Richard Thomas, a native of Anglesey, who had been living for some years in South Wales, where he had become a Methodist exhorter, wrote to Harris signifying his intention of visiting his native county and preaching there, but his subsequent history remains obscure. *Y Tadau Methodistaid*, (Swansea, 1907), ii. 17f.

5. Bulkeley, we remember, was the man who later befriended William Pritchard.

6. *C.M.H.J.*, xx. 17. Harris's Diaries are so full of abbreviations, such as "ab.t" for "about", that they are tedious to read; I have therefore written such words in full, and added a few punctuation marks.

England, and on his first journey to Anglesey he had to try to placate the dissenters, who insisted on separating themselves from a corrupt church and set up for themselves. In an Association held at Lampeter in 1748 the Methodists decided not to allow their dissenting brethren to preach in their societies, and not to go themselves to preach in their meeting-houses, except on special occasions, and this decision was meant to apply in particular to North Wales. It was not intended as a permanent arrangement, perhaps, but merely as a temporary expedient, owing to the prejudice in some districts against nonconformity. The result, however, was to aggravate the already bitter feeling some dissenters exhibited towards the Methodists, as Harris was to discover when he visited Anglesey in October 1748. When he was explaining to one society the "Liberty of Conscience to dissent in a gospel way but not to go visibly from the Church. . . a Dissenter interrupted me and said I kept the People in Darkness and in Babylon etc. I saw such a spirit," Harris adds, "that it was well they have no Authority and would if they could draw every soul from the Church. I discoursed a little with him but it was to no purpose; he was violent, etc." On this journey, Harris found that the Anglesey dissenters called him a deceiver. (*C.C.M.H.J.*, xxvi, Trevecka MSS. Supplement, No. 12. p. 455.) As a result of this visit a certain Owen David of Holyhead left the dissenters, said William Jones, and began exhorting among the Methodists. It is obvious that by now, Methodism and dissent were each choosing its own path, but we must also remember that as late as 1750 John Wesley was on very friendly terms with dissenters. like Howell Thomas, Jenkin Morgan and William Pritchard, and preached amongst them.

It is hardly necessary to trace the history of Anglesey Methodism much further. In 1750 occurred the deplorable breach between Harris and his old friends, under the leadership of Daniel Rowland. For some time many of the Anglesey societies remained faithful to Harris, and later on some of his old converts in the island went to live with his "family" at Trevecka. But when he ceased travelling altogether, he lost hold on his societies, and they probably joined the Rowlandists. and developed into strong Methodist causes. Nowadays Calvinistic Methodism can count Anglesey as one of its most formidable strongholds in Wales. G. T. ROBERTS.

*(To be continued)*

## THE FIELD BIBLE

Most students know of Wesley's reference to the fact that the little Bible he carried around with him was a *genuine* Field Bible, and of the tests by which this could be distinguished from a *spurious* one. It will probably be useful to have a clearer picture of what is entailed by these statements. For this we must turn to the *Historical Catalogue of the printed editions of Holy Scripture in the Library of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, compiled by T. H. Darlow, M.A. and H. F. Moule, M.A., London . . . 1903. From this we learn that there is no simple description of either the genuine or spurious Field Bibles. John Field, of course, printed many editions of the Bible, of which 35 are listed in the *Historical Catalogue*. The small 24mo volumes printed, like Wesley's, in 1653 are numbered 496-500. Field also printed editions in 12mo, 8vo, 4to, and folio. Other 24mo editions were issued in 1658, and again there were disputes as to which were the genuine, and which the spurious (Nos. 520-3.)

Of the 1653 24mo genuine edition, of which Wesley's is a copy, there are several varieties, but the following bibliographical features are common to them all: the text of the volume ends on page Dd 11 *recto*, with a colophon; the Apocrypha is not included; the first four Psalms fill one page. (Aa 8 *recto*); a full column contains 62 lines.

