

Conversion Testimonies Transcript Collection (unmodernized from the original manuscripts)

Acknowledgements

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1	Martin	Ashford	31	Natalie	Lejeune
2	Sarah	Ball	32	Sara	Lennox
3	Frances	Bidwell	33	Kate	Little
4	Roger	Bradley	34	Alison	Lovell
5	Alison	Brophy	35	Keith	Lovell
6	Peter	Brophy	36	Kenneth	Mankin
7	Jo	Cali	37	Peter	Manning
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12	Shelley	Dennison	42	Maureen	Noddings
13	Sue	Dilks	43	Cynthia	Park
14	Sue	Eedle	44	Graham	Pearcy
15	Paul	Ellingworth	45	Owen	Roberts
16	Annie	Farrell	46	Gordon	Robinson
17	Mary	Frank	47	Christine	Scott
18	Suzie	Gallagher	48	Helen	Shields
19	Sylvia	Garrett	49	Sarah	Starks
20	David	Gloin	50	Dianne	Stubbs
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22	Diana	Harmer	52	Pauline	Taylor
23	Paul	Hassall	53	Helen	Thomas
24	Sheila	Himsworth	54	Philip	Thornborow
25	Judith	Hogg	55	Janet	Tweedale
26	Frances	Hopwood	56	Helen	Wilson
27	Vivienne	Hulme	57	Rosie	Winn
29	Christine	Jones			
30	Bev	Kinman			

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Gareth Lloyd

Curator, Methodist Archives and Manuscripts

28 September 2018

The Collection

Reference: EMV/501/1

Date: 19 May 1740

Correspondent: Margaret Austen

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotations: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Margaret Austin's May 19 1740"
2. "May 19 1740 Marg[aret] Austin's exp[erience]. A seal"

Reverend Sir

This as far as the Lord enables me is to Shew you the state of my Soul: as far back as I can remember which before I was married I was exceeding proud and had a great Idol which was my reputation that I Cherisht & hugd but marrying very young and having a Cruel husband that brought Down my Pride very much: but that was but forced away by the cruel usage of an unkind husband: and in that time of my affliction I had Crowds of temptations. Though the Lord would att that time have Directed and led me but I find now that I would not lett him lead me: but yet he was merciful unto me yea abundantly merciful and seventeen months ago my husband left me with two children [March 1739] then the Lord Called me to hear the Reverend Mr Whitefield his subject was on Zaccheus and then brought in the Rich man of the gospel how he had laid up treasures on earth but none in heaven and there I found I was that person though as to worldly treasure. I had none: but I had a great Deal in Before but the Lord was pleased to press the words home to me that very first time: for though I went to Church as often as I could I never was struck in such a manner as then: and the next time I heard him was the second time he preacht in moore-fields: and his subject was on sauls persecuting the saints and there again I was much affected with the word finding my self to be the very person: and so continued to follow him where eer I could: and indeed the Lord by his ministry did awaken me and I saw my self to be a lost undone Sinner: then on a time when the Lord saw fit to Lett me see my self was by Mr John att Wapping he was explaining the sin of the holy Ghost there I was struck,¹ though Satan had not power to make me believe I had committed that sin: the Fryday following of heard you Sir and there I plainly saw my Saviour bleeding on the Cross and the soldiers piercing his precious side and the blood falling to the ground a thought of that I had but one drop of that blood to wash away my Sins but Could not apply it to my heart but was under great Convictions: then I heard for your coming up (...)I thought I should (...) something by your memory then I heard the Reverend Mr Rogers by whom I received much comfort: then I heard Mr Brown he said if we read the Devil read with us and likewise if we prayd he prayd with us ortt we went to Church or Sacrament the Devil went with us : and Mr Bell said if we had any doubts or fears then we had no faith: So that I neither prayd nor went to the Sacrament: but after some time the Lord spoke to me by that text of scripture to Peter when Christ said to him when thou art Converted Strengthen thy Brethren. by which I went again to the Sacrament and as I took the cup Satan told me I Should be Dammed for all that: but when we had done Recieving and the minister was Covering the Cup of San Christ lay with his open

¹ John Wesley visited the Society at Wapping on 15 June 1739 (JWJ)

side and I thought I could see his heart bleeding for me: afterward I had a strong Desire to get into the Bands: I went to ye Rnd Mr John Wesley and he admitted me and the first night we met hearing the other tell the state of ~~my~~ their souls it was of mych strength to me to speak of the State of mine: one morning I went to Sister Robinson early and she sung and prayd and I was Convicted Stronger than ever before. . for I had such a sight of my heart as I was frighted att. I saw I was a Leper and was sick from head to foot: in the Evening I was Reading and I saw the Devill in my soul. So that I cryed out O Christ Do not Lett me go: but then the happy minute came when you came: and on good Fryday the words which you Spoke in your Sermon Concerning the Creditor and the Debtor if a man and another a sum of money and another paid it for him he Could in no wise ask him for it again there I saw I was free and that Christ had paid the Debt & so I came away with great joy: and att night your text was who hath believed our report or to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed then I had such joy that I could scarce forbear speaking: I came to you the next Day being Saturday and told you: and you told me I was justified att Wapping : I found your prayer very helpful that morning: and on Sunday morning one of my sisters in Band told me that my Coming to you was Self and that did me much harm for then I thought all that I Did or all ye joy I had was Self yet I went to the Lords table: and as I went still I of thought I was the Prodigal returnd but att night while you preacht Satan prest the word Self to me that I thought Self had brought me there insomuch that wisht the grownd would open & swallow me up but then I knew Christ would find me att the Last so I found I must press forward to find Christ & the Lord was pleast to Lett the comfort return so that I found I was clear before god by the blood of his son; then when you was Reading your journal and said the same spirit that raisd Jesus from the Dead shall quicken thy Dead body. then I felt that Christ would finish what he had begun: the monday following we heard another of your journals: and that Day two year year (sic) said you had received remission of sins and Mr Whitefield att Bexley on the indwelling of the holy Spirit and there I was I was really half a beast and half a devill: then he preacht on the blind man being restored to his sight then I found I had received some light and the last time I heard him was know ye not that Christ is in you except you be reprobates. Oh, thought I, Christ is surely in me. I am no reprobate. but from that time I became Dead to the world : and I heard Mr Delamot next after Mr Whitefield was gone he was expounding on the Sower that went out to sow: and there I found my heart was that stony grownd for a while .. I was hearing the word my thoughts was filled with other things: but the Lord enabled me and I went to the Lords table and when I went to kneel down I had such joy that I thought heaven was within me realy I cannot express the joy for it is inexpressible .: then I heard Mr Delamot as often as possible as his words was very penetrating to me insomuch that I was in great agonies grieving over my Stony heart and the people would pity me but methought I had rather they had beat me for I Deserved no pity: after that I came to Sister Robinson and she saw me in such Conviction she bestowed much pity on me prayed and Comforted me very much I told her my state and she told me how she had received faith under the ministry and by the prayers of you Sir she also bade me go to Mr John and tell him but I told her I could not so she wrote a note and sent me with it but he said nothing to me nor took no notice of it which gave Satan great advantage over me he persuaded me I was bad that there was no mercy for me afterwards I went to Church and the text was the Lord visiting the sins of the fathers upon the Children unto the third and fourth generation then I thought there was nothing but hell and Damnation for me for I knew I had sin enough to Damn me without the sins

of my parents and here I was in Dispair of finding mercy: Satan bid me be quiet and give it all up for I should never be saved but then again in the midst of temptation the Lord spoke to me and it gave me Comfort the words came fresh into my memory he that perseveres unto the end shall be saved : then I heard Mr John att Fetter Lane there he told us of our unfaithfulness to god by which we lost what we had received then I found I had been unfaithful and satan would have had me be gone from the Place and hear no more but then again I thought O what must I go to be Damned : No Ill stay and hear the word so the Lord enabled me to stay but still I was very much tempted and I prayd (missing text) and in your Prayers I found great Comfort: the next morning: as I was arriving the voice of the Lord said to me thy sins are forgiven twice over I heard it given a third time, "Daughter, be of good cheer. Thy sins are forgiven thee then I felt old things passing away and all things becoming new: Still Satan began to reason with me to make me Doubt whether it was so or not: but still the Lord enabled me to withstand him and I bid him go and ask Christ : and then you said all fear was of the Devil that strengthened me again for I found that very true: then I prayd to the Lord to shew me my heart and I found I was a brand pluckt from the fire last Fryday when you was att Prayers I found my self to be the person that Crucified Christ that I wisht my flesh acursed for Christ Sake: the wensday before that I see so much of the Love of God for me and seeing my self so unworthy that I was melted down in tears : ~~thes~~ and last Sunday hearing mr offal I fownd my self to be a Judas . So that if I was to see my self as I am seen of god I could not hear my self: but while this was writting it was the pleasure of god to manifest him self to me : and his voice told me that what he did was for his own sake: I see there is a great work to wrought still in my soul : but he that has begun this work work will surely finish he that is the author will be the finisher : Pray, sir, remembering me in your prayers.

Reverend Father in Christ

I Beg Leave to Subscribe my

Self your young babe in Christ

Margerit Austin

Awakened by the Reverend Mr
Whitefield: Convicted by the Reverend
Mr Jn Wesley: Converted by the
Reverend Mr Charles: For the truth of whole
Doctrine in Strength of the Lord I am
Ready to Lay Down my Life...

Reference: EMV/501/2

Date: May 1740

Correspondent: Elizabeth Hinsom

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Elis[abeth] Hinsom's May 25 1740"
2. Elis[abeth] Hinson's May 1740 Experience'
3. 'Eliz[abeth] Hinson's case 1740'

I was a Pharisee but god was plesed to convince me by heareing mr witfealds sermon that I may know him and the power of his resurrection but know further it plesed god to send your dear brother to home I am bound in duty to pray for so long as I live it plesed god that I went to mr pearkers and he was upon the 13 chap of corinthians and thear I know my self a damd sinner I came home and I thought I was then sinking in to hell this was in march I think but it did not pleas god to reveal him self in me till last september the 4 day I went to mr croches with a [...] to stay but the crode was very grate that I could hardly git in but god would not suffer me to come away I got in but could hardly stay for feear I should be keild Saton raged within and I have reson to bles my god for he instild the un godly in me your brother expounded the 12 chap of sant John and the lord work mytelly in me and I felt a strong conviction and wold have hid it but my lord huw loves sinners still carrid on his work and brought all my sins to my remembrance and then I trembled and should have fell done but the popel heald me up and I was out of my senses but the lord a wakened me with peace be unto you your sins are for giveing you I went home full of ioeye not knowing more to bestow my self so I continued all next day and then my ioeye left me Saton came in and told me I had lost Christ and I mite as well hang my self but god huw is rich in mercy tords all deliverd me from the evil of this temptation I was in darkness and know not god and was ready to cry out with many thay have taken a way my lord and I know not ware thay have laid him but the lord came comfortabel in to my soul with a promis i will heal thy back slidens and will love the freely this gave me much comfort and then it was imprest on my mind that when you came that I should be deliverd and set at liberty by youre minstre according on weansday as you ware att prayers the lord came a gaine in to my soul with power I was filld with love to all man kind I felt uncommon power in my soul and could hardly containe my self I was so frild I could hardly work and so I contined i thought i was a new creter this contined a weak and then Saton buffited me with un clean thoughts one day for three houers that terrified me much and (damaged text)oath i prayed to the lord and then I was fild agane i see so much of my one un worthines that i am lost in wonder when i see what god has done for my soul i have now peace with god and i know that my redemer liveeth to make intessestion for me i can now look up and say Christ is ful of grace for me I have grasuse vissits from god and i trust i shal not reast till i find christ the hope of glory formd within me i wate upon god in the ordinances

Reverend[?] sir after I was justified I went on looking for a graddual sanctification not so much as dreming of a new heart I thought I should recive a other gift but did not know when nor did not trobel my self for I thought I had a grat gift already so I whent on at leas I cold not pray I did not know what ald me I did not pray for a fortnight I whent to my band and told them I cold not pray I askd if I should sin if I did not thay said yes I fond I had no desire to pray nether cold desire thay bid me lift up my heart to the lord for desires so i did but I thought it was a will worship so i whent on it plesed god to send your dr brother I whent to hear him his text was [unreadable text] manuel not that i said unto the you must be born again he polde done what I had bilt up he said a person mite go on forty years for a graddail sanctification an then if one came an did any but hit thear elbo they wher in a pashon I fond it was so with me he preacht a gaine I wonderd at him he told me my heart I thought he spak to me an when I look at him I thought he spak to me only I whent to

hear him again and his text was in exodes the 14 chap I found I was in that net which he describd I fond my il tempers be gun to stir in me when I whent to hear the word preahnt I cold not bear the peopel to toch me I was so cros I was in entangled the wildernes had shut me in I thought I whold not go to church nor to the sacrament so I whent home not thinking to go but my mother ask me and I was a shamd to deni her so I whent but the lord shod me I should wate in the means I whent to church and theas words I could say cold whey kanged hastless dead to thy dread costs I oft repeat by conshance dred nor custom led I come nor no that God art thear I could not pray for my heart afford the irksom prayr I set all my corrupt pashons came in and pursued hard after me I wold have cried to the Lord but my mouth was stopt i cold do nothing but weap i spak this in my band thay said it was good prayr but i did not think so I thought if i spake it wold be beter I whent to the sacrament but fond myself stil cold theas words of this hymn i knew to be my case nigh with my lips to thee I draw unconscious at thy alter found far of my heart nor touched with awe nor movd the angels trembel round I cold hardly help saying that I had beter searved the egyptians then to die in the wilderness I whent to hear your brother as his text was fear ye not stand still and see the salvation of the lord in that he describd the whole stat of my heart I found that I must stand still for I could do nothing thous I whent on some time at last one day the lord came to my soul again with pwoer I could not containe my self I was so frild I could not bear my self for I was forst to cry to the lord to inlarge my heart or I could not have bore it my flesh heald and had not the lord inlarge my heart it murst have broke so I went on till Sunday I went to the sacrament and this promis was applide to my soul the moment the minster gave me the bread to him that over commith will I give him to eat of the hidden mannah this will fild me with comfort then saton thourst sore at me with this temptation couss god an die this fritend me and I could not till what to think of my self this hung upon me a fortnight when I was at prayrs this wold come in tow or thre tims curse god an die I sweted to my fingers ends and I wold cry out how can I curse that god to wich I am praying and I wold pray to be deliverd from it for I was so terifryde I could not bear my self at last this was takin away from me and then I had shuch un clean thoughts an then I though i was as bad as I was befor for i could not look but shuch thoughts came in to my mind that I was surprised at it I never had shuch thoughts in my life befor thear was carse a moment in day for a fortnight that any thing else came into my mind for when I spak some tims I put my hand befor my mouth for fear I shold spak the words but I did not look to the lord for to be deliverd for when I did thay were ten times wors then thay was befor I whent out into the world for when I was talkin I was well a nouf and the moment I came alon theas thoughts came a gain I hated my self and i wisht every body els hated me to for I was a divel to my self when I was at church it was all the same once I was going to the altar an I was half pes[s]waded not for those thoughts came so fast that I though god wold not except me but I did not stay away tho I had a mind to I wisht every body knew that though for I feard they wold think me something when I thought my self a divel. i had a good mind to tell them some times but did not at last I thought god had for got me for then I prayed and stil thay contined I resond so much about it that I brought my self into dearknes even daerknes wich mite be felt and so I contined till the lord sent you with a fresh blessing to my soul I know the lord ofton

begins an ends his work by his messengers and as thro your minstre I am brought thus far by your ministry I dout not but the lord will carry on his worke

worthy Sir I beg leaf to [find?] my self your unworthy servant

Elizabeth Hinsom

Reference: EMV/501/3

Date: 1 June 1740

Correspondent: Martha Jones²

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: Annotated by Charles Wesley:

1. "Martha Joan. June 1740"
2. "Martha Joan's Experience. with God!"

Reverend sir,

I should have been very glad if I had been excused from this task and was in hopes you would forget to ask me for it again. I knew it was my duty to obey you as my spiritual pastor but in this I thought i could not indeed. it was a secret pride in my heart wich made me so unwilin I knew my incapacity to write anything of this kind as it ought and was loth to have my ignorance discovered. O pray for me that all self may be utterly rooted out that i may become as a little child in all things and now according to the abillity god shall give me, I will proceed.

I was brought up in all the outward duties of religion. At the age of fourteen [1736] I was confirmed and solicited by my parents to receive the holy sacrament. My father had taken care to provide me books of instruction, the authors of wich were as he cald them, sound churchmen thus I went on for some time and thought I should be saved for these things. but this shaddow of goodness soon passt away i gave into all worldly pleasure and cast aside the form of godliness insted of the church, the playhouse was my greatest delight thus I sought death in the error of my ways and greived the holy spirit but god out of his tender love hedged up my way with thorns to stop me in my sinfull course and imbiterd all my pleasures by continuall crosses and dissopointments in all my affairs i sought after creature happyness but it pleased him to deny me in what went nearest my heart i could find no rest in anything yet still i would not come to him in whom only true rest is to be found and now behold the amazeing mercy of my offended Lord. He would not let me scape him but let his terrors surround me that my sins might not destroy me. The arrows of the almighty stuck fast in me and his hand pressed me sore an horrible dread overwhelmed me, my sins were set in aray before me and now I felt I was a damned sinner I strove all I could to stifle these convictions but neither company nor my beloved ammusements seeing and reading plays, would not do. The fire of gods wrath was kindled in my soul and I could not

² This is one of two documents written to Charles Wesley. Martha Jones (1722-45) is also mentioned in John Wesley's journal.

put it out. I thought every moment the hand of god was upon me to slay me and send me down to hell my heart was so hard I could not pray.

I continued in this terrible condition some months when on my birth day as i was thinking on my miserable state and wishing I had never been born and despairing of mercy on a sudden I was strongly moved to pray I immediately retired cast my self on the ground and cried for mercy my dear Saviour heard my prayer and comforted my heart my terrors ceased and every fear was gone and I thought my sins were forgiven though then i had never heard of any such thing.

Now I began to work and to amend my life and sought righteousness by the works of the law being ignorant of the righteousness which is of god through faith in his son Jesus Christ. I went on in this dead way upwards of two years at least I heard of mr whitfeild a little before he went to Georgia.³ I heard him preach four times but the account I had his life had much more effect upon me than his sermons. The piety of the young preacher made a deep impression and I had a glimpse how far I was from being a Christian. I now grew very uneasy preaching in the churches afforded me no comfort.

Then I was told of mr broughton but found his doctrine the same with what I had all along heard. The people praised him but I found no benifit however i went of a tuesday night to hear him and happy was it for me for their i first saw and heard your dear brother but was little the better but the next night at Basingshaw⁴ I heard him and felt he was a teacher sent by god my heart was knit to him and I thought I could follow him over the world. I heard him whenever he preached and received the word with gladness and was much comforted and instructed thereby.

The Holy Scriptures, which were before but as a dead letter to me were now Spirit and life I prayd day and night for faith to beleive in those precious promises and god gave me to beleive they should all be accomplished in me in his due time. Your brother's departure to Germany⁵ greived me very much but I was not a little comforted when you came amongst us then i blessed my dear lord who out of his tender love did not in this sence leave us comfortless. Your sermon of the threefold state⁶ which I often heard with tears showed me i was one of those that was seeking god but as yet had not found him I went on my way sorrowing waiting till Jesus should reveal himself unto me.

I have already mentioned how I were delivered three years before from fear of punishment and could not be brought under bondage to fear again. This may seem strange to some but known to god are all his works. It pleased him as I was siting at home one night to give me to beleive my sins were forgiveon that christ died for me

³ Whitefield embarked for Georgia in February 1738 (Dictionary of National Biography)

⁴ Area of London, close to Moorfields

⁵ John Wesley visited the Moravians in Herrnhut, Germany, June - September, 1738 (JWJ)

⁶ Charles Wesley first preached this sermon from 1 John 3:14 on "The Threefold State" on 16 July 1738 from a shorthand manuscript that was first publicised by Oliver Beckerlegge and Tom Albin in 1987 (CWJ and Albin note)

and his righteousness was imputed to me this came with such power into my soul as I cannot express. I was filled with joy and wanted to declare it brother thompson came to see me soon after and I told him, he rejoiced with me and said he would tell mr wesley the next sunday night when your brother had done expounding at mr syms they said I must stay for mr wesley was coming to me when I heard this I was so terrified by satan that I trembled exceedingly and began to doubt. I thought I heard the devil say do not dare to tell this lie you were not justified mr wesley was now come. I told him as well as I could what God had done for my soul and was much strengthened by what he said. After this the devil left me and my faith increased. I walked for some time in the light of gods countenance and was at peace but the lord began to show me my heart and I was much cast down many temptations surrounded me and fear was on every side but my dear saviour succored me in all my sorrows, that I did not utterly faint. Indeed it pleased god always greatly to comfort me by your ministry so that I could not

help being greatly troubled at your departure from london you and your brother gone we were left as sheep without a shepherd those who were left to guide us led us into strange paths. I was brought into great confusion; then I cried unto the lord to help me,. for vain was the help of man but he hid his faith from me and I was sore troubled. Satan vexed me with all his storms and said where is now thy god thus I was distressed on every side. It would be endless to recount every temptation that beset me and conflict which I endured by which my soul was brought nigh unto hell and I almost despaired of seeing this great salvation yet, I was enabled to say unto the lord though thou slay me yet will I trust in thee though i much doubted of my justification because I did not always feel it so strongly as at the first yet I could not but think nay, I could not but believe i was. Indeed, I was confounded when so many of our sisters gave it up who were so much stronger than I and thought it was presumption in me yet i dared not say I was not, I was not justified. I poured out my complaints to my dear redeemer in tears and groans for otherwise I could not pray but he was as one that heareth not. I would not consent to leave of the ordinances though they said we should not go to church nor pray nor receive the sacrament. These things shocked me not that I trusted in any of these things god by your ministry had taught me better. It was Jesus Christ I wanted and him only I sought in them but indeed i feared these men were bringing another schisme into our church this greives me very much and I earnestly pray and doubt not but you will join with me that god would preserve her and restore her to her primitive purity which I trust he will do since he hath raised two or three faithful ministers and has made them instruments in his hand to carry on this great work.

I continued in great perplexities and had almost given up my hope when god sent you to us again and on easter sunday I heard you preach and the lord strengthened and confirmed my faith.⁷ My doubts and fears vanished and the lord made his way plain before my face and as now I believe I shall see his full salvation o praise the lord on my behalf and let his name be glorified for all his great and undeserved mercies to me. Dear sir accept this imperfect account which in obedience to you, I have writ much against my will from your weak sister in Christ

Martha Jones

⁷ Charles Wesley preached on Easter Sunday, 6 April 1740 at the Foundery in London (CWJ)

Reference: EMV/501/4

Date: 1740

Correspondent: Ann Martin

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Note: This is the first spiritual autobiography to include Charles Wesley's religious verse to express spiritual experience. See below for extracts from *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, published in the same year that Martin wrote this testimony.

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Ann Martin's Experience 1740."
2. "Ann Martyn 1740"

Ambassador of Christ and well belov'ded in the Lord Please to accept these from the Simplicity of my heart, as a little child beging to speak plain the Lord is very gracious to me O I feel the fire of his love in my heart O Lord how shall I express thy goodness who am unworthy of the least of thy mercies, but thro' the son of thy love O dear S^r: Join with me in prayers to prase the lamb that sits upon the throne for ever and ever. O my Dear Saviour thou art now pleading to thy father for me, thou art presenting my soul before thy father O Glory be to the O God of love who has brought me out of Egypt and led me through the wilderness to thy promiss'd land. I begin to tast the fruits and rejoice in the hope of that glory which shall be reveal'd when christ which is my life shall appear then I shall behold the glory of my father O thou art in the father and the father in thee O holy father Glorify thy son for thou hast search'd my heart and try'd my spirit here in me thy spirit cryes O Lord and heavenly father in me perform thy will for in thee is my trust Dear Sr: the Lord was pleas'd to use Mr Whitefield as the first Instrument in Drawing me to the Son of his love but you I must own as my Spiritual father I was begetting to a lively hope in Christ Jesus my lord before you first went to Bristol First I was drawn to use the ordinances but I was afraid I thought I was not fit I came to ask your advice you told I might expect to recieve faith I thought it was strange talk to me For I thought I Lov'd Religion better than ever I went away from you very heavy and soon began to grieve that I griev'd no more I was reading when my heart was filld with joy But soon I found it was Deceitful fearing I should deny the Lord and be worse than I was before but the lord gave me power to cry out Jesus thou son of David have mercy upon me some times I was dead and cold in prayer I thought I could only lay before the lord till he gave me power O Lord make us all as clay in thy hands satan was nigh but Christ was nigher I felt his spirit Interceding with groanings that cannot be utter'd O 'tis a good but painful fight I was ready to say father if this cup might pass from me but thy will be done in prayer I receiv'd the spirit of Adoption crying Abba father I had not yet seen the lord the last time I heard you at M^r. Brays⁸ but I had a greater gift more than any

⁸ John Bray (*fl.* 1738–44). A poor uneducated layman and brazier by trade, who was possessed of a deep religious faith. Bray's house in the district of London known as Little Britain was a centre for early evangelical activities until it was superseded by the Fetter Lane Society. It was at Bray's home that Charles Wesley was converted in May 1738 (*Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860*, edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995))

before the power of the most highest Overshaw'd me, I thought for some time I stood still and was the same But glory be to the lord I feel I am grown in grace and feel the lord always in my heart waiting till faith to sight be chang'd and I behold thy glory O holy father as in a glass I seem to see the glimps O the son of Righteousness is risen with healings in his wings O king of Glory shine with full heat he that shall come will come when patience has had his perfect work, our Sister Mary Frances Join's with me in duty to you and Love to all Our brothers and Sisters in the Lord for ever and ever Amen the lord has brought her out of darkness into the Marvellous light and out of the Bondage of Corruption into the glorious Liberty of the children of god, Sing we now to god above praise eternal as his Love Dear S^r: we should be glad to hear from you if you will please to write too us tho.' Absent in body yet present in spirit I trust for ever and ever Amen, The Lord strengthen you and Your Dear Brother in the Inner man and fill you with all the fullness of god and assist you with that Wisdom which cometh from above and give you the Discerningments of spirit as far as is needfull Lord take all evil from amongst us and grant that we may be all knit together in one spirit as thou and thy father art one, Now to him that is able to give more than we can ask or think be all Honour, Praise, Might, Majesty both now and for ever Amen
From Y^r: Unworthy sister in Christ.

Ann Martin.

My Dear Brothers and Sisters Let me beseech you by the mercies of god in Christ Jesus that you hold fast that you have attained too still forgetting the things behind press forwards towards the mark of your High calling which is in Christ Jesus our Lord What he said unto one he said to all watch and pray lest you enter into Temptation take care of evil speaking and judging one another but look unto Jesus the Author and finisher of your faith whose fan is In his hand and he will thoroughly purge his floor _ Amen

Let the fruits of grace abound
Let in us thy bowels sound
Mutual love the token be
That we O Christ belong to thee⁹

We for christ our master stand
Lights in a benighted Land
We our Dying lord confess
We are Jesus Witnesses¹⁰

Reference: EMV/501/5

Date: 25 May 1740

Correspondent: Sarah Middleton

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Locations: London and Plaistow

⁹ The first two lines of the preceding verse are from *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1740) pp. 182-3 "The Love-Feast" Part II, verse 3, lines 1-2.

¹⁰ The preceding stanza is from *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1740) pp. 181-2 "The Love-Feast" Part I, verse 3, lines 5-8.

Annotations: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Sarah Middleton's Experience, May 1740."
2. "Sarah Middleton May 25 1740"

Reverend Sr,

I writ these lines to let you know what a pharisee I was I went to Church & Sacrament Constantly & I thought I Did very well for I was a Strict pharisee I would not be in any ones company that said an [evil?] word nor would I go a pleasareing as others did for fear of Sin if I did at any time and mis my Church I thought some [jud[ge]ment would follow me so if any one had asked what hope I had of my Salvation I should presently have said I never did any harum for I always did to others as I would they should do unto me and I thought I was very sincere so I did not fear but God would accept me that is the Most account I could give of my self then but thanks be to God for his unspeakable mercy in bringing me by his free grace out of darkness in which I sat Thought my self a Christian but I found my self mistaken when it pleased god to revial his dear son in me & to show me the way of savation as for the articles of our church the Doctrine of the spirit of God, of regeneration and of justification by faith I was a stranger to them all nor do I remember to have heard any of them preached or explaind by our clergy indeed I went to church and said my prayers and had a form of profession but knew nothing of the power. I had no oyl in my lamp no inward principal of holiness in my Heart what was I but a whited sepulchre the harlots and publicans [would] have entered into the kingdom of heaven before me how shall I Sufficiently praise the lord for first drawing me to hear Mr Whitefeld but Satan wold fain a kept me from hearing him but the Lord drawd Me with the cords of his love so that I could not keep from hearing him where ever he went but when I have heard him say that every person born into this world Deserves Gods & Damnation and tho we went to church & Did all the outward things we were but baptised heathens them words usd to sink deep into my Heart I had a Great deal of sorrow under his preaching but when it pleased God to call him away I went to hear Mr John Wesley his words was sharper to me then a two edged sword & I cannot but always honour him as an instrument in Gods hands of shewing me the true way of salvation by Jesus Christ sep^r 10th 1739.¹¹ I heard Mr Wesley take the 16th chap^r of Acts v 30th the words as follows what must I do to be saved then he explained the Ten Commandments which wounded me so much that I was hardly able to stand under him for I thought I had kept them as touching the law blameless from myyouth up but hearing them explained I felt I had broke all of them so that I could take no rest night nor day by reason of that load of sin which I felt within me for I felt a hell within me so that I often cryed out in the agony of my soul what must I do [to be] savd for my soul was like the troubled sea so that it weight my body down so that my mother and others thought I should hardly overcome it they wold had me taken many things but I knew it was for sin so that I refused all outward comfort it usd to press much upon me that the power of the lord was present to heal me so that I had hope against hope for I could plead with my Dear saviour O Lord

¹¹ John Wesley "expounded" at Plaistow twice on the evening of 10 September 1739. Plaistow is now part of the East London borough of Newnham, but in the mid-18th century, it was a country village 8 miles from the centre of London (JWJ)

Thou has said come unto me all you that are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest I felt my self so vile that I thought hell was ready to swallow me up but I found Christs everlasting Arms was under me the 14 of Sep^r when I was in the greatest agony of soul I heard a voice Say unto me daughter Be of Good cheer thy sins be forgiven thee at the same time I felt so much love in My heart that I could hardly contain my self for I wanted the whole world to feel what I did & I was at the same time restored to my bodily health as well as ever I was in my life but I was [much] tempted to keep it to my self and not to tell Mr Wesley what the lord had done for me but that saying of our lords pressed much upon me that there were ten cleansed but where are the nine there is none that is returned to give thanks save this stranger so that gave me courage to go to him and let him know how Gratisus the lord had been to me for I was caught as a fire Brand out of the fire I was full of pride & passion & every thing that was evil but did not do it for I never remember our teachers to speak against it for I was alive without the Law once but when it came in a spiritual meaning sin revived and I dyed but thanks be to God for his free grace for shewing mercy to the chief of sinners for it is not of him that willeth [nor] him that runneth but God that sheweth mercy

Blessed be the name that set me free, the name that sure Salvation bring the sun of righteousness [a]rose on me with healing in his wings. Blessed be God now I can say whom have I in heaven but thee & there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee thee I can love & thee alone with holy peace and inward bliss, to find thou takest me for thy own O what happiness is this." [*hymn by CW?] Glory be to the lord I feel a continual peace & love springing up in my heart Day by day I know I do not commit sin for my soul is always hungarying & thirsting after righteousness and I know I shall be fed I used to rest in going to church & sacrament but now I do not rest upon them but upon Christ Jesus my lord and My God but I find it a Glorious Liberty to use the means of Grace and not abuse them. Glory be to the O christ I find I gather strength daily for I used to be a afraid to Speak to my carnal relations what god had done for my soul but now I find I am constrained to speak tho I know they will cast me out as a byword & a Proverb of reproach when I was of the world the world Loved its own but now christ has choose me out of the world therefore the world hates me but this I rejoice In for it only sets a mark upon me to showe what master I belong to

I am

Dear Sir

Your affectionat but unworthy Sister in christ

Sarah Middleton

Reference: EMV/501/6

Correspondent: Katherine Gilbert

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Date: 1740

Annotations:

1. In the hand of Charles Wesley – “Cath Gilbert 1740 converted”
2. In an unknown 18th or early 19th century hand – “Experiences of the first Methodist conversions under Rev[eren]d C. Wesley”

Revd Sr

With humility I make bold to write these lines unto you, it being my Greif of heart wh is the real cause, upon the acc^t of your leaving Us in this place. Ye great work wch ye Lord Jesus has done for me and in me, thro: ye Operations of ye Holy Spirit under Your Ministry yt I am Constrained thro: Love to acknowledge what ye Lord hath done for my Soul, for I am Pluckt as a firebrand out of ye fire. God as Convinced Me of Sin, of Righteousness and of Judgment Before ye Lord sent you and your Worthy Brother Amongst us, I thought my, Self Something but I can Now See what I am by Nature and Deserves Nothing but Damnation. I knew nothing of Faith alone in Christ, nor ye Operations of ye Holy Ghost nor what it was to be born of God, and to become as a little Child a New Creature in Christ Jesus. I was Ignorantly led and taught. My Soul longeth to become More and More in purity of heart and to receive greater Measure of ye love of God Shed abroad in my heart. I humbly desire your Prayers at ye throne of Grace yt God in Christ would Perfect and Compleat my Salvation. I am not left without Reproaches or threatnings by ye Children of ye World, for ye Words Sake but I hope I am thro Christ overcoming this World I am not Moved at their doings towards Me, as at ye Contempt Cast upon Gods Word and Children. May ye Lord our God Even Christ Jesus fill you More and More With his Spirit and Crown your Ministry wherever you go with thousands of Seals in ye Conversion of my Guilty Brethren. So continually prayeth your handmaid in ye Lord Katherine Gilbert

Reference: EMV/501/7

Date: May 1740

Correspondent: Sarah Barber¹²

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotated: In Charles Wesley's hand:

1. "Sarah Barber's 1740"
2. "Sarah Barber's Experience, May 1740."