As Mr. Bridgen points out, (*Proc.* xiii; 122). this tiny Bible, containing the text of the A.V., was printed so incorrectly that Field got into serious trouble. A few years later (1659), W. Kilburne published his *Dangerous Errors in Several late printed Bibles*. In this he said:

In a Pearl Bible printed by John Field at London in 1653, ni volume 24o. (very small to carry in pockets) whereof there have been near 20000 dispersed, are these egregious faults, viz:—All the Dedications and Titles of David's Psalms are wholly left out, being part of the original Text in Hebrew, and intimating the cause, and occasion of the writing and composing those Psalms, whereby the matter may be better illustrated. John 9.21. *Or who hath opened his eyes we know not.* These words are wholly omitted. Rom. 6.13. *Neither yield ye your members as instruments of righteousness unto sin, for unrighteousness,* 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall inherit the Kingdom of God? for Shall not inherit.* This is the foundation of a damnable Doctrine for it hath been averred by a reverend Doctor of Divinity to several worthy persons, that many Libertines and licentious people

## PROCEEDINGS

did produce, and urge this Text from the authority of this corrupt Bible against his mild Reproofs, in Justification of their vicious and inordinate Conversations.

Leaving aside the matter of the headings to the Psalms, for which there was some excuse in a pocket-Bible, we have here three typographical mistakes. A later authority (Lea Wilson, 1845), mentions three other misprints: Matt. vi. 24, *Ye cannot serve and Mammon* (God being omitted); John ii. 10, *when they have* for *when men have*; and John iii. 21, *might be manifest* for *may be made manifest*.

Wesley, strangely enough, does not mention any of Kilburne's finds, and has added two of which Lea Wilson did not know in 1845. He notes the Matt. vi. 24. misprint (though quoting from memory once he got the text mixed up). He also records as tests of a genuine Field Bible the fact that Isaiah 34 is printed 39 (i.e. XXXIX for XXXIV), and that I Kings xviii: 13 omits *slew*. These misprints—and almost certainly there are many more! - were apparently not known to the compilers of the *Historical Catalogue*.

The *Historical Catalogue* adds to its description the very necessary warning: "Varieties occur, differing in the engraved title, the number of errors, and other details. Many copies, probably, were corrected by cancel-leaves." Three main varieties are listed:

A. (496) has all the errors noted, the title-page reading ". . . y<sup>o</sup>: Old and New Testaments".

B. (497) has Rom. vi. 13 corrected, and the title-page reads ". . . the Old . . .", whilst there is the signature "WV" at the foot of the engraving.

C. (498) has John ix. 21, Rom. vi. 13, and I Corr v. 9 corrected, "WV" and other slight varieties on the title-page.

Wesley's copy is apparently the number 496 noted above, the title-page also bearing the misprint "Contaning". The writer possesses a copy of 498. In the Rylands Library is what appears to be a combination of 496 and 498, for the title-page is the same as Wesley's, but three of the misprints are corrected, as in 498. It is possible that Wesley's copy is the same at this—detailed examination would soon settle the matter.

The sizes in millimetres of the printed area in each of these varieties are given as 110 x 53 (496), 108 x 52 (497), and 111 x 53 (498), but one feels that these can only be approximate measurements because of the uncertain factor of

paper shrinkage. It seems probable that the sheets would not be completely reset, but only those in which errors had been discovered, so that in general the printed area would reach the same, about 110 x 52. (The writer's copy of 498 measures 108 x 51 mm.).

The *Historical Catalogue* lists two "spurious" editions. The first, numbered 499, is

similar to, but quite distinct from, the preceding Bible. It is far less incorrect, and is printed on thicker paper. Some conjecture that it was produced abroad, and call it the 'spurious' edition of 1653. Engraved title as in No. 497. Text ends on Zz 12 b. No Apocrypha. The first three Psalms are printed on Y 10 a. A full column contains 66 lines in the O.T., and 65 lines in the N.T. This has only one of the six errors mentioned above, viz., that in John iii. 21. 113 x 62 mm.

The second, 500, is described thus ;

Marked by Fry as a variety of the edition immediately preceding (No. 499) ; but it is quite a different book. The B.M. Catalogue calls it a 'spurious edition, not printed by Field.' The engraved title is signed in the left hand bottom corner : *L. Lucas fecit.* and has a list of books on verso. The N.T. title is undated ; it bears the words *Appointed . . . .*, and designates *Field one of His Highness's Printers. . .* The text ends on Ddd 7 a. No Apocrypha. Only two verses of Ps. i are printed on Aa 4a, the first page of the Psalter. A full column contains 67 lines. John iii. 21 is correct. 121 x 61 mm.