Reverend Sir:

Att your Request: I here as far as the Lord gives me knowledge to see & know my Conversion: which before I heard the Reverend Mr Whitefield I was a Publican Living in the world as if there was no god: but that I Did not know it because I was not a notorious open offender. I therefore thought my Self a very good Person: but the Lord was pleased to Call me first by the ministry of Mr Whitefield: I went the first time that he preached in moorefields but Could not hear him: wherefore - my Curiosity was the Stronger to return. So I went the next Sunday and the Subject he was upon: was Sauls Persecution of the Saints: and therein the Lord was Pleased to Show me. I was that very Saul and from that time I was under Conviction for some time that I saw nothing but hell and Damnation before me and that humbled me att that time-: So I had stronger Desires but I rested there and thought those Desires was the thing it Self insomuch that I got into Spiritual Pride and not being Convinced of my heart of unbelief insomuch that I thought I need not pray for faith: but the Lord Saw me in my Sins though I Did not: and by the ministry of Mr John on a time when

¹² Listed as a member of the single women's band led by Bridget Armsted at the Foundery, 1745 (Stevenson, *City Road Chapel*, 36)

the Lord Saw fit his Subject was on the Woman that Stood behind our blessed Saviour when he was att meet in the Pharisees house that She powered the Box of ointment on him: there the Lord Shewed me. I had not faith though before I thought I had yet I was very uneasy knowing I wanting Something but knew not what will there till then: nor then neither for then I thought I had faith though not Such Strong faith: and att that time. I went to Sister Robinsons to get into the Bands but Could not be a admitted then: and I told her my but She told me I had no faith which indeed was true then the Lord shewed me more and more my unworthiness and the want of a Savior then I saw the Saviour was not mine – for I was not Saved from Sin. neither Could I Call the Saviour mine - then I Walked on in a Deep Spirit of bondage: afterward I was admitted upon tryall and then I was Most time in great Doubts but then hearing the Lord Justifieth the ungodly, then I knew I was ungodly but then Satan would Dragg it away again and would make me believe it was not for me. though Sister Robinson would often bid me not believe him. Then I hoped and found Comfort and indeed the band was of great Service to me for I never went away without Some Comforts thensome comforts. Then, when the Lord Sent you to town¹³ I thought the Lord had Something in Store for me which should be revealed unto me by your ministry: and Sister Robinson told me you gave her Leave to bring us to hear your Journals for which I have Reason to Praise God: for in your Prayers I saw my Saviour Bleeding on the Cross and the Lord Shewed me my unworthiness in it so that I was astonished and Stood amazed to think it was for me. I heard the voice Saying this I do for my own Sake but Satan put me to Doubt of in Such a manner that I had not Power to Speak of it to any: but att night when we met again in your prayers the Lord was pleased to give me the Second gift of faith to believe that Jesus was my Lord: I was going to Speak of it but Satan stopt my mouth: because there was Several Sisters had received the Same gift and when they spoke of it I was going to speak but was stopt for thought if I spoke of it Would only seem as if I wanted to be Like them insomuch that I did not Speak: but in Coming home I told Sister Robinson and she glorified god and Said I was Justified: but was Sorry that I Did not speak that we might have praised God together to Shame of your Enemies: So I went on till the Tuesday following in great calmness and in Such peace that I never felt before: but then I Went to Sister Robinson and told her I was Afraid that I was going into that Stilness that was talked of but She told me it was the Peace of god. That my Sins were pardoned and if I had peace: and was in a very Safe State: and On the wensday I found it true for I found the Pardon written on my heart: blessed be. The almighty for what he hath Done. But I find there Is still a great Deal more. to Do in his good time for there is great Corruptions Still in me: and I Doubt not but he that is the author will be the finisher: Of my faith: indeed before I was Justified Satan threw his Daughter att me to keep me from the ordinance. but the Lord gave me Power to go and When I was att the table the voice of the Lord said unto me this is the way walk ye in it: [...] and the Lord enabled me to go on not trusting in them: but in him alone: Reverend father in the Lord I beg that you would Remember me among the Rest of your Spiritual Children in your Prayers: I beg Leave to subscribe my Self your young Babe In Christ
Sarah Barber

¹³ Probable reference to Charles Wesley's visit to London commencing 4 July 1739 after delivering his University sermon in Oxford (CWJ)

Reference: EMV/501/8

Date: 23 May 1740

Correspondent: S[ister] Iberson

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: [London]

Annotated: In Charles Wesley's hand:

1. "May 23 1740"
2. "S. Ibison's exp[erience] May 1740"

This is what god hath Dun for my soul I went Sume time Since to Kennington
Common to hear M^r Charles Wesley priach & he prached out of y^e, Cor: y^e 6 & 9 &
10: but I Can not tell any body what a Great Sinner I was for no tounge nor Pen Can
Exprise y^e Grife of my Soul I though y^t he had spake it all to me, for I Sow all y^t I had
Ever though & dun in my Life So y^t I was y^e Greatest Sinner y^t Ever Lived & had not
my Housbon been there I should tould al y^e people So, but it Cam into my Soul what
will my Husbon think y^t I have been Some vile woman & a Las it was allways what
my Soul obhored no it was my wicked Hart y^t I sow:now, & I near sow it befor: for
befor this day I was well I though I was very good becose y^e would Coled me So: but
a Las I had brock all y^e Commands it was now y^t I wanted a Saviour I Sad o what
Shall I do to be Saved: I am Suer y^t this I Spake from my very Soul for befor he had
Dune praying my Joy was as as Great as my Sorrow there was some thing y^t tould me
my Sinnes was for given & y^t I might go to y^e Sacrament for I had near been I though
y^t I was not Holy a nofe & I alway's had a great desir to go: but Same thing fel out y^t I
near went for I was for making my Self Holy but now I was resloved to go So I went
& when I Came in to y^e Church I Could not Hold a bone of me Stile I was. So a frad
& I begain to dout what Suer this was but a fance y^t Came in to my Head Can my
Sinnes be forgiven hear, for I was a Stranger to y^e Doctreing for I had near anything
Like this in my Soul befor I was a mased at my Self: well near y^e Las' not with
Standing all my Douts & fears I rec^d: it & I was fild with

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Love as well as Joy I pray'd for all for I Can Say y^t I loved Ever Soul, well though
now I well near Sin no more as Long as I Live, I begain to wounder what was Come
to me I was not acquainted with any y^t I Could tell my mind to but I was all Changed
to what I was befor: but I begin to Reason with my self; y^t I fal to dout & I fall into a
Pashon at a trilfeing thing, but when I Came to my Selfe my Soul was as Black as
Hell for I though there was some thing tould me in my Soul well now you have brock
your promis you ned not go to Church any more nor hear y^e wesley priach: now did
my Grife return & my Soul was in Hell I Could not Rest day nor night I was worse
then Ever. I pray'd for a nue Hart day & night al tho I do not remember y^t I Ever rede
it to take notiage of it: well I was resloved to go a gain to hear them Priach so I hard
m^r John & he in his Sarmon toald me y^t I wanted a nue Hart for I though y^t it was all
Spake to me So I was Glad y^t I had prayed a Right so I begine to Loke in to my Bible

& then I Sow y^t what there had toald me was troue o what Grife was I in for a Long time & under Great temptation but Stel I prayed al wayes & weped & I was Sorry y^t I did not See Ever one wep for I though if there Souls was as black as mine we Should al Crie & then I Could frely tell thim all my Grife, but as I Satt in fatter Lane¹⁴ by my selfe in Great Sorrow y^t my Soul was in Hel: there Came In Such Joy in to my Soul y^t all my Grife was gone I Lay at my dear Savor fett & I prayed y^t he wou'd bliss me & I am suer y^t he did for I had no Condimnacion in my Soul o how did I Love

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my Dear Loving Saviour & all people now Could I pray in ded to my dear Saviour y^t he had Coled me y^t was Such a worthlas worme now did I wep in ded with Joy now I begain to pray for the 2 m^r wesleys but more for y^t Dear Soul m^r Charles for he had plockt my Soul out of Hell & I am Suer I Can not forgett him So Long as I Leve I Can as Soon for gett my Self Can any be So vile & unGreatfull as forgett y^e Parson y^t Leds y^e way to So good a Saviour this Love y^t I have is not Such a Love as y^e world knows any thing of nather Can there but those y^t hath received it when I was on friday att prayers I was in such Joy y^t I Can not Exprise it you Spake Some thing of y^e Holy Sacrament it Cam with such power into my Soul y^t I prayed o y^t I might but receive it from your Hands then I Should be free in ded for I know I had received so many givefts from my dear Saviour by your praching & prayers allthow I at y^e Same time know not which way y^t I Ever Should but when I had dun praying & all y^e Reast of y^e people you Coled me & tould me y^t I should go with you to rec^d: y^e Sacrament for you was a going to a Sick woman I woudered at y^e Love of my dear Saviour & then I was amased how you Cam to know what was in my Soul for I had not Spak with any So I was Suer y^t y^e Lord hard me & y^t he tould you to Cole my from all y^e Reast I prayed al y^e way & though what a good Saviour we have o y^t all y^e world but know him how good he is but when we Came to y^e House you tould us y^t you woud not give it

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her if she had not forgiveness of sinnes which was So,^aprise to me but I though well if She hath not y^e Lord will hear his prayers for her & for give her So he did all y^e Glory be to god who heareth them y^t put there troust in him so we rec^d: it & I was fild with Love as well as Joy So y^t I prayed for all & I wept to See So many dead people in y^e Streets I Could hardly get home with out telling them So but a Las I begine to thank what a descattfull Hart I had & y^t it was past finding out & y^t I must put a dower befor my Lips & wach over my descattfull Hart for I am Suer y^t I obhor myself when I See what a good Saviour I have when I was att m^r Halls I was taken So full of Love y^t I though I wou'd gett him to pray to my dear Saviour y^t he would keep allwayes in y^t State but I did not for it Came in to my Soul what am I going to do who knows what y^e Lord will give me if I wate uppon him as a power Sinner I desir to be Led as a

¹⁴ Fetter Lane, London

Little Child & y^t I may Ever wach over my self for now I Can not See anything in any, I find y^t I have dun my Soul Great dele of harm by Spaking tow much, but Since it is my dear Saviour y^t hath tould me So I hope I Shall nevar forgett him no I Can not o y^t I might keep him Ever befor me if I do not I am Suer y^t I Shall fole o y^t I might not Lett go my Hold but Prise forward for y^t Great Salvation pray for me I begg of you & y^t you will not forgett me

Reference: EMV/501/9

Date: [1763]

Correspondent: Joseph Jones

Document: Account of William Grimshaw¹⁵

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Haworth

Mr. Joseph Jones's Account of the Revd Mr. Grimshaw

I was taken ill at Mr. G's house, and confined there for 6. Months, during w^c time he was more than a father to me; I had then ye happiness of seeing ye glorious life he lived, shewing forth ye power & goodness of his Saviour, God & Master: (as he was wont to call him w^m he lov'd honour'd & obey'd in every action & every breath.

He would often say "I love my God & Saviour but how shall I love him enough." He was so filled with love, y^t at only mentioning ye name of God, he has stood stile when I was walking wth him, & not been able to speak for 10 minutes together. At last he said "what shall I do, what can I do to love & serve my God better"! I have seen him

¹⁵ William Grimshaw (1708-63): Born in Brindle, Lancashire, the son of a poor farmer, Grimshaw was educated at Blackburn Grammar School and Heskin Free School before going up to Cambridge Christ's Church in 1726. After graduation, he was ordained and served curacies at Littleborough and Todmorden until 1742, when he was admitted to the perpetual curacy of Haworth in Yorkshire.

Grimshaw began to exercise an evangelical ministry on Methodist lines although he did not have contact with the Wesleys until much later. He was particularly influenced by the Scottish preacher William Darney who visited Haworth in 1744.

Grimshaw met Charles Wesley in October 1746 and in the following May, John Wesley preached in Haworth Church. Grimshaw began to evangelize outside his parish bounds and in July 1747 he accompanied John Bennet on a tour of Methodist societies in Lancashire and Cheshire. In 1750 he was named by John Wesley as the next in authority after the Wesley brothers.

Grimshaw was a staunch High Churchman and a close ally of Charles Wesley in the struggle to keep Methodism within the Church. (Principal source: Frank Baker, *William Grimshaw* (1963); Lewis)

so overpower'd with love, yt he seemed as tho' he would have taken wing & fled from the alter to the Throne of God. At the Sacrament in singing the psalm or hymn, his voice has been so raised, than it seemed more than mortal. In prayer afterwards, he had often these words "Lord we have taken hold of the Horns of ye Alter, & we will not let thee go till thou hast blessed us."

There has scarce been a dry eye among the communicants: whose number was seldom short of a thousand.

His love to man was without bounds, and impartial to Xtians of all denominations.

He used to say "I love my God first & best, but not enough. Next to him, I love my dear Bro.rs Wesleys, wth whom I am heartily join'd & hope never to be parted in time or in eternity. Next to them I love my dear Bror Whitefield,¹⁶ & next to him all ye labourers: & all yt love & desire to love ye blessed Jesus. And I love all mankind as well as them."

If he rested a day from his outward labour of preaching, he spent at least six hours of it in private prayer, beside reading, meditating, and other Xtian duties.

In labours he was more abundant & quite indefatigable. He never preached less than twenty times in a week: I have known him preach 28 times Once he told me, he had preached that week 31. times.

Indeed his whole life was scarce anything else than preaching, prayer & praise.

Yet he never exacted his dues of ye people; but wld often tell them in the Church "I will never have ye curses when I am dead, for what I received for my poor labours among you: for I want nothing more than your Souls for God, & a base maintainance for myself." This he made appear throughout his life: he wore very mean apparel, & lived upon very coarse food; wch is "more, said he, than I deserve"

I have often heard him tell his parishoners from the pulpet, "If you will be damned, it shall be long of yourselves, for I will be clear of yr blood". He used every means he could to save them from ye pit, when he knew any that wld not come to church, he wld give public notice there, that, at such a time he should preach at such a mans house. & when there he would say, "I know I am not welcome, but I will speak to every one under my care concerning his soul. If you will not come to hear, you shall hear me at home: & if you will perish, you shall perish wth the sound of ye gospel in yr ears"

¹⁶ George Whitefield

When any such was sick & sent for him he dealt very faithfully with them, & said “the hand of God is upon you, & the devil is ready to take you, & hell to swallow you up: & now it is, send for Grimshaw in all haste”! He has talked thus to the most hardened sinners, till their beds have shook under them: & many have been thereby brought to a knowledge of themselves & of Xt.

He told me once, “I have buried 18 of my parishoners this year, & I have good reason to believe that, 16 of them are now in the kingdom of God”. He used all means to make his people keep their church. When the law of God could not prevail, he made use of the law of Man. While the clerk was singing ye last psalm, he often stole out of church & visited the public houses, & drove all he found there to church before him. He informed against the alehouse-keepers & made them pay the fine, for drawing beer in time of divine Service. As many as he found in the churchyard, he sent to church in like manner; telling them, “you came here to go to church & I will make you hear me”

If he saw any that were trifling, or sleeping in the time of service, he would shame them, before ye whole congregation. On Sacrament days, he continued in the church from 9 till 5 in ye afternoon, & would then often go 3 or 4 miles to visit the sick, or some new born infant likely to die; & at night say “I have done nothing for God to day”

In his family duty he exceeded all I ever saw He rose at 5. Began singing “Praise God from whom all blessing flow” Spent an hour in private prayer, yn called the family & read the psalms & lessons for ye day sang an hymn & went to prayers. He then took his leave of them, as if he should see them no more, with “God bless you in your Souls & in your Bodies, and in all you put your hands to this day, & whether you live or die, the Lord grant you may live or die to him.” He observed a like form going to bed, wc he usually did at 11.

In his charity he was so liberal, that his Friends were afraid he would die in debt. I asked him about it: his answer was. “Were I to die to day I am not worth an halfpenny.”

When there was any quarrel among Xtians how would he labour to reconcile them. After he had taken much pains to make up a difference between two persons. I heard him say “I beg you upon my knees: I will put my head under your feet, if you will but love one another.” He then fell upon his knees, & broke out into prayers & tears, till all in the house were melted down into tears & perfectly reconciled. In short he aimed at nothing but the glory of God, and the good of all that came in his way.

If any had used him ill, as soon as he saw the least repentance in them, or heard the least confession from them, he would take them into his bosom again. I think, in all things from ye beginning to ye end of my acquaintance with him I never saw a mortal man like him.

The mean opinion he had of himself is hardly to be expressed. He preferred every soul before himself extolled ye weakest messenger of Gods sending, praised God for all; & told his people, “if they despised any of them, God might justly take them all away”. After hearing any one of them (Mr Gilbert in particular) he used to say “O how shall I ever preach again after this man”?

He embraced Xtians of all denominations, saying “I love them & I will love them, & none shall make me do otherwise: & my House shall always be open to them all.”

He never stuck, at any weather, or suffered it to hinder his labours. In the coldest he never complained of the cold, but thanked God for whatever he sent.

He was sometimes much afflicted in body, but bore it with invincible patience. He often said “I expect my stay upon earth will be but short & will endeavour to make the best of a short life; & so devote my self soul to God as not to go creeping to heaven at last.” He fulfilled his word by redeeming his “pretious, pretious time” as he justly called it.

He could not bear to hear people say, they had faith, while their lives said the contrary. He hungered & thirsted after righteousness & pursued it in all he did saying “Holiness is a pretious Gift & a pretious Priviledge.” How would he bless God for Jesus Xt, & for all the benefits of his passion, for the gospel & its being preached; for all the means of grace & the hope of glory! It seemed as if he could never praise God enough. O God what hast thou done for us! & what wilt thou do for us hereafter! Surely there is no God like unto our God!

He spoke of death with pleasure as letting him into a better world; & bringing him into the arms of his Saviour.

In his conversation, he was edifying at all, times. He was always happy in Xt, & never lost sight of him from the first day of his conversion: yet no one groan’d under the bondage of corruption more than he did: & he frequently said “O if the people knew what an heart I have they would not love and honour me as they do”!

God had shew’d him at the beginning of his course, that he should endure unto the end: which he declared to a very few of his most intimate friends: but never preached Perseverance, as a doctrine or encouraged others to think themselves past danger of falling

He used great plainness & simplicity in his conversation with all men, sparing neither poor nor rich, but boldly reprovng all as necessity required

He often prayed that at last he might give up his account with joy: & he now enjoys the fruit of his prayer in paradise.

Reference: EMV/501/10

Date: 20 September 1738

Correspondent: Mrs Platt¹⁷

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Oxford

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Mrs. Plat's Justif[icatio]n 1740."

September 20th 1735. I Receiv'd a present from a Dear Friend which was a Book called ye Great Importance of a Religious Life,¹⁸ which when I came to open I found these Words Written Be Faithful unto Death & I will give thee ye Crown of Life when I had considered with my self my past Life and ye state I was in then it made me cry out with ye Trembling jaylor what must I do to be saved. O who can dwell with Everlasting Burnings at which I was Astonished to think what I had being Doing For I saw Nothing but ye sight of Hell Before mine Eyes which Brought me Almost into despair my Friends being called from me By ye will of our Heavenly Father to Preach unto ye Unconverted I was left in a Maloncolly state not considering that I had a gracious Saviour that had spar'd me in all my Sins & hath Promis'd to Forgive me if I would but forsake my Wick'd Ways. & turn unto my Saviour which made me to Consider what Solomon sais that ye course of ye Lord is in ye house of ye Wicked & that Evil pursueth Sinners How can anything but Misery attend me who had Drank inniquity like Water & gon an in Deadly course of Sin & I haveing no Power in my self to turn from my Evil Ways feel it Pleas'd my Heavenly Father who had compassion on me & open'd my Eyes and let me see that all ye Threatings in ye Scripture was Dew unto me so that I Looked for Nothing but ye wrath of ye Almighty to Fall upon me so that I continued in that state of Life teel Thursday August ye 31st 1738 I went to hear a Sermon at ye Castle Preach'd by ye Reverend Mr Charles Wesley Master Stewardant of Christ Church Oxon. which Struck me with such amaising Thoughts of ye Judgement to come when I considered how I should Appear before my Makor knowing I was condemned here all Ready which made my very Bones & Flesh to Tremble & my heart to sink with in me. I had such Disparing thoughts upon me at that time so that ye Enemy told me it was in vain for to go any more to

¹⁷ The conversion of Mrs. Platt is referred to by Charles Wesley on 31 August 1738 (CWJ) and in JWJ.2:107d, 325, 349d, 472d. A manuscript letter from Mrs. Eliz. Holmes to JW (20 Jan. 1742) indicated that Mrs. Platt of Oxford had died recently (Albin note)

¹⁸ *The great importance of a religious life, and the continual pleasure thereof consider'd. To which are added some morning and evening prayers* by William Melmoth (Dublin, 1735 3rd ed.

hear their Preaching or Reading for ye New very well that I was Lost though ye Strove to comfort me yet ye Enemy assaulted me in this Manner so that I wandered from Place to Place seeking Rest But Finding none and while I was thus Museing in Time of Devine Service it was said unto me if I could but tutch but ye Hem of his Garment i should be hole. but to trust in human Flesh would stand me in no Stid for ye Saviour of ye World that good Samaritan who can Forgive me all. I willingly obeyd & went after him not knowing whither I went & still it was in my heart Part of ye Day if I could but tutch ye Hem of his Garment I should Be hole. for I can give no other acount than this how I came their it was his heavenly will I should go to Mr Mearses house though I was all most Beside mySelf for ye Enemy told me that ye Did not Desire me to come & ye Looking cold upon me gave me Room to Entertain those Evil Thoughts for when Mr Wesley came to Read he took no Notice of me which Troubled me very much & mad me think that all yt ye Enemy said unto me to be true for he Presented nothing Before mine Eyes but ye pit of Hell nor Nothing could I Behold But a Angory God whom I had justly offended yet he was Pleas'd to Manifest him Self unto me that Night ye unworhest of all Creatures for I saw not Many Minutes Before that I hanged as it were By a Thread over Hell & that I saw my Self in a Damned State & did not but Expect to be in Hell yt Night ye Room where in I was Appeared so Dark & Dismal that Beard witness with my Conscience where I must have been had not my Dear Saviour snatch me from ye Brink of ye Pit that Moment I had uterly perished Everlastingly for which all praise all Glory Be unto thee O Blesed Saviour Now hence forth forth for Evermore. Amen.

I joynd in Prayer with them but Nothing I can Remember of ye Prayer for while I was Praying my Sences was Takeing away from me For some Time So that I thought nothing of God or my Saviour Then Did my Saviour manifest him self to me For I Feel'd such Power come into my heart that I thought it would have Rent my heart in Sunder I not Being sick at all thought it was heard to be Bourn. I Gladly Receiv'd it not knowing at First what it might be for ye Space of 15 Minuits then was it Reply'd unto me that it was ye hand of ye Lord that Pearsed into my heart & yt it was ye holy Gost yt was upon me. where in I have a Sure Pardon of my Sins. it is heart work to be born again. O ye Pangs of ye New Beath who can Express it But thos that are born a gain. Loft was this wicked Enemy to Leave me. But when my Blessed Saviour came and Demanded my heart he could not keep Possession any Longer for he said come out of her thou unclain Spirit For she is mine O thou Dearest Saviour what Return can I Render unto thee For all those great & Manifold Blessings thou hast Bestow'd upon me this in Pertickualler thy Free gift grant that I may walk humbly before thee Ever Fearing to offend thee Either in Thought word or Deed & when I do Fall may I know thou art Near to help me. O. what Tongue can Express what my Soul Do Feel now I am in Christ ye are joyes Flowing continually from a good & gracious Father though Bestowed upon ye most unworest of all Living yet is he so good & gracious to give me all things & a Shurence of his Being Reconciled to me for which my heart Burns with Love towards him & my spirit Rejoyceth in ye Lord O Dearest Saviour make me humble meek & Lowly in thy Sight that I may be a patorn to all my Followers that are in Christ

Date: 12 April 1740

Correspondent: Elizabeth Bristow

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotations: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "E. Bristow April 12 1740 Seal"
2. "El. Bristow. A seal & witness. April 12 1740"

April 12 1740

Reverend. Sir

My friend in Christ

I cannot help lesting you know the Comfortable work the Lord began he carrys on: he hath shewed me you are a minester of his own sending: he hath taken the scales of my Eyes: I was lame he hath made me walk: I was bound with Chains of Darkness: But he hath Broken my bonds asunder he hath pluckt me as a fire brand out of hell: and shall I dare to hide this: shall I not declare what the Lord hath done for me: God for bid I am not ashamed to say I sat by the way side beging and as Jesus passed by I recived my sight: I am not afraid to say a servant of Christ uncovered the roof and Jesus saw me brought unto him poor and helpless:and he looked on me and sayd thy sins are forgiven thee thy faith hath made thee whole: O this small Grain is of matchless value: thy sins are forgiven thee: o that word was Christ: Christ was the word that spook itt: o behold a miracle indeed a Greater one than: if a dead Body had been raised: out of the Earth: I was dead in trespasses and sin: and Jesus raised me: he brught me from the pitt of hell: into the Kingdom of light flesh and blood hath not reveald this to me but the spirit of God which Dwelleth in me: O Jesus make this light A continewall Spring of life: Ever springing more and more: the lord comeforted the words: to me you diliverd on fryday: concerning Satans devices: I though much on them: that he wants no better force than to come in by way of ponderous thoughts: but the Lord is with me: he regrads the low Estate of his handmiade I have some striving: But the Lord keepeth me: he that keepeth me neither slumbereth nor sleepeth: I now know I have no strength he is only my support I lean on him: I am as a new born babe, he Gently leads me on & my Lord haith brought me in to his banqueting house and his banner over me is love: I would not have taken this liberty But I am shure you will rejoyce With me o may the Lord bless the word by your ministry and may there never be a want: But a constant supply of faithfull labourers in his vineyard is the humble petition of me, who am with the Sincirest thanks to the Giver of Every good Gift: for the benefits I have received from Christ throught your ministry: yours in Christ Elz Bristow

Sir

I beg your prayer to me that the lord would send support to me: and that the Holy Spiritt may Dwell with me allways – Even to the End

I trust in the lord: to have some conversation with you: good sir my Chife friend in Christ.

But I know your allways ingaged in the work of the Lord

Reference: EMV/501/12

Date: 18 May 1740

Correspondent: Mariah Price

Addresses: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Maria Price's Experience, May 18, 1740."

My dear father in God i now declare unto you with a joyfull heart as well as i can Remember how the lord worked in my soul by you my own father i came to you about the begining of last march was a year [1739], by the desier of a friend as dead as my self the morning we came it rained very hard and as soon i had Got out of door i said it is not the will of God that we should Go if it where it would hold up and we went in again but we had no sooner Got in but it stoped raining till we had been with you and came home again and then it rained the whole day i think it never ceased, dear sir i came to you as dark as a blind man from his birth that never had no thought of sight and if he heard that there was such a thing he did not beleve it because he had it not himself i had been a partaker of the bread and wine for some months but not of the body and blood of my loving saviour i did exhort men to lead a Good life as to the body but as to the Spirit i had heard of such a thing but i never felt that i had Got one for it was dead and i did not know that it was ever to live in this world dear sir my heart longs for words to tell how Good my dear Saviour is to save such a dark dead stony hearted damned unbeleveing pharisee as i i did often repent for one sin and did not know i had any more but i had no sooner Repented of it but i committed it again and was two fold more a Child of hell then before thus was i mourning and sining and wondering that i could not overcome it myselfe that one sin was pasion i told you how i did weary my self with it and said i God knows my weakness and what i can do and why dos he try me so you answered me God did it to let me know what i could do that word was of much Comfort to me your discourse and your prayer Gave me so much Comfort that when i came home i said to the same purpose this is the day of Salvation you bid me read the 7th [chapter] to the romans you said that was my State and i did read it and found much Comfort insomuch that i began at the first Chapter in order to read them thro to see what was in them but as i was a reading i think it was the Sixth Chapter i was forced to lift my eys of the book and look about me like a person that was born blind and that moment received sight i wondered i so often read and never understood before I was almost lost with wonder at my new eys i saw my self an unblever and was Greatly ashamed of my past life and i came to the words where the apostle says what fruite had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed that increased my wonder a Great deal more to think it so suited me and at that moment when i received such sight as i never had before i as planly felt a burden taken of my heart as i could feel one took of my back it was done in a moment it was such a work so planly felt and so wonderfully wrought that i almost lose my senses to explane it and can not do it nither all this time i had not the forgiveness of my sins but soon after you expounded at fetter lane and then i was at that time and ever since filled with joy and peace in beleveing i recevied the forgiveness of sins and the witness of the spirit and a dominion over sin at that very time i said to you in the mids of the pepole now if i had ten thousand souls i could trust them all in the hands of God i trembled so with joy and Cried that i did not know how to bear my self you asked me if i found that peace that pased understanding i said yes indeed i have and it doth pass understanding Dear them Sir them two talants has Gained other two God hath to me that had littell Given more and i trust will increase me daly

dear Sir i am your own dauther in God

mariah price

Reference: EMV/501/13

Date: 4 June 1740

Correspondent: Mary Ramsay

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Locations: London and Bexley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Mary Ramsay's Experience June 4, 1740."
2. "June the 4th 1740"

Reverend Sir:

With the Woman of Samaria I may say Come See a man that told me all that Ever I Did in my Life: for the man Christ has turned my Eyes back to y^e tender years of my Childhood wherein are sett before me many Sins that I had quite forgotten: I Shall mention Some particulars that the Lord has set before me and how graciously he has from time Delivered me from Some of them: the first was passion which I brought into the world with me and as I have heard my Parents Say I was very Passionate in my infancy: but when I grew to the age of 2 years then my Parents began to Check those Evil tempers: but from four years of age I Can remember many things Particularly y^e Death of a brother which was twelve months old when he Died. I was then four years of age I was very inquisitive to know where he would go and what must become of him: my Mother talked to me as my tender age Could then bear telling me he was gone to god: but I Said he was here Still he Lays in the Coffin said I. She then told me his Soul was gone into the Golden City but what must be Done with him now when we go to the burying. they told me he must be put in a hole in the Church yard. then I Cryd but they Pacified me by telling me he was to be fetched out by angels: but when we returned from the grave and I Saw not the angels Come: then again I wept Sadly but they told me the angels Did not Come while the People Stood there but Still I was very much Concerned: and I thought I Could willingly go to the golden City also: I was Soon after Sent to School where My parents took great care to keep Constant there among the Other Children I Did not fail to observe pride and would not go to School without I was Drest Clean and in Such and Such a Dress as Such and Such other Children had I Cannot but observe how natural these Things Comes into the world with us and how Soon the Old Dragon tempts us for about the age of Six or Seven years. one morning as I was going to School it was very Cold and my mother gave me a pair of gloves and I Did Not Like them but She bade me put them on and Charged me to go with them: away went I in a passion but Did not Dare Lett her know. I murmurd & Contrived which way I should Do for I was resolved not to go quite to the School with them on. well Says I as I went along where Shall I pull them off: not in this Street thought I for severall people that Lives in this Street knows me and if they See me they will tell my mother: att last I appointed that I would pull them off when I Came to the Corner of Such a Street and Satan he Came in and Caused me to vow he Should have me if I Did not pull them off Just att ye Place: well after that as walked along my anger begun to abate So that when I Came to y^e Place I forgot the vow. I past the Place and went Directly to School with the gloves on: but when I Came to the Doore I Could not go in for Some time for it came fresh into my memory what a bargain I had made with the Devil: and I trembled very greatly to think he had Cheated me. So which way to turn I Could not tell well then there Came

a thought Go back to the place and pull them off and then you^l be secure so I was going back but again I remembered yt I not only Said I woud pull them off there but also that I would not go So far as the School Door with So that I was quite Confused and knew not what to Do but thought ye Devil would have me att Last I Said Lord Don't Lett him have me: and So trembling I went in with my Gloves: but Gods preventing grace from yt time prevented me Ever Calling to the Devil in that manner. Some after he tempted me to keep from School for ^{as} I was ^a going he Suggested Such Evil thoughts against my mistress telling me She had beat me in the morning Dont go to her again Don't you See what a Cross old Creature She is what be So Cross to you that ^{are} her Sisters Daughter for She was my aunt so I was already puft up with Pride. O thought I if she Ought to be very good to me better than to the rest of her Scholars but instead of that She is worse to me: so I went not that afternoon but walkt about ye Street for I Did not Dare Go home till ye School was Done and all my School fellows was att School So that I Did not know where to go but thought I would walk about the Door to watch when the Children Came out that I might Go home att the usual hour: but mark how the Devil Cheated me again for there were two or three Children that Came out together. So I thought to be Sure the School was over So away run I home: but when I Came home it was an hour to soon: and my mother begun to question me how I Came home So Soon and withal bade me Sure to tell her the truth telling me She would go and see if I had been or no: but if I would tell her the truth she would forgive me for that time. So that time I came off without being beat: well after that I took a great Dislike of the school and be came a tell tale some-times my mother would rebuke me and some-times she would hearken unto me then I thought I had got the Day when she Did but say well I will Speak to her the – Child Child Shall not be abused: well about ten years of age I begun not to be so obedient as before butt would stay a great while of an arrand and play by the way So that my Parents was Dayly grieved att me. me well Sometimes I would sit and think and Consider and found that I Did not Do Right but still after I had promised to my Self to Do better and So I Did for a Day or two but then I forgot again and begun again: O the infinite good ness of God now I Can Look back and Consider his great mercy towards Such a young Devil as I for by a Particular Dream I was Startled to amend and in a great fright I told the Dream: another time I thought I saw the Devil Standing upon the bed with great Claws over me ready to take me and with the fright I skriekt . my mother asked me what was the matter I told her & She bid me pray to God and She would pray God for me to: So these things Left a Great terrour upon me for Some time: but att thirteen I began again and Getting acquainted with a neighbours Daughter a polite young Lady O Good Lord how Dangerous is Evil Company Especialy to youth for then had it not been for the preventing grace of god through the Care of my Parents I had DoubtLess run into all manner of vice for I was pufed up with Pride to excess and was ready to go any where with miss polly: they would Send their Servant for me to go with her to see plays but Glory be to God my Parents would not give me Leave but then I thought they were very Cruel not to Lett me go: many tears would I Shed for this: O Develish nature in youth what cry ~~that~~ when we are kept from going to the Devil. O amazing Love of God that Shews me how his mercy has always been Over me: now I Can admire the Goodness of God towards me and can say praise the Lord O my Soul for She poor Soul this young Gentlewoman run quickly to Destruction and was Cut off in her youth in the midst of her sins: but my Dear tender mother kept me from her Long before She run So fast to Destruction: and I much about that time begun to think what a wicked Creature I was I had a great sting of many Disobedient acts towards my Parents: though I had Scarce Ever been two hours att once from the Sight of my

Parents but the Devil Dont want a Great while to act his part for I very well remember I was very proud and wanted to Climb higher [...] and to follow the fashions as nigh as I Could: but when I went to Lay me Down to rest att night then I was frighted Lest I Should never awake I felt the Pangs of hell and misery very plain but then I would for get it and Divert my self from it in the Day but att night the Pangs would return: I Said nothing to no one I told no body of it but: I became a Little more thoughtful and prayd God to forgive me and ^l would Do better: I forget to make mention what a young Pharisee I was all this while for I would not go to bed att night nor forget when I was up to pray: but hold not Pray: but say my Prayers as I called it for I Could say as many Prayers by heart as any one of my age: but I Remember one Particular thing which was thus my Parents was in great Grief and I being Left alone in a Room I Lookt up to God and thought he Could help us: I threw my Self on my knees & prayd I think for almost an hour and Certainly I did not want words the Lord open ~~my~~ ~~mouth~~ my mouth and I prayd and praised the name of the Lord and the Lord heard me and att that time – wonderfully granted the request: yet Sometime afterward I begun to Doubt whether there was a god or no and to reason how god Could be from all eternity without beginning & without End: especially without beginning there I Stumbled insomuch y^t I would Study on that till I was not able to Stir nor move: about fifteen years of age I was taken into y^e number of ye Commuⁿicants in y^e french Church and before this I began to be very uneasy and Desirous to go to the Lords table but When I had been then I thought I was Safe and y^t I had Done Something very well: and I heard Declare y^t I have received this Eight years - being not a weak believer for I was no believer att all: and yet the Lord has been pleasd to manifest himself greatly to me Lately: I believed Something So far – the first time I heard mr Whitefield was the 2^d of June Last: his text was out of the Gospel of St John the 17 Chap the 3^d verse this is Life Eternal to know thee the Only true God and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I thought the Doctrine to be very true nay I was assured it was I agreed to Every thing he Spoke but Did not apply it to my self yet I believed all he said. Then I heard him the monday following att black heath: the text was watch for ye know not the Day nor the hour wherein the Son of man Cometh. I Liked the Discourse Exceeding well: but applyd it to my Self So well that I Scold att a young Gentleman that was a Scoffer. he Called some body that was by him Whitefields Disciple and Laught and Scoft; and I told him he was the Devils Disciple : Still while I was Looking att another I forgot to Look att my self for mr Whitefield was Speaking of What the world Calld Christians that they would Go to plays Games publick houses and Such and all manner of what is calld harmeless Diversion Still I Could find nothing for me because I Did not Do Just this in effect: but Still Did not See the Evil that was in me but Coming home I hasst every one that offered to Speak one word against him: So I Did not hear him for Some time after but I went on as usual to Church Every Sunday to the Sacrament Every month preparing my self the whole week before: using much the Preparation Books Else I thought it was not Right went to y^e Preparation Sermon. So I Came with a whole weeks righteousness or rather a Whole weeks Pharisical hypocrisie-: Yet I had a Longing Desire to hear mr Whitefield again and was very Sorry that I had not gone to hear him before I Did: well when mr Whitefield Came to town again which was July the 21st on Saturday evening I went to Kinnington his Subject was from y^e 3^d Chap of Genesis the 15 verse and he there showd us our Sinful nature – and our fall well I agreed to Every thing he Said but Still was unCon Cerned. I went the next Day to y^e Same Place and heard him on the 37, 38 & part of the 39 verses of the 7 Chap’ of St Johns Gospel: where he shewd that believers had y^e indwelling of the holy Spirit now as well as formerly: and

there I was Sadly Stumbled in that he Said we might have y^e Seven Gifts of the holy Ghost but if we had not its sanctifying Graces: we might go to hell att Last: the next Day I went to hackney his text was what think you of Christ but that time I heard Little of his Sermon being full of ye Devil but knew it not for there was a fine Drest up Gentleman & his Spouse in the Place where I Stood that mockt Every word he Said and much interrupted those that Stood by them and I thinking my self much better than them I Scolded them all the while and was So angry that when he had Done Preaching I calld them infidells but knew not that I was then one my Self : the thursday following being y^e 26 of July I went again to hackney and he was then on abrahams faith in offering up his Son Isaac. I hearkened and begun to have as I thought to have Some Comfort more than usual but my Comfort was thus there was that Day a horse Race a Little Distance from us and his Soul was moved much toward them and was rejoiced to see that I was one of them y^t he Called gods Children that Came to hear the word rather than go to see those Poor Souls that were Labouring to Serve their master there I thank god I was not as other men Especially those: the next Day I went to kinnington again the text was out of St matthew y^e 27 Chap^t of st ~~matthieu~~ y^e 38 verse when y^e whole City of the Gergesens Came out to meet Jesus and when they saw him they besought him that he would Depart out of their Coasts: and there he showd how we were in a worse Condition then the two men Possesed of Devils for though they were bodily Posesed they knew it : but we had the Devil in our hearts and Souls and knew it not: well but I thought I had not the Devil in me because I Did not those gross outward Sins : the Sunday following I heard him again: his texts was be not Righteous overmuch: well there I was very Joyful: and begun to think he Spoke very much to my Purpose: well thought I but Surely there must be Some Change wrought in me for he Spakes nothing but Scripture: but from that time I rested very easy thinking that that the Lord was able to work this Change: then I Did not hear him for a fortnight after which was thursday august the 2^d his text was old things are past away and behold all things are become new: there he Showd how we must be renewd in this Life: but I was much Starlted att that he Said the Soul when it Departed Carried the faculties with it well thought I what must I Do now for I begun to find I had many bad faculties in my Soul : the Sunday following I was att Bexley he Expounded in the morning part of y^e 6 Chap of St mark from the 3^d verse to y^e end of the Chapter: there indeed the words was more imprest upon me than Ever they had been before: I Received the blessed sacrament that Day att Bexley Church and heard him again in afternoon: on abrahams faith in all I heard him thirteen times but all that While I Did not apply any thing to my self: but was very Glad and thought ah now he gives it home to you all Especially to his adversarys but thought it did not belong so much to his followers: but however I was very willing to be one and very much admired him and was exceeding glad to hear of so many Converts but thought I Did not want so much Conversion as those outward notorious sinners but the Lord has shown me since that I was worse than any one of them all for indeed I Do Perceive that no one had such a stony hard heart as I: for though in that time I would go home in a great hurry with a great Deal of the sermons in my head so that I Could repeat half or sometimes three-quarters of the Discourse but O Lord how Gracious is thy Goodness in keeping me and Leaving me out of hell: for though I had that memory how Did I Look on those Relenting souls that wept and were in strong Conviction: them I Calld hypocrites Every one that I saw Weeping O thought I you are an hypocrite to be sure for any one Can be as much affected without all that but since I have often wished that the Lord would be pleased to work so in my soul but he has shown me that his time is not ours nor his ways ours: I forgot to mention when Mr