A copy of this second "spurious" edition is in the Rylands Library, and is noticeably bulkier than the genuine edition. There is no colophon. The Rylands Catalogue records that it is "attributed to a press in the Netherlands, but the evidence on this point does not seem conclusive." All the eight misprints noted in the genuine editions are here corrected.

It is interesting to note the reference to Field as "one of His Highness's Printers" on the N.T. title-page, although the general title-page contains the usual "John Field, Printer to the Parliament." Oliver Cromwell was installed as Protector on Dec. 16th, 1653, and this Bible, issued at a crucial period, bore on the title-page the arms of the Commonwealth, and announced Field as a Parliament man—it became known to many as the "Parliamentary Bible." One cannot but recognise a Royalist touch in the half-concealed description of Field as "One of His Highness's Printers." The fact that the 1653 Field Bible had such interesting relations with the Civil War would enhance its value in the eyes of Wesley, whose interest in the history of the period is well known.

Mr. Telford, describing the title-page of Wesley's Field Bible, says "A round shield bears the lilies and their text, and 'Luke I, 63 His name is John' is possibly an ingenious play upon the printer's name." The way in which this is put suggests that Mr. Telford had overlooked the important fact that the first text, Matt. vi. 28, is "Consider the lilies of the field". The two texts taken together are most certainly a play on "John Field". It should be remembered that this was an age of conspiracy; secret signs, codes, hidden meanings had become almost second nature to the people.

FRANK BAKER.

For other notes on the Field Bible see *Proceedings XII*, 121 and *XXIV.*, 13.

---

## EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF MRS. SARAH HALL, BRISTOL, 1817-1856.

---

### Part 3

1832. August 16th, Thursday. Meeting for Intercession instead of a sermon. Scores have been removed to their long home the last fortnight. Many of the great and good have died this month in the cholera, but many by other diseases. Robert James about the 20th, Mrs. Cook 25th, Dr. [Adam] Clarke 26th, cholera, Mrs. Perry, 29th.

September 3rd, Monday evening. The fair put off for this year and it is delightful to see the Chapel well-filled while Mr. Turner, [Rev. Philip C.] preached the necessity of following Christ. This is a week of much anxiety. I am about to part with my Dear Jane and left without a daughter . . . . *But my Saviour lives.*

September 9th, Sunday. Mr. Robert Smith preached 3rd Hebrews, 1st v. My spirits much depressed at the consideration that after this day I shall never see Jane *occupy that corner*, or Dr. Clarke speak again from that pulpit, or Mrs. Cook or Mrs. Perry sit before me, or Mr. Wood whose death I have just heard of, neither of them will ever see or hear me till the morning of the Resurrection. The hymn and the sermon so affected me I was silent, could not sing, added to the above my beloved friend Mr. John Shum is very ill.

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The thought of a widowed Daughter and 6 Fatherless children was more than my frame could have borne had not strength from the consideration the Lord reigneth been given me.

[The diarist quotes six verses of the hymn which so affected her, emphasizing the lines :

Joy through my SWIMMING eyes shall break  
And mean the *thanks* I cannot speak.]

September 9th, Sunday evening. Mr. Taylor preached Dr. Clarke's funeral sermon, A *great man* is fallen in Israel.

November 27th, Tuesday morning. The day appointed by the Magistrates etc. etc, as a day of public thanksgiving for the cessation of the progress of the Cholera in the City, Mr. P. C. Turner preached an appropriate sermon and in the middle of the Discourse stopped and called upon the Congregation to join in singing—Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

1833. January 10th, Thursday . . . informed of the death of our late friend Richard Watson.

January 20th. Funeral sermons in the 3 chapels, and crowded congregations. Heard Mr. Alder from 13 ch. Hebrew, 8 v. Jesus Christ the same yesterday and to-day and for ever. Our home was his, Mr. Watson's home, whenever he visited Bristol, everything brought to the table pleased him, but most the *exactness of time* of which he spoke with much pleasure.

January 23rd, evening. A nephew of Mr. Edmondson returned from Barbados, out as Missionary 11 years, 7th Romans, 23, 24, 25 v., a good preacher.