Whitefield told us we was by nature half beast and half Devil there was something in that heart of mine that showd me it was very true though it was such a hard heart: those Words made some impressien that I was really Convinced that I was inwardly very wicked: and another thing that workt in me was some words of that hymn Calld [...] Christ the friend of sinners these words his bleeding heart will make you Room his open side shall take you in: them word Remaind with me so Close that I believe there has never been a Day, nor scarcely an hour but those words were with me: but to return to his I was half a beast and half a Devil: well but thought I how Can I help it if I am so by nature: but after he was gone: I set about to help it and Would not Read nothing but Good books and would pray more and instead of Going to the sacrament once a month I went Every Lords Day and was very Desirous to be taken notice of that I was a Constant Comunicant: and also I entered into a society but alas I was Just were I was before or Rather worse: So I went On until Mr John Wesley Came up: which was the 4th of September: att Dowgate hill he expounded the 16 Chap of the Gospel of st John beginning att the 16 verse: and there indeed I was shown My state and my wants both spiritual and temporal in that we said we should have sorrow in the world & the world would rejoice: and Every word spoken that night Did much Concern me: for I fownd a tryal was Coming on for before that as soon as my neighbours and acquaintance knew that I Went to hear the field Preachers they begun to persecute and took their Children from me and put them to other schools but I admire how the Lord works Every thing for the best for the words has all Come to Pass that was spoken that night and the Remembrance of them has been a great comfort to me Continually [...] in the midst of many troubles: but many temptations Came in between that wispered me in the Ear and bade me Leave off then you will get in business again as before: but the Lord would tell me on the other hand think you that my blessing will sooner attend thee if thou Leave off and go away well but then the Decever would tell me you have heard a Great Deal. keep Close to what you heard but then I fownd the soul wanting food: as the Body Craves temporal food often so I went on: as often as possible I would Come and hear the word the second time I heard mr John was the 12 Chap of the second book of Samuel and there the Lord that time – Plainly showd me I was the Person Guilty of all those Crimes that I had Disdainfully Lookt on others for: I Could not Creep out manner of way there was no Room I stood as if I had been outwardly guilty of all notorious Crimes insomuch that I was ashamed to Look back and see how I had set my self att a ‘great Distance from such: the 30th of Sept I heard him again in more fields the text was the Eleventh Chap of st matt the 28 verse: and till then I always brought home great pieces of the Discourses: that I was very Proud and was much admired by some: but that time I staid till mr Wesley had Done Collecting and got in talk with somebody and afterward must Go see him as far as the Coach: so that when I returnd I begun to Consider how I should talk of the Comfortable sermon: I had forgot Every word text and all I beleive if must have been Condemned to Die or tell 3 words: I must have Died for I Did not remember one ah thought what is come to me well the Lord has Justly punished me: and from that time I became very Dead to the word though I begun to feel it went Deeper: so I Continued under the word and heard mr Hall mr Rogers and was then more Calm Expecting something of the Lord but I knew not what nor what to ask for: I fownd I had many evil tempers which had Dominion over me and Could not tel how to get Rid of them, they begun to be a great burthen to me: but hearing the word often and Reading some of mr Whitefields sermons: in February Last I was medetating on what I had heard: and saw I wanted the Remission of my sins: and the Lord spoke unto me saying I am nigh that Justifyeth: thou art Justified believe and thou shalt be

saved: then I said Lord I Will believe and then I ~~found~~ found my self quite another I was as I thought passed from Death unto Life I thought I was in another world: but my ungratefulness unto god was very Great and also the temptations very strong the Devil would have perswaded me it was a Delusion: and the 21st of february I heard your Dear Brother again on the 7th Chap of the Romans and there he Described my very temper: and the Devil told me: there are you Justified you that have so many Evil tempers no surely you are not well but I said I believe I am and I begun to reason with him Saying well but I have not all those Evil tempers now sometimes there is something stirs but it Dont Reign in me so that I Did not quite Lett go for the Lord answered me several times telling me was not a Delusion but I told him my heart was hard but the Lord bade me believe and I Should have a heart of flesh but I fownd my heart was still harder and saw one weeping and another in strong Convictions other would Rejoyce in the Lord for what he had Done for them so that on Either side the Lord workt in some soul now I Did not Call them hypocrite as formerly I had but Desired that the Lord would work in me: but still I was the same hard as a stone: so that When I was alone I Could not so much as sing a hymn there was one that I indeed used to sing that is that hymn Calld ye method that I thought suited me very well but att Last I Could not sing none Except when I was among some of the Brethren or hearing the word: but when I was att home by my self I could not sing att all if I offerd to sing I Could not tell what to sing therewas nothing I Could see that was fit for me: sometimes I Could not open my mouth I was Just as if I had been a sleep: I Continued still Constant in Coming to hear the word & on thursday y^e 28 of february mr Jonhs text was out of the Epistle to y^e hebrieus the 9th Chap the 25 verse: in that sermon I was much Comforted but y^e saturday and sunday following I was again as Dark as Ever but was in Great Expectation that the Lord had still something in store for me: I Continued to go to the foundry sundays and thursdays and to the society in Brick Lane and there was Great Devision in the society that Grieved me very much and I knew not what to Do I was very Loth to Leave them and staying with them there was Disputes and animosities and here I was very much troubled and I Came away from them: and att Last the Lord sent you Reverend sir. I can but admire y^e wisdom of God in seeing how he sends out the Labourer one after another that what one has Planted the other waters and the almighty gives the increase: I had never heard you before but had been Desirous of a Long time to hear you the thursday that you Came I heard you and Received much Comfort and also the fryday and sunday following. I had great Comforts but still when I was att home I Could not Raise my heart to god and begun to be also very Dead in Prayer: then again when I heard the word I was a Little Comforted and so I went on mourning that I Could not mourn more- : and about a fortnight after you were Come I fell into such mourning that my heart was Ready to break. I Came on monday morning to speak with you but when I Came I Could not speak you asked me if was Justified I said yes but I Could not tell when nor I Dont know what you Said to me after for I was quite stupid and So Continued for some time then you admitted^{me} into the society I was much rejoyced att that and then when your Dear brother Came up I Received much Comfort by him again but the sunday before assension Day I was frighted and saw my self in such a manner that I Lothd my self your subject was then on the 43^d Chap of Isaye beginning att y^e 22^d verse there you shewd that in our best we had Eaten and Drunk Damnation and that we were but moral Devils this frⁱghted me and I saw my self so black that I thought I must not Go to the Lords table any more and the Devil suggested such thoughts that I had Eat and Drunk Damnation Enough. So that I had a great mind not to go though I had purposed to go this was the first time that ever I

had a mind to keep away: but I thought there was as much Danger in staying away: so the Lord permitted me go: black and Develish as he had showd me I was: and I Received much Comfort ~~att night~~ in the Evening by mr Hall & the thursday following being assension Day I had so much Joy when you was Preaching that I thought my soul seemed as if it was assending into heaven indeed y^e Joy begun in the morning when mr Harris was preaching: on the words thy kingdom Come and it so increased in the Evening while you was Preaching that methought I saw my saviour in Glory and So Continued or rather increased for in the society the soul seemed as if it was out of the body. I cannot utter the Joy I felt: words Can not Express it: indeed after I was first Justified I several times had Joy and manifestations sometimes I thought when I was att the sacrament that I Did not Dare Lift up my Eyes for I stood as if Christ was Just then on the Cross and his blood Descending into my heart: Particularly about five weeks ago my father was then sick he sent for the ~~Dæter~~ Minister to administer the sacrament to him: and while the minister was giving him the Bread and Wine the Blood of Christ Dropt into my heart that I Burst out into tears: and wept for Joy my father thought I Cryd because he was sick he would have Comforted me but I Could not speak: but I knew it was not for the Cause y^t he thought and many such Joys I have had but none Like that of ascension Day and since there remains a small still Joy that in all avents it springs up and Comforts me against all the temptations of the World and the Devil: I also find much Comfort in the meetings att sisters Robinson^s: and the state that I now feel my self in I Cant Describe for sometimes I feel my heart hard as a stone yet there is no anger I Dont find any anger att all arise but Could embrace any one that speaks all manner of evil against me Even taking my bread away for that they Do Dayly yet I Could Willingly Do them good and am in no wise angry with any but truly there is not much room for any for self fills up every Corner it follows me every where & stirs up in almost Every thing that I Do that sometimes I am frighted to see the Corruptions of my filthy heart the Lord shows it me more & more. O Dear Sir Reverend father in Christ Remember me in your Prayers Pray that the Lord would Cleanse my heart by the inspirations of his holy spirit: and that the Lord will be ~~be~~ pleasd to Carry on the work that ~~tha~~ is begun in me: for satan is very busy and would Preswade me that all this is presumption: indeed I Do fear presumption insomuch that I Dare not speak sometimes for I know that is a Dreadful sin: but the Lord I hope will keep me from y^t & all sin: O Pray for me that I may never fall away Cry unto the Lord for me pray unto your God and my God to our Lord Jesus Christ for me a Corrupted Wretch: O admirable goodness of God that has sent such faithful Labourers into his vineyard to Deliver and bring his People out of the Egyptian Darkness: I know not how to conclude for att present methinks my spirit is spread among all the brethren and a hearty Desire to the Bristol Brethren I am often present with them in Spirit though absent in Body

Reverend Sir

Beg Leave to Subscribe My Self one
Of your young Babes in Christ

Mary Jane Ramsey

Reference: EMV/501/14

Date: [before November 1741]

Correspondent: James Flewitt¹⁹

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotations: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Jam Flewit Nov 1741 Experience. Departed in the Lord"
2. "Jam Flewit Nov 1741."

H^{ond} S.^r In Compliance with y.r Request I have Sent you the following account how the Lord in his mercy has Dealt with my Soul

it is now about fourteen years ago [1727/21 yrs. old] when God in A Most Wonderfull Manor Reveald himself unto me, yea Even when I was in my Sins & In my Blood he said unto me Live, I was near one & twenty years old before I had any Sollid thought of God or Religion I Was Disobedient to all the Commands of God, & What Commands I obeyd of men was moore in fear than duty, I have violated Evry Command of God in the Gros Sense, accepting murder & that in the Spiritual Sense a thousand times, Sure I am that their,^s not a greater Siner out of hell than I am. & If any one Crys out Distinguishing Grace, I moore, yet I Believe God is Loveing to Every man & is mercy is over all his works. the Manor how God workt with me was as follows, a Little before I was flung into Convictions I had A Very Sollid frame of temper Come upon me, & often thought if I should Dye in the State I was in I Should Go to hell, which Gave me Some uneasiness, much about the Same time [1729/21 yrs.] I took to Reading a Little book upon the new birth, written by a Dissenter, his text was, Except a man be born again &c, this seemd Very Strange to me & Nicodemus like thought how Can this thing be, but the Lord who Bles^t the Reading of that Book to my Soul Soon Shewd Me: I was Ready to Cry Out What Must I Do to be Savd but God Soon Showd Me it was to have Something Done in me & for me which Could not be Done by me. This Set me upon Strict Search to know what means to use to have this Done for me, O thought I if I Could but Pray to God I am Sure he would hear me, this Indeed Seemd a Strange work for, I do

not know that Ever I Prayd before, But Blessed be God I Did then or moore properly his Spirit within me, my Prayer I know was heard, for, from that time I found no Rest to my Soul by Reason of my Sin, much about that time I Dreamd, I See my own apparition which the Devil & Carnal people told me was a Sure Sign of my Death & in one Sense So it was, for that Dream being Sanctified to me was one means of my Dying to Sin But this was but the begining of Sorrows, Soon after this, Just after I Got into bed one night I was all of a Sudden Struck to all apearance with Sudden Death, O who Can tell, but them that has felt the Same the horror & Confusion that I was in, Death I thought Sit hovering upon my Cold Sins & hell open^d Ready to Recieve me, the terrors of the Lord was set in array against me & in this agony I Lay for Some time in a manner Speechless att last the Lord gave me utterance & I Said the Lords Prayer, I Pray,^d Earnestly for Christs Sake that I might not Dye then, I promis,^d obedience to all his Commands how I would keep his Sabbaths & walk in his ordinances I thought I never would offend him in thought word or Deed any moore all this I promist in my own Strength So Ignorant was I of the ways of God, this fit a Little abated & I lay till morning but the fear of Death was So fallen upon^{me}, & the

¹⁹ James Flewitt is listed as a member of one of the married bands at the Foundery in June 1745, led by Thomas Hog (Stevenson, *City Road Chapel*, 34)

arrows of the almighty Stuck So fast in ^{my} side that I was not able to Look up, Sure I am the Law is a School master to bring us to Christ, for I immediately went to work to Save my Self as it were by the Deeds of the Law, I thought I would Redeem all my Lost time by being moore Dilligent for the Fewtor Accordingly I went to Church three & Some times four times

a Day, I attended the Church Prayers of the week Days very frequent I went to the Sacrament very Constant & if I neglected any Duty I, immediately thought I was Damed, indeed most of my outward Sins was broke of, as Swearing & Lyeing in a Great measure was Done away I Donte Know that Ever I Swore three oaths for this fourteen year though before I Donte ^{Know} that I Spent one Day without blasphemy Cursing & Swearing I went on in a Constant Round of Dutys & all this while under Deep Convictions [...] use your own words it is a Good but painfull fight many times was I Ready to wish that I had never Set myself about the Dutys of religion, not Considering that it was God that had Set me about it often times Did I wish that I had never been born or had been as a brute Beast that has no understanding I often times Could have been willing to Dye but the thoughts of Judgement Startled me: with Sorrow Do I speak it I being of the Church of England I was att a Great Loss to Finde a Spiritual friend that Could Give me any Spiritual Comfort what ministers I Liked in the Church I found their lives was so Contrary to their Doctrine that Satan would have often had tempted me to believe that all Religion was priestcraft often times he tempted me to Deny the being of a God & att other times he would tell me if their was a God he would not [...] his self with me with many moore athestical & Blasphemous notions Did he torment me he Drove me att Last almost to Despair I thought God had forsaken me where to fly for Comfort I knew not all my Relations was Strangers to the work of God all my aquaitance was Surprised to ^{See} this alteration but had never known any thing of the work of God their Selves, the Book of Psalms was my Greatest Comfort their I see the man after Gods own heart in my State I often Could Cry out my God my God why hast thou forsaken me, but very seldem Praise the Lord o my Soul &, I abhord all Company & Lovd to be in Lonesom Places by my Self my tears have been my meat Day & night for near two year was I tryd as it were with fire & had their been nothing but my own Strength I must have Sunk under the burden of Guilt often Did I wish to See the Days I now See that is for men to Live as they Preach as I Believe you & your Dear brother do what Little Spark of faith I had was almost Extinguish with Doubts that Kept me from applying the Promis of God to my Soul, it would be too tedious S^r to tell if I Could Collect all the various ways the Lord has Dealt with me whilest I was under this Conflict

after two years Deep Convictions God Rebuked the Stormy wind & tempest & their was a Great Calm & Doubt & fear was in a Great measure Done away & I had ^a Sure trust & Confidence that God for Christs Sake had forgiven me indeed I had Joy & Peace in the holly Ghost I tasted that Peace of God which Paseth all the understanding of the natural man I Remained in this Sweet State Some time But as the Christian warfare admits of no Standing Still & they that Does not Go forward must needs Go Backward so I found to my Sorrow that Sattan Got an advantage over me he Persuaded me that I was to Religious & that I see hardly any body So Strict as I was & that two sermons a Day was better than three or four with many Such Like Sugestions which I Soon abhor,^d to Indeed I fell into a Lukewarm State Presently & if I did any thing Contrary to the Command of God Sattan told me I Could not fall away finally or to the Same Sense though I know nothing of Predestination Doctrine the

next thing I began to Grow Spiritually Proud I Despis^d others that had never Gone through what I had & began to Reason whether they would be Savd or not & I know by Experiance that Spiritual Pride is the foundation of Predestina^{tion} But God who had begun a Good work would Carry it on o how Did I Rejoice when m.^r Whitefield Come about to Preach o how was that Spark blown up that was Just a Dying away But after all this I never See the hundredth part of my own wicked Deceitfull heart till you & your Dear brother as instruments in the hands of God has in Great measure Showd it me I had Stopt a Great away this Side Jourdan But now I See Clearly the necessity of being A Non Creature Many things is Done away Since I Sit Under Your Doctrine, which once I never Expected would, Glory be to God for the Same Pride and anger is att Present the Sin that most Easily besets me Dear S.^r Pray for me that I never Rest till I fully Rest in Christ & the Length of time & the treachery of my memory makes it imposible to set Down Every Particular