July 11th, Thursday. Mr. Robert Newton at Ebenezer, collections for Sunday Schools. Isaiah 4 c, 1 v. *Very, very good.*

July 25th, Thursday, Mr. Joseph Taylor gone to Conference, alas for Bristol.

November 15th, Friday. Chapel in Hotwell Rd. opened by T. Lessey. Sermons afternoon and evening by W. Davison, [married Sarah Shum, father of Rev. Dr. W. T. Davison.]

1844. January 5th, Afternoon attended the Meeting for renewing the covenant.

May 11th. 19th Anniversary of Methodist Missions. St. Philips, Rev. James Parsons; evening, Mr. Hannah.

## PROCEEDINGS

### MARRIAGE OF HER DAUGHTER JANE

September 12th. *Celebrated the Wedding* of my daughter Jane, given to Mr. Charles Tucker by her father . . . Mr. Hall so much affected both at breakfast and at taking leave of Jane, that my sorrow was swallowed up in caring for him. This I expect to be the last meeting of the family till death shall remove one of us from the land of the living. My dear Mrs. Pearse and Mr. Hall overwhelmed with tears. Mrs. Samuel Hall spending some time trying to sooth Mrs. Pearse, while Mary, Margaretta and Sarah were busily employed in sending cake to the friends.

Mr. Smith read the first 11 verses of 2 St. John and we sang Thou God of truth and love. Mr. Smith and Mr. Taylor joined in most delightfully praying for general blessing on all present, particularly for the new married pair, for the young, middle age and we, the aged members of the family, not forgetting our dear Grandchildren now 18 in number.

After breakfast Mr. & Mrs. Tucker went on to Dine at Midsummer Norton with Jane's old friend Mrs. Mowett, late Miss Lancaster, from thence to Bath to spend a few days with her sister Mrs. Shum. [Rev. Charles Tucker went out as a Missionary to Tonga. The diarist records a letter from Jane, "off the Isle of Wight, 30th October."]

November 4th, Sunday morning. Mr. Alder's first sermon after his return from America. Psalm 118, 17 v. A memorable text to me applied with power to my mind when labouring under great depression of spirit, in prospect of being removed and leaving a *large little* family in the year 1799, soon after the death of Mr. Hall's Father, and birth of Mary.

May 14th. Missionary Meeting held in St. Philip's Chapel, well attended at both services and the collection good, the general opinion is that never was there a more spiritual meeting nor one managed with greater peace and order, and friendly feeling.

June 4th. Letters from Jane from Friendly Islands, the first account of their arrival.

### NEGRO EMANCIPATION

August 1st, Friday. A memorable day to the Slave population. Mr. Smith, 24th Deut. 18 v. But thou shalt remember thou wast a Bondman in Egypt and the Lord thy God redeemed thee there.

(To be continued.)

JOHN BROWN. A METHODIST  
PIONEER

John Brown, a plain farmer, converted under Wesley in 1742, is one of the interesting minor figures portrayed in Wesley's *Journal*. His story is well worth recalling. He farmed consecutively at Tanfield Lea, the Low Spen, and Newlands. Low Spen is in the area of the present Ryton Circuit, the other places are in the Shotley Bridge and Consett Circuit. Newlands is a hamlet on the opposite side of the Derwent to Ebchester, an ancient village of historical interest. It is reached by a road which branches off Watling Street. Its greatest fame is due to Wesley's visits.

On Sunday, November 28th, 1742, Wesley walked from Newcastle, his Northern headquarters, to Tanfield Lea. He had a great congregation, but declares "so dead, senseless, unaffected a congregation have I scarce seen, except at Whickham. Whether Gospel or law, or English or Greek, seemed all one to them." But one of his hearers was John Brown, who on the following Thursday morning was "waked out of sleep by the voice that raised the dead; and ever since he has been full of love, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

John Brown was a man, as his story shows, somewhat subject to moods, and, on the following Saturday, he provided, as Wesley says, "a genuine instance of enthusiasm." He came riding through Newcastle, "hallooing and shouting, and driving all the people before him; telling them God had told him he should be a king, and should tread all his enemies under his feet. I sent him home immediately to his work, and advised him to cry day and night to God, that he might be lowly in heart, lest Satan should again get an advantage over him." (*Standard Journal*, III. p. 54).