So I Remain your Dutyfull Servant & Brother In Christ James Flewitt

Reference: EMV/501/15

Date: [1741]

Correspondent: Nathaniel Hurst²⁰

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Nath Hurst 1741 Experience"

Rev:t Sir according to your Desire I shall give an how the Lord has Dealt with my soul but since you asked us I have been at a stand about writing to you and have been troubled a little for some times it comes to me I have nothing to say but what I have is as followeth when first the Lord sent Mr Whitfield out into the fields I went to hear him in moorfields I liked what he said very well I said I would go again accordingly I went on the next sunday and ever since I have followed the Lord in his appointed ways I had a form of Godliness for some time but knew but little of the power. I were not willing for to part with my sins but when the Lord began to show me the evil of them I could not live thus then the Lord shewed me the want of a saviour. then he gave me to hunger and thirst more and more after him I had a desire to receive the Lord supper but did not dair to come to it without prepareing my self then accordingly I went one sunday morning to st. Lawrances Church²¹ and the Lord blest me therein and from that time I have had power over outward sins then [Note: Conversion Christmas week 1739] the Lord was pleased to let me hear Mr John Wesley one night at Fetter Lane. he expounded on the eleventh Chapter of John of Lazarus come forth. I found my self that Lazarus whom he spake of I was all of a tremble for my bones shook as if thay would part from my flesh but before Mr Wesley had done his

²⁰ Internal evidence indicated a London worker who first heard George Whitefield in Moorfields c1738. He is awakened and convinced of the sin within; decided to prepare for sacrament and received at St. Lawrence's Church. During Christmas week 1739, he heard John Wesley preach on "Lazarus come forth" at Fetter Lane Society and experienced evangelical conversion followed by spiritual turmoil

²¹ Probably, St Lawrence Church Jewry, next to the Guildhall, City of London

discourse the Lord spake peace to my soul he let me know my sins were blotted out by his Blood this was in the Christmas week this Christmas two year. I after this I went on very smooth for a wile then the Devil sett his Adversaries to work for the Master that I lived with was a Carnal worldly man he was of great hindrence in my progres but I know the Lord always sees what is best for his Children he suffer'd it for a tryal of my faith then the Devil took place for my master one night force'd me to stay at home which caused us to have words then anger broak out of me then the enemy buffeted me and says to me how can you call your self a Child of of God. but it was not long before the Lord appeared in my behalf and shewed me that I was again reconciled unto God then I could again rejoyce in God my Saviour but the Devil would say to me some times do not you deceive your self and some times I used to give way to him a little but there was a hope left in me that I could not give up my Confidence quite but Jesus did keep me by his power then the Lord began to show me my heart and that there was a hell within me for some times as I was standing I used to think that the ground whereon I stood was hot under me which made me almost to tremble and to think if the ground should open and swallow me up I should perish for ever. but the Lord hath spared me yet longer that I might live unto him to praise him O may I give unto him all the Glory for his loving kindness unto me in Calling me out of Darkness into his marvelous light and this I can say that Jesus has been gracious and loveing unto me he has dealt tenderly with me for he has fed me with love continually which makes me to cry out o the goodness of God to such a poor worm as I am and more than a year agon on a sunday morning as I was a hearing of Mr John Wesley the enemy says to me do not you deceive your self which put me to a stand but I presantly knew from whence it came and from that time I have not had one doute since of my being a Child of God then the devil departed for a reason from me my soul was full of peace and love the Lord gave me many promises in scripture and I used to feed on them much thus I continued for many months I thought I never should see war any more then the enemy came in as a roaring lion reddy to devour me up then the Lord began to show me what was in my heart and I began to find anger and pride and self will and above all Lust which wounded my soul sorely but I did not find any desire for to grattify it no manner of way after this I walked in darkness for a little while and so long as I was thus I went morneing longing to be sett at liberty my soul was humble befor the Lord groaning under my burding then at length the light of God shone on me once more and my soul was filled with love then I could lift up my heart again to the Lord and one day as I was at my work my soul was over power'd with the love of God that I knew not wether I was in the Body or out of the Body I took an oppertunity of going to prayer my heart was much enlarged and thus I continued all that Day and some time after my soul was Calm and full of peace nothing seame to disturb me or to draw my mind from the Lord I thought I desire'd to know nothing but Jesus and him Crucified thus I continued for sometime then the Lord gave me these words the Darkness is no Darkness with the but the night is as Clear as the Day the darkness and light to the are both a like this made me humble before the Lord I thought the Lord had fulfilled his promise in my soul and had brought me into that rest that remained for the people of God. but I did not dare to say that I was enter'd into that rest till I had found the fruits of grace in me I was so for about six weeks then after this I found my old nature began to stir again and I wel knew then that the root of bitterness were not destroyed after this I found pride and anger and lust more than before after this I see my self more clearer than ever I did before which made me some times to cry out o the Goodness of God to such a poor Creature as I am which made me ashamed before the great majesty of God. then after this I came into darkness by reason of my

perverse will which lasted with me for about a week so I could not see the light of God or one scripture promise for me then the Lord with drew thoes Dark Clouds, and I could see him as before which made me to cry my Lord and my God. and since that I have not been in much darkness but still I find the Lord Carys his work on in my soul for this I can say I find a hunger and thirsing after the Lord and am groaning under my Corruptions longing to be delivered, tho not so much at some times as I ought to be for I think at some times I grow cold and Ccarless which often makes me to wonder how God bears with me so long as he doth. it comes to me some times O that my Eyes were fountains of tears that I could weep day and night for offending such a Saviour as Jesus is o may I never rest as I am. but grant that I may still cry unto God and never rest till I rest in the wounds of Jesus Christ

and so to conclud from your unworthy Brother and servant in the Lord Jesus

Nathaniel Hurst

Reference: EMV/501/16

Date: [1741]

Correspondent: Thomas Cowper/Cooper²²

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In Charles Wesley's hand:

1. "Cowper 1742"
2. "T. Cowper's Exp[erience] 1741."

Reverant Sur acording to your desier and by gods help i will Lett you no how the Lord hath wrote is worck in my Soul: the first of is droyings was wen I was about 12 years of age wen i first went to Prentis my master & M^{rs} Cept me to church and reeding the holy Scripturs on the Saboth days and I heard Sermons that youst to tack great a fect on me and went to prayers often alone and wept much especely wen i red of the Suferings of our Saviour and thought the people were very heard hearted. I did not think i had done the deed and then i felt the Love of god in my heart but Could not tell wat it was: I went on in this way till within two of the last years i had to Serve of my prenteship the Boys and young people of that plase youst to mack game on me becous I would not game and keep Company and do as they did: now the tempter Came to me but i new him not and tould me if i would doo as other people did they would Licke me very well and not to mack my Seluef So pertickler from the rest of

²² Cowper appears to have born in Staffordshire and moved to London after his apprenticeship with a religious family. He fell into sin and was deeply troubled. Attempts to stop sinning proved futile until a friend joined with him. Together they attended worship at St. Lawrence's Church. Cowper went to the Aldersgate Society in August of 1738 and joined the Fetter Lane Society that same year. He was a leader and a catalyst for the conversion of William Barber. This account is significant for several reasons: it contains references to three different London societies, all frequented by the Wesleys; it also records in detail his conversion taking holy communion and the method of questioning employed by German quietists, which was subsequently adopted by the Wesleys(Albin note)

the world: I tooke the devils advise and went into Company and did as they did and then my Company was excepted and in three years after i Came to London and got a deal of acquaintanse and Spent a deall of my time in horing drincking dancing plays and Such vice as youth is prone to: But often wen i have been gratefieng my fleshly desiers my Conshons youst to ackuse me then I would macke reselutons never to do so no more but wen i Came into Company again my good reselutone were all brock then i would be redy to tear my Seluef to pecis; then to avoid my Companions i went into Stafford Shear to setel their & it was all the same their then I Came to town a gain but resolved not to keep much Company but live a Sober life: I Came but fel into Sin wors then befour but one night i was Siting in a publick house with one of my acquaintanse he began to tell me how his Conshons trouble him and this way of life would not doo for he intended to Leave is Companians that droud him into wickedness and go to Church all operteunity: I agreed to this and So we went on for Some time then we herd their was a sermont at set Larin is²³ Church every Sunday morning at 6 oClock wee went there and wen i youst to go i was so aShamed of my Seluef to think how i had Spent my time in Siting up all Saturday nights and Lying in bed all Sunday morning wich Caused me to wep often now by the providence of the allmighty my frend heard of a religus Society in aldersgate Street i think in the month of August 1738 we went their and one night the Lord brought you and Mr James hutton you began to Speack on Justefacaton by faith a lone and tould them they must feel their Sins forgiven them in this life or they never would in the Life to Come: I remember they yoused you ill and some were for puting you out of the room but at Last they Sufered you to reed a homilis upon faith I thought it Comfortable doctrin but Strange doctrin to me for i never heard Such befour: the Lord did not sufer mee to Speak a gainst it but he let me to see they were not right by their behavior towards you: So i went home to prayer and prayed to god if it must be So that our Sins must be forgiven in this life i prayed i might experince it and feel mine forgiven but i was almost a fraid to ask him for i thought i Should Speack Blasfemey if i Should say my Sins were forgiven mee: but i went to Serch the Scripturs I Say the words you Spack were in the book of god and Something tould me I must beleve the Scripturs for they were the words of Jesus and he was god and Could not ly: and of is aposels and if I would be saved I must beleve them: but Something wisperd as it were in me and tould me the Scripturs were not tru; this frighted me and i began to resin with my Seluef wether they were or no: So i prayed to god to dyrect me and Give me Faith to beleve them if it was is word but Something a gain tould me it was is word and i must beleve it but for Some time i was Strugling betwixt these two Sperits not noing it was the Sperit of god and the devil Striven in me but at Last the Lord gave me to beleve it was is word and I Say by it i had not that faith wich would Save mee and wat to do for it i knew not but i Cept to Church and went on in yousing prayer in all operteunity: then I heard of the Savoï Society their i heard m^f John Wesley Such a minister i never herd befour for by the grace of god he Spake to me as never man Spake I found my Seluef Condemned under is word i found by my Sins i had Comited: i deserved to be damned I thought I was the person he made his discorse upon for he tould mee all that ever I did: I had: a desier to Speak to him but was So a Shamed of my Seluef i did not and then i went morning all the day Long and Could fiend no rest in my Soul by reson of Sin: now the Lord put it in my mind to go to the Lords table but i was a fraid i was not fit and how to prepair my Seluef I knew not but i got a book on the weekley preparation for that purpas and yoused that and Serched the Scripturs and Say their if

²³ St Lawrence

we forgive our enemies god for Christ Sack woud forgive us: I prayed that he would give me a hearty and Sinner repentance and bring all my Sins to me more and more as i found he did in a litle time for wen i have been at prayers my sins came fresh in my mind that i had Comitted Some years befour and never thought them sinful but now by the Commandment[s] i Say Sin to be exceeding Sinful: i desired him to give me a heart to forgive all my enemies i found he did in a litle time So I went to the Blessed Sacrement and pleded his one promis but I took the bred and wine with a tremblin hand and found my Seluef much afraid: and now i beleve i was Caled to that holey ordanince by god him Seluef for i have seen it in others I doo not pres upon aney to go till they have a desier and are Convinsed in their one heartes they Should yous that ordanince: the day after I had been their I found Stronger Convictions then befour, then the devil Came and Suggested wicked and Blasfemeus thoughts in me as i Sat at my worck wich made me: often burst into tears it was to Curs god and our Lord Jesus but i Could not tell for wat and the more i Srove against those thoughts the Stronger they were prest on me to do it I wept and prayed and Cryed to the Lord that he would tacked them from me for if i Should do this i thought i should be damned to be Shewr: then I found I Could ansur with S^{nt} Paul for i found a waring in my Soul against the mind that I had in me for with my mind I would Serve the Lord but i found wen I would do good evil was present with me: the devil at Last So Suggested in me to Curse god that he made me beleve i had in my heart done it: this indeed drove me to Christ as a Siner for now i had nothing to plead before god i went to our Saviour and tould him wat i had done and if he Could have marsey on Such a Siner as i was i desired he would it Came often to me Lick a Small Still vice Christ deyed for Siners this youst to give me Some hopes Still: and Caled them that were heavily Laden with their Sins and these preshous promisis gave me great Comfort Some times: now the devil tempted me to go and hang my Seluef for i was Such a Siner i Could not be Saved but the grace of God was with me and the Lord did not Sufer me but took the temtashon from me but i went on in deep morning praying and Crying to the Lord i youst to go often by my Seluef into the feldes and get under egis or aney were to be in priult that no won [say me] for now nothing would Satisfie me but this faith thatt i had not on remishon of my Sins and now i felt another temtashon wich beset me the devil tould me i did not Call upon the right god i was in a delushon and as i was walking one day in the feildes alone i prayed: if i Called upon the god that made heaven and earth the best of the feilds and all things that I then Say with my bodeley eye he would Sho me by Some token for i desired to Serve the Living and tru god it Came to me i was right So I resisted the devil and he fled from me So in that our i was delivered from that temtashon: and found great joy Such as i never felt befour and often felt it under the world wen i was at the societey i asked of god wat this ment it Came to me it was the drayings of the father now i began to tell my Brothers and Sisthers and my hould acquaintance wat Comfort i felt now to wat i felt wen i Lived in the plesurs of the world Some tould me i Should drive my seluef mad and go to bedlam others tould me i need not tacked so much pains for i was good enough but i had often these words Come to me you Cannot Serve god and mamon and if you Love this world you are an enemy to god and this Came to me with great power to press me forwards and not to give heed to my acquaintance for if i thought of turning back i Say nothing but hell and destructon for me so i tooke up my Cros and foloud my master: but Still i wanted to no my Sins forgiven and now i was determined not to Let Jesus go till he had Spoken peas to my Soul for I beleved he had power on earth to forgive Sins and he never turned aney a way in the days of is flesh and I had a hope he would not turn me a way for i was a Siner and one Saturday night i went into my room and began to examin my

Seluef by the Commandments and found their I had brocke them all in the Speritul Sence and felt i deserved to be damned: and now i had nothing to trust to but the Blood of Jesus and asked god to forgive me for his Sacke alone and give me his grace i would never afend him more: and medetating in my heart on my deutey to wards god and wilst i was thinking on those words i had Something came to my heart licke a dart in one moment and i was melted tears & tears of love indeed for i found that I Loved god more than those words Could express and faith was given in that moment that I Should reseve remishon of my Sins at the Blessed Sacrement on the morow i prayed and red the holey Scripturs till one of the Clock and Still i beleved i Should reseve parden for my Sins i prayed to God to wacke me in the morning I was wacked about 3 of the Clock i beleve by the Sperit of god and so [sown] as i wacked i beleved Still i Should reseve forgivenis of Sins at the Sacrement i got up and went to prayers till five then i Caled my hould frend up that youst to go to Church with me we yoused a short prayer to gether and so went to S^{et} Larings Church and wilst i was their i hungred for the Blesed Sacrement for i beleved from my heart i Should beforgiven Still and wen I recued the Cup from M^r Sparkes i recued it as from my Savour and Say by faith my Sins bloted out and it was unto me acording to my faith i rose from the table and found all gilt of Sin tacken away from me i found peace with god and Some joy: and this was the first of October 1738 in the beginning of the 28 year of my age

But on monday and teusday after; I found a hunging in my Soul for Something else but I Could not tel wat but on teusday night I went to a Societey in Bair yard near Clare market²⁴ M^r John Wesley was their and expounded and after he had done we went to prayers and wilst i was at prayers i thought I Should desolve away in tears I thought I felt my heart hopen within me and Licke a fountain of water run from it and in that moment i felt Such Love peas and joy past all expresen we sang a him i thought i was out of the bodey with the angels in heaven for i was So ful of joy i Could not expres my seluef i went down Stars Brother Jones²⁵ my hould frend and Companion staid for me he hasked me how i was I tould him and all that were about me now I knew my Sins were for given me for I had reseved the witnis of it from god he went homeward[s] with me but the Joy Came more and more upon me So we went back and took a wolke round Lincons in Squair i felt the Joys Came more and more upon me so that I Could not Contain my Seluef withought lening on him and wanted words to prais god for wat he had done for my Soul but these words Came to me O Praise the Lord o my Soul and all that is within me prais is holey name and wilst i was praising god i found heas to my Soul for I was Licke a vesil fild with new wind and then it Came to me the wind Bloth were it Listeth but ye Canot tel from wence it Came nor were it goeth So i Could witnis for i say nothing but i felt the power of the holey gost in my Soul then I returned home and tould Sистер Potes wat the Lord had done for my Soul and desiered hir to Seek the Lord and not to be so Carful after the things of this world She then thought I was niad in deed for i bracke out into praising of god befour hir and Could not Contain my Seluef Brother Jones and i went to prayers and to give god thanks for wat he had done for my Soul and So painted i went to bed that night and dremed i was with the angils in heaven and So these Jous Lasted with me for three weks and in this three weakes by times i Could Say with Snt

²⁴ Bear Yard close to the junction of Sheffield Street and Vere Street (Rocque's map of London, 1746)

²⁵ "Brother Jones" is listed as a leader of one of the married bands at the Foundery in June 1745 (Stevenson, *City Road Chapel*, 34)