In late December, Wesley visited Tanfield Lea again, this time on horseback. It was a rough and dangerous ride, the storm being so violent that he was "more than once only not blown off" his horse. He preached in John Brown's house, and later while he was meeting the society in a large upper room, the room itself shook with the storm.

In the spring of 1743, John Brown removed to the Low Spen, seven or eight miles from Newcastle. Christopher Hopper, the 'tall cedar in the goodly forest of the early

preachers,' who was to become Wesley's "Lord-Lieutenant of the North", enters into the story, becoming a leader at Low Spen, which was not far from Barlow, in the parish of Ryton, where he then lived. With him John Brown made missionary journeys, in which Methodism was planted and fostered by their devoted labours. Wesley pays a fine tribute to John Brown's work at Low Spen. "John Brown had been obliged to remove hither from Tanfield Lea, I believe, by the peculiar providence of God. By his rough and strong, though artless words, many of his neighbours had been much convinced, and began to search the Scriptures as they had never done before; so that they did not seem at all surprised when I declared, 'He that believeth hath everlasting life.'" Two instances may be given of his usefulness here, which affected other places. Methodism appears to have reached Prudhoe, near Ryton, from the Spen, when he lived there. Robert Fairlamb, who became the great stay of Collierley Dykes Society, which has developed into the present Dipton Society, was converted at the Spen. We are told that he followed Thomas Merrick, who had been preaching, into John Brown's house; and that one of the original societies was then formed. So, at the Low Spen, Fairlamb received blessing, and later shared his blessed experience with others at Collierley Dykes.

John Brown's last home was at Newlands. Wesley attributes the beginning of the society here to him; and also that of Blanchland, a famous Northumbrian village, which figures in Besant's fine historical novel, *Dorothy Forster*. Charles Wesley says of John Brown's work at Newlands, "Here also, J. Brown has gathered a flock, and suffered greatly for their sakes."

Christopher Hopper and John Brown were travelling in the North with Wesley, when he was passing through one of the most trying experiences of his life, the all too successful opposition of his brother Charles to his proposed marriage to Grace Murray. In some of these dark days John Brown is by his leader's side, a faithful, sympathetic friend.

In the same year, 1749, Hopper and Brown first visited Weardale. "None opposed, and none asked them to eat or drink."

In 1772 a great revival broke out in Weardale, and the ~~one-time~~ desert blossomed as the rose. Weardale Methodism ~~remains~~ vigorous. When I went to the Wolsingham and

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Weardale Circuit in 1918, the steward who sent the invitation said, "Methodism is the Established Church of the Dale. We have eight pipe organs in the circuit." The last reference to John Brown in Wesley's *Journal* is a sad one. Happily we know it is not the final word about him.

On June 15th, 1759, Wesley crossed from Chester-le-Street to Newlands, where, he says, "I was met by poor John Brown, who has refrained from preaching till he is fallen into deep despair. I preached on 'I will heal their backsliding'; but the word did not reach his heart." T. W. Blanshard, who wrote the interesting and scarce little book, *A Sketch of the History of Methodism in the Shotley Bridge Circuit*, includes in it a brief biographical sketch of John Brown. He tells us that his family found fault with him for neglecting his farm. His foes seem to have included those of his own household, who perhaps quite conscientiously, were opposed to his travelling considerable distances to preach. We rejoice that light shone on him again.

For upwards of sixty-five years he was a devoted and hard-working Methodist. The last ten or eleven days of his mortal life were spent in praise and prayer. As the lamp of life began to burn dim, the light of the Lord shone brighter and brighter on his soul. A few hours before the spirit left the body, a friend, after praying with him, said, "John, is Jesus precious?" The dying saint replied, "Very precious." "John", added his friend, "I think the lump is leavened." "Yes", said he, "it is finished," and immediately fell asleep in Jesus. (T. W. Blanshard).

RICHARD H. WRAY.

Remarkable Methodist extension in the area, broadly reckoned, above is revealed in the list of places included in the Sunderland Circuit when it was separated from Newcastle in 1782, Swalwell (25), Whickham (29), Kiphill (36), Collierley Dykes (55), Burnopfield (55), Sunnyside (9), Hagg (19), Newlands (33), Colgate (46), Barlow and Blaydon (35), Greenside (60), Prudhoe (34).

F. F. B.

---

## THE W.H.S. ANNUAL LECTURE

---

Circumstances compelled the postponement of the Lecture from the July date originally fixed. It was delivered on September 27 at Old King Street, Bristol. Mr. J. Bernard Farnell, who had promised to be Chairman in London, was

## PROCEEDINGS

not able to come to Bristol, and the chair was taken by Ald. C. V. Heaphy of Glastonbury. Dr. Platt, Rev. J. H. Squire and Rev. Dr. Maldwyn Edwards showed helpful interest, and the Lecture by Rev. W. Lamplough Doughty, B.A. B.D., was well received.

The Lecture is confined to the relations between Wesley and his preachers as these were established and maintained through his Conferences, forty-seven in number, from 1744 to 1790.

Mr. Doughty has introduced a feature new to these Lectures by prefixing apt and striking quotations from a wide range of literature to the thirty-one short chapters of which this work consists.

The truth implied in the title *John Wesley: His Conferences and His Preachers* is made manifest in the Lecture. "It was under God, *his* creation, the offspring of his religious genius". But note this: "Leader and President as he was, he yet in spirit made himself one of them, seeking to learn the fuller truth of God." "For over 130 years the Conference was, with little qualification, an assembly of itinerant Preachers only." The reasons for this can be readily understood, says Mr. Doughty; this is so, but it is to be feared that they have been often misunderstood.

It is made clear once again, but not once too often, that the Preachers were not ignorant men, unfit for their work; "the history of the Christian Church can furnish few examples of such devoted, heroic, and sustained service as they rendered." To promote the all round fitness of the Preachers for their work was ever a great concern of the Conference.

The subject of "our doctrines" is handled in most helpful fashion; the first Methodist Preachers recognised them as the dynamic doctrines of the Christian faith. Throughout nominally Christian England they had long been in abeyance. Hence many thought they were new; they were not, and were only peculiarly Methodist by default.

The provision of a seminary for the Preachers was mooted at an early stage, but was found impracticable. Wesley showed his deep concern for the educational advancement of his Preachers by the remarkable schemes of reading he drew up for them. These Preachers, united in their loyalty to their leader, became a band of brothers.

## WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Lecture deals with many other interesting and important aspects of the subject; it is the result of much reading and thought set forth in clear and graceful language, and no student of Wesley should overlook it. F.F.B.

---

### NOTES AND QUERIES.

---

838. A NEW METHODIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOR WALES.—The Calvinistic Methodists, now known as the Presbyterian Church of Wales, established a Historical Society in 1914. This has done much valuable work and continues to do well. The Welsh Methodists, belonging to the Methodist Church formed by the union of 1932, after long consideration have formed a Society to investigate and record the history of their branch of the work.

There is room for this Society; much material awaits exploration, which in the hands of the competent workers enrolled will yield useful results. There was closer fellowship and co-operation between the leaders of the two sections of the revival than is generally known. The Chairman is Rev. D. Tecwyn Evans, M.A.; the Rev. H. M. Pennant Lewis, B.A., B.D., Secretary; Mr. Whitlock Williams, Treasurer; Mr. A. H. Williams, M.A., Editor; Rev. G. T. Roberts, M.A., B.D., Assistant Editor.

839 The Rev. John Bishop, 26 Frayne Road, Bristol 3, is at present preparing a thesis with the title, "A study in the Forms and Psychology of Free Church Worship, with special reference to Methodism." Any one who may know of pamphlets or articles likely to help him to give an authoritative survey of this little-explored field is asked to be good enough to let him know.

---

Title-page and index for Volume XXIV will be sent out with the June issue to Libraries and Kindred Societies in our list. Other members desiring the same are requested to make prompt application to Rev. F. Baker, B.A., B.D., 40 Appleton Street, Warsop, near Mansfield, Notts. It is felt that some members do not require these pages, and that a superfluous use of paper should be avoided.

---

#### A CORRECTION.

The size of the Wesley portrait which appeared in our last number was incorrectly stated. The figures should have been 18½ x 15 inches.