Paul wether in the Bodey or out I could not tell and wen i have ben wacking in a morning i have heard Such words of prayer and prasis Come out of my mouth befour i was awackened to me remember wat they were but wen i Came to be wide a wack they were as fare tackin from me as if i never had heard them and i believe to this day they were words not for mortol man to expres and these joys Came on me by times that if i was in Componey with aney bodey i Could not help brecking out into praisis for i found it gave me eas: and now i found Love to all the world and Could not help declaring to all i met with wat the Lord had done for my Soul that they might feel the Same Some tould me I was mad others tould me the devil was in me but I did not mind that for i Spake So much the more: now i thought these Joys would last all ways [...] and thought of nothing but doying and going to him wome my Soul Loved I left all my worldly bisnis for Six weakes and was afraid of going into the world for it greved my Soul to hear the name of god blasfemed but in about three weaks these joys and this burning Love wich i had was tacken from me and all Comfort now the enemy was permitted to temt me So i went morning and was a fraid I had a fended god or he would not a tacken my Comforter from me now the devil tould me I had a fended god for teling wat the lord had done for my Soul I Should a Cept it to my Seluef and tould nobody So one day I went to Mr John Wesley and tould him i was afraid i had afended the Lord he tould me it was a temtashon of the devil i might keep the secrites of an earthley king but not of the heavenly for i did right to declaire it on the house top So the Lord Let me se i had not afended him M^r Wesley bid me Look to Christ wen i was tempted So wen the tempter Came again I looked up to Christ and I have found wile i loked up i was allways delivered for befour i Could tel god wat i wanted i was answered and wilst i Cept in that Child lick Simplisitey I walked with god I Conversed with my Lord as free as one frend would with another and asked him to direct me in all things and went on declaring wat he had done for my Soul the Lord being my Strength and i found the Lord put wordes in my mouth to Speak and none Could resist that power wich i felt Some times I have been in Companey with maney of the polight people of this world and they have began to rail against you and your doctrin i would Let them go on a wile and that time i would Spend in prayer to god to help m and Stand as a fool before them: then the Lord put words in my mouth to Speak to them that in a few minits they have been So Confounded they Could not mack me no ansur and this power i had from above and to god be all the glorey for i never had much Learning: and that you may see by my SCroul hear to you now: the Lord never Left mee Long without the Light of is Countanance but wen he was with dron from me i yoused to morn and weep and be very unesey So he was So Loving to me he would return again and aney times wen the tempter Came and tell me i was deseving my Seluef or that i was in a deleushon I youst to Look back to the time i reseved the witnis of the Sperit it would tacke of all doubttes and so I beleve i Can say i trusted to my gifts for a year and a quarter: But in this time i was prest in Sperit to go into StaffordShear to see my frendes and declare to them wat the Lord had done for my Soul their i found the words of our Lord fulfilled for i found my gretest foes: were those of my one relashons but the Lord blesed the word to Some that I keep a Corspondont with now i Staid thein a bout three months: I Came to town a gain and this wile the Germon bretheren Came over and the first privit Band night that we met Came m^r Hutten and a nother they tould mee I had not faith but I withsdood them and tould them I had and the witnes of the Sperit: they asked mee if i Could not go to bed with out prayer and Leave of prayer for a fortnight this Struck me in a So prise they tould mee if i Could not i trusted in my one workes we parted that night but brother price Staid with me and their the Lord Shoued me their advise was of the devil for i

found it was pleasing to flesh and blood for i had found often it was Contrarey to my natur to pray at all So at that time i was delivered but i found maney of my acquaintance turned out of the way that I left in a good way wen: i went out of town they were tould they had not faith they must not go to the sacrament So they Left of prayer and going to the sacrement till they fell in to Sin and were almost as bad as if they were never a wackned and Several Came to me and asked me wat they must do: now their was so much talk that none Should go to the Lords table but those that had faith had put me into resoning a bout it and I Could not tel them wat to do but i durst not Say they Should not for it often Came to me did not i reseve faith at the Sacrement: and it hapned at that time that you and m^f John were out of town and i had nobody to declair my mind to: but one day I Set a pairt for fasting and prayer and prayed to the Lord to Sho me is will in these things and the Lord Shoed me that I must keep in all is ordaninces and exort all to go their and Blesed be the Lord he sent mr John to town and he Confirmed all that the Lord had Shoed me So from that time the Lord hath Cept me in is ordanancis and i hope will do to the end: and this is about a year and three quarters a go: but the Lord Convinsed me by hering M^f Molten one Sunday morning his discors was upon the 3 of the philippians to forget those things that were behind and pres forward for till now I bilt on my gifts and gracis and till now I thought I was a new Creatur i thought i had a new heart but now the Lord would a tacken the nail from my heart but i would not Sufer him and I had tould maney i had a new heart but wen i brought my experince to the word of god it would not Stand the trial their for i found my Seluef Come Short of it i found pride and worldley mindedness Lust and maney others evels in my heart but Still my prid was so great i would not Confes to god nor man but went to resining within my Seluef how it was with me i found i had faith and felt the a biding witis of gods holey Sperit with mine and found by the word of god it would stand: but a bout this time i heard of one of my bretheren had been overtaken by the Lust of the flesh i was Saprised to hear this of one that had faith for the Lord had Cept me from it ever Since i beleved but now I beleve i was puft up up and thought my Seluef beter than he but withen a fortnight after i fel into the same Sin and the Lord Let me see i was no better then he and now I fell into resening with my Seluef and into darknis Such darknis as may be felt for i felt a nail over my heart for near a fortnight and was in Such a way i never was befour i was all most redey to give up all that ever i had resened and redey to give up all hopes of my Seluef but in this time i Could not Commit sin for the Lord Cept me: then the Lord took away the nail from my heart and Shoued me my inward Corruptons and now he humbled me and brought me to Confess my sin befour him as at the begining and tould my frendes I was deseved wen I tould them i was a new Cretur and now Blesed be god for Sending is ministry to Comfort his people and opening the Scrupturs to them to See farther then at the beginning for now Came M^f John from bristoll and he Shoued me my State beter than I Could expres it my Seluef and from that time the Lord Shous mee deeper & deeper into my heart and after the Lord hath shown me my heart then he Lets mee feel is love and So i go on from one Step to another for Some times i feel my Seluef Such a Sinful Cretur i wonder i am not in hell for i feel as i think ten thousand hels my desert nay i Canot help ating god so and if he will thrust me there I Can Look up to heaven with my eys my heart and andes and tell him his will be done and after i have had such a Sight of my Seluef i feel Such a depth of the Love of god it mackes me Cry out o the depth of the Love of god it is past fiending out for Sometimes i think i Can feel no more for i think I am redey to be Consumed in is love and must Leave this flesh behind me and go to the regins above but Still the Lord inlargis my heart Some times i begin to think i have a

new heart but the Lord is pleased to show me to the contrary that I have not yet but I have a hope in me that he will perfect his work in my soul before he takes me hence and give me a clean heart Sometimes I think I will wrestle with God and will not let him go till I enjoy that rest that is for the people of God then comes unbelief and reasonings So I start at the promise and draw back and cannot enter in because of unbelief: I have found of late lust and uncleanness come upon me as a flood and such filthy dreams as I am ashamed to mention I thought about a month ago I had that unclean spirit with our Lord spoke of and I believe I had for I felt nothing but uncleanness but one night I after we had been in bed I found faith to be held I went to prayer and was determined not to rise from my knees till he forgave me my sin and gave me power over the unclean spirit and glory be to his name for he heard my prayer and ever since I have found a sweet calm in my soul and at this time I find my soul very happy in hopes of our Lord to come and make is a bode in my soul and that he will strengthen establish and settle me in him the stronger rock of ages: and this I have yet to show you the pertickers and what I do to be true from your unworthy son and servant Thomas Cooper

Dear Sir I take you and your brother Mr John Wesley to be my only ministers and shepherds over my soul under Christ and if you see any thing that I do or say which is not agreeable to the gospel of Christ I desire you will let me know by letter or by your own mouth that I may not bring any scandal on the gospel which God grant I never may but be faithful unto death and that I may be the crown of your rejoicing in the last day when you faithful shepherds shall give up your accounts and that is my prayer for the churches you are shepherds over and that it may be with joy and not with grief.

Dear Sir pray for me that my faith fail not

Reference: EMV/501/17

Date: November 1741

Correspondent: Joseph Carter

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In Charles Wesley's hand:

"Jos Carter's experience Nov. 1741"

Dear Brother in the Lord Jesus

According to your desire and by the assistance of him who made me and likewise of his own free grace and mercy hath redeemed me from the guilt & I trust will deliver me from the power of all sin, I shall give you some account of what God hath done & is doing in my soul. about 4 years ago I was induced very much to pray to God for his grace & holy spirit. my wife told me that her mother taught her so to pray I had reasonings about it that I did not know what it was, and how could I pray heartily for it: but however I went to prayer, and it was to that effect, & I found a deal of satisfaction in it; so that I was moved to pray again & again & a many times repeated, & I could not tell how to be said nay, although I knew not what I prayed for at y^t time, no more than a stock or a stone, but I had continually comfort in that prayer, & great drawings to it. one Saturday night being in a Barbers Shop, ye Barber said he had been to hear a Sermon Preached before all the Religious societies in London. he surprised me. I asked him if there was ever a one there I told him, by ye behaviour of ye people there was little sign of it, he mentioned several, he belong'd to

one; yt in mile's lane.²⁶ I was glad to hear it & desired to be introduced into it, and see there orders. accordingly by him I was. I found some comfort y^e 1st two or three times of meeting: but at Length I began to see things in y^m w^{ch} I did not Like, as particular Persons Speaking at Pleasure, & Dictating in their way as they thought fit; & could not bear Contradiction. they were y^e old ones & great ones of ye world. at yt time I went to hear Dr Heylin, and I was powerfully Convinc'd throu him y^t Religion was not anything outward, but yt it was a through Change of ye Heart. this I strongly Insisted on amongst this soceity, & if they would not hear, but answer'd that we were to do as we were commanded & y^t was enough

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I told them y^t I could keep none of ym, but if I was inclined to all evil, & could do no otherways for my Life: however we was to do w^t we could. & God would do ye rest. however I did not much like ym, & and soon after left ym. Mr Seward²⁷ & his Brother were yn belonging to ym, I still went to hear Dr Heylin & I was still more & more convinc'd of y^e Spirituality of Religion but could not find it in my self. at Last being at work awainscoting of a house in Little Brittain, it being now ye white horse Ale house, there comes in a Boy to beg some Shavings, w^{ch} I gave him Leave to take. I took Particular notice of him, yt he took nothing else, w^{ch} was uncommon; for those yt come for ym, take as many chips as the can wth y^m: w^{ch} made me ask him who he belong'd to. he told me - Mr Bray²⁸ a Brazier hard by. I told him further, yt I had heard he was a very Good man, & he was welcome to some at any time. he asked me

²⁶ Possibly Mile End-Green lane in the open land east of the city

²⁷ William Seward (1703-1742): Born at Badsey, Gloucestershire, the fifth of seven sons of John Seward, the estate steward of Lord Windsor. As a young man, Seward moved to London and embarked on a career as a stockbroker. During his time in the capital, he was an enthusiastic promoter of charity schools.

In 1738 Seward was introduced to Charles Wesley and in November of that year, Charles recorded in his journal the fact of his friend's conversion. In January 1739 he attended a conference of Oxford Methodists and came increasingly under the influence of George Whitefield. Seward joined Whitefield on his American tour of August 1739 and was a generous financial sponsor of the mission.

In April 1740 he returned to England to transact some business on Whitefield's behalf. He published his journal of the visit to North America and this increased the tension that was developing between the party that looked to Whitefield for leadership and people who were gathering around the Wesleys. Seward travelled to Wales with the preacher Howell Harris and in October 1740 received a fatal injury at the hands of an anti-Methodist mob while attempting to preach at Hay in Breconshire. (Principal source: *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860*, edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995))

²⁸ John Bray (*fl.* 1738–44). A poor uneducated layman and brazier by trade, who was possessed of a deep religious faith. Bray's house in the district of London known as Little Britain was a centre for early evangelical activities until it was superseded by the Fetter Lane Society. It was at Bray's home that Charles Wesley was converted in May 1738 (*Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860*, edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995))

if I knew him. I told him no, I never saw him in my life to know him; but I knew two young men yt used a soceity at his house on Tuesday night, he farther asked me if I had any notion of this new Religion? w^t new Religion replied I why salvation thro faith only. no, I told him; I had heard nothing of it. wt did you never hear Mr Wesleys, said he? (no, I never heard ym), Mr Charles is in Town, & hell preach a Sunday at this Church well I think to goe to hear him. “Mr John is a Coming from abroad & he is a very fine man Likewise said he,” But I will tell you my belief said I, Pharise Like, wth my Arms folded together, swaggering as it were. I believe in all y^e Articles of y^e Religion. (& I believe at y^t time I never had read them all over nor hardly knew wt was in them) Likewise I Believe in ye Scriptures of ye old & new Testmt in all y^e Creeds &c. he asked me if my Belief influenc’d all my Life & actions? I told him no. I did not find yt it did. he told me yn yt my faith was yt of ye head, & not of ye heart, I answered I thought so too, then he began to prove it by Scripture he said if Christ hath made you free yn are yw free Indeed; and we have not recieved ye spirit of bondage unto fear, but we have received ye spirit of Adoption whereby we Cry Abba Father:

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he struck me all of aheap I could not tell w^t to say, he advised me to buy a little book called a Choice Drop of honey from y^e Rock Xst²⁹ and bid me Consider on’t, and bid me Good buy. as soon as he was gone, I began to Consider of y^e texts of Scripture, & concluded in my self if I misbelieved these; I must misbelieve all y^e rest, & so I assented to y^m, well knowing it was not in a y^t state of freedom there Spoken of. then Imediately came into my mind all my notorious sins y^t I had committed, & especuly my reigning sin y^t of Adultery, w^{ch} I had so often made. Promises & vows y^t I would never more commit. nay the Last time y^t I had made avow against it, was on this condition y^t I did not desire to enter into y^e kingdom of heaven if I broke it, this made so deep an Impression upon my soul, y^t I thought all hopes past, Reasoning thus “w^t signifies your talking of Religion, & y^e kingdom of heaven you have forfeited it by your own Conditions, & have fell from y^m; how can you expect any thing but hell? These terrors followed me hard & Close even almost to Desperation but I strove to get rid of y^m by amusing myself at my work, and working harder & harder, & striving to get y^m out of my head, as I had done for 3 years before y^e Last time I fell into y^t sins but all would not do; I must be damn’d at Last. I had a Little allay by Considering y^t I prayed heartily for y^e Grace of God y^t I might not fall, and reasoning y^t if he did not give me his Grace how could I keep it; but it was a question to me whether I had his Grace, or not. yⁿ was I at as Great aLose about y^t, that I could find no Comfort, for about an hour or an hour & half. at last there came into my Inmost soul a voice, y^t thro’ y^e mercy of God in Christ Jesus my sins were forgiven me, I burst out a Crying, & Laughing, & Dancing. & Jumping about y^e Room, y^t any one, if they had seen me, would have thought me Craze. I then knew that God

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was my father, and I could cry Dear Father, my Father abba Father! I then saw that he had mercy upon me. Purely and only for the Sake of Jesus Christ my saviour, yⁿ did I plainly see my own vileness, my own nothingness, & I saw nothing upon the face of the earth so vile as my self, & in particular I saw my self worse than y^e dirt I trod on,

²⁹ *A Choice Drop of Honey from the Rock Christ* by Thomas Wilcox (London: 1690)

& for this reason Jesus Christ Died. then I Cryed out, o my dear Saviour, have I all my Life time been Rumiging over so many books to find salvation, & at Last have found it in thee! I blessed Jesus, Glory be to thy holy name for it, then did I see the Insignificancy of all things else, but Jesus Christ only. In him I had all things. and it Came strongly into my mind, yt I need not read any more Books nor Goe to Church any more, for I had Jesus Xst and I had all in him. I doubted in Relation to going to Church, and a voice said "frequent Divine ordinances" twice or three times, & from thence I concluded to do as I was comanded. by and by Came in William, Mr Brays Prentice. I Imediatly told him y^t I had no occasion for y^e book he recomended, for I had Jesus Christ, & in him I had all things. he was very earnest & particular in inquiring of me ye account I had to give of it, wch I did in Broken Language thro ye exstasie of Love & Joys he mourn'd much, because he had not received it, but together we had a Glorious Intercourse, I rejoicing in y^e mercy & Love of God with a full belief yt he also would visit him with his Salvation, then he parted wth me for y^t time, but at all opportunities he visited me, & was very much Drawed out in Love towards me, Continually the 1st person I saw yt I thought had any notion of Religion I communicated to them my experience, w^{ch} was my master, & he rejected it all as folly & Predestination, & hated me for it, and at a Convenient opportunity turned me from my business, but ye Lord Imediately took me up, & brought me unto one where I had the full Liberty to Speake all my mind & they could rejoyce with me.

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In this full assurance of faith & love of God I went on in for about Six months; in wch time I never had any occassion to pray for any thing, but only rejoyceing in him, & Continually Giving him thanks for his Great Love and mercy. I Laid down in full assurance of faith, & rose the same, & whatsoever I thought said or did, was to y^e Glorification of his name: and I could not bare to hear of any Care or forcast for ye morrow; it was so contrary to ye entire dependance on God. I had at this time a Call into ye Countrey to my sick mother & I communicated unto her and to all where ever I came the Glad tidings of salvation unto every one of y^m by y^e Blood of Christ by my own Experience: & y^t it was out of mere mercy & Love, for I my self had done nothing for it, & were nothing but only believing in y^e Lord Jesus; wch I pressingly exhorted them all to do. At Last my mother died, I was not yⁿ wth her: but y^e person that was, afterwards told me, thro ill will, yt I had thro what I had said to her Given her great uneasiness all her Sickness she continually Crying out to God yt she might know y^t her sins were forgiven her, & yt her pardon was Sealed in heaven thro ye Blood of Christ, he told me She could not die in peace for me; he said he read by her, & endeavored all he Could to Comfort her by her good Life; but that would not do any good, he then told me, he read to her in Dr Hammonds Practical Catichse & y^e LordCatechicyt the lord gave her to lay hold on these words. Know ye^e not yt Jesus Christ is in y^u except ye be reprobates? She cryed out, y^t She was not reprobated, yt she was in Jesus Xst; & soon Died. this was the reproach he cast upon me for troubling my mother on her Death bed. Glorious reproach, would our Lord make me such an instrument to call all dead souls out of their dreadfull darkness, to cry continually unto him yt they may have Life. my mother dying She Left me a small matter of money yt after I had it I was strongly Imprest to pay it to some of my wifes dealers, wch she had Contracted some years before, & contrary to my knowledge. I then began to reason 1st y^t I never had any dealings wth ym, & likewise y^t, they never had ask'd me for money, but yt would not doe; for every time I went to prayer, this

was uppermost “owe no man any thing”. yⁿ I would get up wth a resolution to pay it away to ym. and by yt means I should give great Glory to god; & I was to tell ym, yt that was the effect of the Doctrine of ye Enthusiasts, then I consulted flesh & blood I [told] my wife of my Designe, not acting simply in obedience to ye Command wch faith w^t soever thine hand findeth to Do to Do it quickly & wth all thy might. Consulting her, she opposed it wth all her might, & began to scold & rave in a most terrible maner I Still insisted upon it, & ye good Spirit within Continually prompt me to it, that I was for ever Resolving & never Reforming, fearing her continual noise:and y^c flesh tempted me another way, by my wifes being near her time, & yt I should by so doeing leave her Destitute of ye Comforts & necessaries wch are called for at yt time. however all this did not satisfie me I still was persuaded yt I was to owe no man anything, & I continually endeavoured to perswade my wife to consent but all in vain [*words obliterated under crease in the paper*]

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oh make it mine for thine own mercies sake & remove all ye hinderances thereto the Present state I am in is this, yt I have no Doubt or fear of my Salvation nor have not had from ye Begining. (Blessed be ye Lord for it) because he very often giveth me fresh assurances of his Continual Love towards me, and of my acceptance in ye Blood of ye Lamb. but I have not yt constant love, yt continual Love yt ever flowing faith as usual: but only Enough, as it were, to keep me free from Sinking. not but yt now I could sometimes Lay down my life for ye Brethren. Even now I feel I could do it by his assistance. I plainly see that all the work yt hath been done already, hath been done for me; but now I am fully perswaded y^t it must be wrought in me, But by ye same almighty power, even he that hath begun ye good work will also finish it. I find that in me there is placed a Moniter Strictly to watch over and examine all my thoughts words & actions, yt nothing should come from either of them but wt is to the Glory of God; and I do find yt satan would if my Lord permitted him; wch he cannot, for he will not forsake those yt trust in him, I say y^c Devil hath set himself against all my Endeavours, wch are according to his will, & would spoil y^m all. If I spake to his praise & Glory if out of pure love he tempts me to be proud of it; if ardently and sincerely; he tempts me to be angry; he would willingly have all my thoughts; wch he cannot. yⁿ he would visciate or poison ym by causing me to Judge my negibour, or to think of my self more highly yn I ought; but this is very rare. my Lord does keep me very Low. he oftener Gets power to make me believe yt I have not recieved wt I have, nay in Short there is not one good property in me, (although given me by y^c spirit of God,) but this Devil of Devils would if he had power Poison, and make it turn to his own advantage. O Lord enable me to with Stand ye temptations of ye world ye flesh & ye Devil, & wth a pure heart and mind to follow thee ye only God thro[^] Jesus Xst our Lord. oh my Dear Brother, do you pray unto ye Lord yt I may hold out unto ye end; yt I may not be wary nor faint in my mind, but yt I may Press forward for ye prise of ye high Calling of God in Xst Jesus y^t I may goe on from strength to strength, yt I may be made holy as he who hath called me is holy in all manner of Conversation & Godliness; yt I may never rest untill I rest wholly in ye Arms of Jesus, untill I am made one with him & he in me, and we are all Perfected in one. O Lord Jesus Christ thou hast Died for us, o Do thou make all our Bodies Souls & Spirits fit Habitations for thy holy Spirit to reside in for ever! Oh do thou come, and take Posesion of our Souls, & Rule & Reigne their, who only hath the right unto them; and Put all thine enemies under thy feet [...]

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of it, y^e further she was from it. in this tryal I was for about 3 or 4 months but Continually the love of God wth me & still rejoycing in y^e doeing of this; being glad to do any thing to his Glory. at length my wifes time drawing very near, I thought I would stay til y^t was over, and yⁿ do it; but when y^t time was accomplisht, she was as far off Consenting as before, and as many Calls for y^e money, but I still resolved to pay then w^t I had. and Continually told her so. at last she broke open my Chest, & took a Good part out; & in a Little time God visited one of my Children wth y^e small pox, & not Long after wth Death. I then went in a great hurry to perform my resolution wth what there was Left without saying anything to any body, and in doeing of it I had as much Satisfaction & Comfort as tho I had Paid the whole. Blessed be the Lord for his Goodness toward me, tho undeserving. from this time the Storms began to arise from within & without: my wifes crying out against me to every one of my starving & perishing my family, by giving y^t away w^{ch} was sent by God for y^e nourishment & support of them. & in relation to my Childs Death told me y^t I was y^e instrument of it, by not being Diligent enough in y^e use of y^e means; all w^{ch} tryals brought me into great Darkness such as might be felt: w^{ch} I continued in for about a week, when I went mourning all y^e Day - I could not taste y^e word. I then had no Love, nay I was as it were stript of all, for y^t time; but at Last y^e Lord appeard to me againe as before, by the means of reading of the tryals & temptation of the Children of God, wⁿ I saw y^t those that would live godly in Xst Jesus must suffer Persecution; and y^t those whom God Loveth he Chastneth, and Scourgeth ever son whom he receiveth, and that those afflictions and troubles y^t I had Lately gon through was for my Disobedience to him in not Directly following the Dictates of his holy Spirit when he enjoind me o Lord grant y^t I may in all things simply obey thy will wⁿ thou commandest, not consulting flesh & Blood, Come Life Come Death. This is w^t I continually press in my band, being a standing monument of his mercy, tho[^] Continually Disobedient to him in all these trials I had no affection for sin, but hated & abhorred it in all its Shapes: but y^t w^{ch} was y^e most reigning one as above) I was entirely dead to; so y^t not having Conversation at home as usual it raised Jealousies hatreds & heart burnings towards me from my wife but y^t never hurt me but caused me to keep still Closser to my Saviour, when I was in my first Love, I then could say, & did, that in Xst I was a new Creature y^t in me all old things were Passed away & y^t all things were become new; and y^t I were one of y^e Saints on earth, and y^t I had communion wth y^e father and y^e son Continually, & y^t I had fellowship wth y^e saints that were in Light, oh that I could as Incessantly say so now as then! O Lord come into my soul & take up thy abode there for ever. It is thy will o Lord *(a few words obscured in copying)*

unto thee o Lord be all y^e Praise and Glory for w^t thou hast done & still art doing in us & for us now henceforth & for ever more Amen!

From your Ever Loving Brother in ye Lord Jesus

(name obscured)

I doubt not, but you allow this Writer admission into the Class Band.

I have no doubt

Reference: EMV/501/18
Date: 20 November 1741
Correspondent: Samuel Webb³⁰
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Location: London and Islington

Annotation: In the handwriting of Charles Wesley:

1. On the reverse side is nearly twenty lines of shorthand
2. "Sam Web.'s Exp[er]ience Nov. 1741."
3. "Sam Web's [shorthand] Nov. 1741

Nov. 20th 1741

Dear & Most Rever'd S^r by ye Good providence of God I Had A desire to Hear ye Methodest So I went to Islingtons Church one Day About 2 Years & ½ Since It Pleas'd God that your Self preach,t³¹ from our Lords Discorse with ye Woman of Samaria at Jacobs well but Indeed Your Zealous looks and forsable words Caused me to think you Spake as Never Man spake when our Lord Had Convinced Her of adultery I then and not till then felt that He Knows ye Secrets of all Hearts for I thought mine would aburst as well as I was able I Kept mySelf from making a disturbance till ye Sermon was over when I went out to ward Canbury House where I plentyfully Pour,d out My Soul it Being filled with Joy Unspeakable I Had Such asence of my own Vileness & ye Love of Christ towards me that I was Confounded & had No Inclination to Go Home any More this being ye first I ever Heard ye pure Gospell preach't Nevertheless I Date my Justification from this time although I canot But take Great Shame to My self when I Consider ye long Time with ye Many Blessed Oppertunitys I have & do Enjoy of hearing ye everlasting Gospel Preacht without Greater Improvements. after this I took all Oppertunities of hearing ye Word of Mr. Whit[e]field, your Brother or you & when you where Chiefly at Bristol I found out Fetter Lane Society were I attended ye word Constantly Twice a week And One thing is very Remarkable Although I heard them Preach their still Doctrine yet for as much as I went with a Sincere Desire to Know Christ all their Warnings a gainst ye Ordinances where taken by me that we must Not depend on any thing we did as Meritorious About Christmas will be Two year I came Acquainted with Brothers Cooper³² & Hage & Hearing ym talk of of ye forgivness of Sins whether I Had [received] ye Bressing I Began to Reason about this time you Came to Town Last Easter was a year & began to preach Mornings at ye foundery which Rejoyse,d me Much So I left Journy work yt I might have ye better Leasure to Attend & as I was

³⁰ Listed as a member of the band led by William Baker that met at the Foundery, June 1745 (Stevenson, *City Road Chapel*, 34)

³¹ In the mid-18th century, Islington was a semi-rural parish on the northern fringe of London. The Vicar of Islington in 1739 (time of Webb's conversion) was George Stonehouse. Charles Wesley served as an unlicensed curate for Stonehouse between 1738 and 1739 (Methodist sources and DNB for Charles Wesley)

³² Possibly Thomas Cooper (EMV 16)

Sitting one Day in Much Doubt I Had a sense of a voice with in me which Gave me Much Comfort & I believe, d it ye witness of ye Spirit Accordingly I declar, d it to Brother Cooper in Band and from that time for 3 months (to ye best of my Remembrance) I had Such a Glowing & Bigness in my Brest yt I thought it my Duty to Invite all men to Seek ye Lord for I Had Not Heard of any that had a Clearer manifestation of His free Grace than my Self I have Generally found a desire to Meditate on ye things of God but Commonly a backwardness to closet prayer though I am Convnc'd tis a Great privilidge. I have for along been Surounded with much fear & doubt Not of ye faithfulness of God but of My own Deceitfull Heart which Indeed Has & does discover itself to be Deceitful above all things. yet I find yt Little Principle of faith Conquors for I Continually find those words of our Lords True Look unto me & be ye Save'd I find Now a Confidence yt ye Leaven will work till ye Whole Lump is Leavened it Has Pleas'd ye Lord to Shew me that it is A Lump of Curruption yt must be throughly Purg'd ere it Can Inherit that Glorious Kingdom which I Pray God fully & perfectly to Accomplish of his free Grace for ye Sake of his only Begotten well beloved Son & my Saviour Jesus Christ Our Lord Amen

Last wensday night you Spake as if you thought your Labours would not be blest But in America Now I do Declare that I never [illegible] had ye Expectation of being Blest so much Under any ones ministry [illegible] as your & ungratefull as we are I believe Many are Like Minded & I pray God to Make Us all faithfull Hearers as you are Teachers that you that Sow & we that Reap May Rejoyce together Grant this O father for ye Honour of Jesus Christ our Lord from your Unworthy Hearer Sam Webb

Reference: EMV/501/19

Date: 24 November 1741

Correspondent: Taverner Wallis

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London: New Inn

Annotation: In the handwriting of Charles Wesley:

1. 'Taverner Willis [shorthand text - experience] Nov[ember] 1741'
2. 'Tav Wallis Nov[ember] 1741'

Reverend S.^t

Having had from my youth up great drawings of The Father; and Flights of Relegion at sometimes, and at others, chuseing the pleasures of sin for a season; but at last being convinced that there was no peace to the wicked, I said I will return to my Father; and this was ab.t Aug.t 1738; when I began to read Josephus w.ch gave me great encouragem.t and I wem.^d between whiles, ready to do any thing to be saved; nevertheless the Sin w.ch did so easly beset me had still dominion for I did but Discemble; I now rec.d the Bless.d Sacram.t for the first time with Shame and confusion of face & some tears resolving for the future to amend my life and to this end set ab.t going to Church & Sacram.^t and giving to the poor; but after strugling some months, in this way found I co.^d not come up to what I ought and to what I must to be saved,- Sometimes this wo.d discourage me, and tempt me to give up all hopes, at least for the present, till I had better opportunitys to put in practice what I had

learned; The Fear of Man and unwillingness to forsake all was at the bottom; and was what hindered the work of God on my Soul, but however I had got so far as to watch over Sin and had Dominion, and likewise by being Grave, my former acquaintance soon avoided me, as I did them; all this time I had no one, to speak my mind to, and haveing strove to repent but in vain finding my heart not contrite as it ought, and being recomend.d to get acquainted with good men if I wo.d be so my self, I thought it was quit right; and haveing heard talk of the Methodists at Oxford some years ago how Religeous they were I made it my business to renew my acquaintance with one so call.d, but to my great Disappointm.t found him of an other oppinion; but it was by him I was first Informed of the Society in Fetter Lane and after I had been there severall times and found great Satisfaction knowing it was good for me to be there I proposed to M.^r Bray³³ to be one of the Society but it was answered it was contrary to the Rules to accept any person without they were known by some of their members, I went their afterwards, but seldom, and haveing heard M.^r Viney speak ag.t the means, my nature being pleased therewith, took the bait and by that means threw me back again into the World, and into Sin, w.ch I had Dominion over till then; and by these things, being convinced this way co.d not be right and having the burthen of Sin on me and fear of Death; ab.t april 1740 as I was going down in the Stage Coach to my Fathers it pleased God to give me an oportunity of being acquainted with Mrs Jason who was going to Dimmer - and after she had resolved me in a few questions concerning the way she was in, I desired her to bring me acquainted with the M.^r Wesleys w.ch she did by Letter; Determined now to set my hand indeed to the plow, I went to the Foundry and having heard an Excellent Sermon by M.^r J.s it made me say to my self what must I do to be saved; I went very much moved with the Commendatory Letter and he recomend.d me to the acquaintance of Br.o Thornton³⁴ w.ch

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was of much service in building me up. and now by attending constantly on the word I was soon convinced of the Doctrine, and that it was Different from that preach.d in the Churches I was in some months time convinced of unbelief and in feb: last I found I had forgiveness threw the blood of X.t, but after three days (haveing had a book recomend.d me to read) and tho' my Conscience told me not to read it, yet thro' fear of man I took the contrary way w.ch threw me into great darkness so that I went mourning, for a whole day to find him whom my Soul lov.^d it was not long er'e I found him; and then I knew what it was to love God with all my heart & about a month after this I fell again occasioned by takeing to much care of my health and Studying Physik, and being absent from under the Word so that I thought the Kingdom of Heaven consisted in Meats & Drinks and trusted much in the means. but

³³ John Bray (*fl.* 1738–44). A poor uneducated layman and brazier by trade, who was possessed of a deep religious faith. Bray's house in the district of London known as Little Britain was a centre for early evangelical activities until it was superseded by the Fetter Lane Society. It was at Bray's home that Charles Wesley was converted in May 1738 (*Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860*, edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995))

³⁴ Possibly Henry Thornton, who was a married member of the Select Society at the Foundry in February 1744 and a leader of a married band in June 1745 (Stevenson, *City Road Chapel*, 33 and 35)

God when once my Soul asked Councill of him convinced me of my error; I found once, (since I was Justified,) guilt, for speaking unadvisedly with my lips: but found, afterwards I had an advocate with the father; and I was again restored to his favour; I once turned back in my heart to Egypt, in a time of Tribulation & Temptation; after this the Lord shew.d me from whence I was fallen (as the Hymn when I was a Little Child describes) but this lasted but some few hours; I have lately seen my Salvation more clear, tho in great deadness still, and void of the Love of God, I am perswaded I have been fighting in my own strength, and have not waited patiently on the Lord to work in me to Will & to Do of his good pleasure, therefore have ~~ing~~ found no comfort or satisfaction in Devotion as formerly, being as I take it fed with strong meat; I have been quit dead to the world till lately as likewise to the Flesh having had no temptation to abide with me till now, I find I am carry.d away with lust full thoughts and likewise with the desire of being rich, but find, blessed be God, I am more than Conqueror, find.g that those things worketh experience & I have had Temptations to take up with other things rather than Christ; but hope thro' the grace of God to be willing to loose my natural life to be his Disciple; I think of late that I am grown lukewarm because I can't rise of a morning as I used to, and that my love to the Brethren is grown faint; nevertheless in Generall I have a hunger & thirst after righteousness & doubt not but that I shall be fill, th'o at present I am all Unclean; thinking myself the Chief of Sinners, I still remain unthankfull for this Glourious means of Salvation and for what the Lord has done for me already; & not to have the Love of God in my h.t; I am willing more of late to let the Lord teach me & shew me all things and have found now the Lord is going to shew me my heart (w.ch he did in part formerly but that soon I forgot) I am convinced I have.^s been fighting in my own strength and lay more now like clay in the hand of the potter; what has been a means of bringing me into Darkness and Temptation is the haveing not took Councill of God but follow.d my own Inclinasons, and have.^s in my heart Turned back into Egypt; I now see more of my heart and soon to be jealous over myself least I sho.d fall away w.ch. thing till of late; (I always fancying myself so strong) co.d see no sign of .ye Lord convinced me but last knight & shewed me that I had depended on former gifts. what I seem

[page break]

to stand in need of is self denial, to Take up my cross daily, and not be ashamed to confess X.t, to wach and pray ag.t Temptations, to be come a little Child to see more of my heart and to sease from my own works and look unto C.t the Finisher of my faith to have more of the knowledge & love of God and a settled peace (tho I dont find the Guilt of Sin on my heart) in short unbelief I want to be rooted out & every plant that my heavenly father has not planted ~~to be rooted out~~ and to have a new a loving heart Christ in me the hope of Glory:

Some time after I was justified I found a great sorrow and contrition for my sins and great mourning looking unto him whom I had pierced.

Once I saw that every [thought?] of mens heart by nature was only Evill continually & co.^d give Glory to God for all the good but now I seem to have thought of my own and so don't rely on God to teach me etc

I thought I was the men that Crucified the Lord and a very deep contrition hereon but now these things seem to be forgotten and I seem ignorant that so it is, I seem quit blind to what I was formerly;

I lattely have plucked out a right Eye; and now I know of no Idol that I desire to keep., ~~now but~~
The Sin of Ingratitude to you S.r & your Brother for your pains I am affaird lyes at my Door I am Rev.d S.r

Your much Obliged Humble Serv.t in Christ

Taverner: Wallis

New Inn 24 Nov.r 1741
I beg your prayers for me:
To the Rev.d M.^r Charles Wesley

Reference: EMV/501/20

Date: [1741]

Correspondent: William Barber³⁵

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"W. Barber's Exp[er]ien[ce] 1741."

Rev^d Sir according to y^r Request i shall give you as plain & as simple anaccount as i can of my state since i sett outt to seek Christ
The first instrumentt under god of bringing my soull outt Darkness into the marvelous Light, was our Brother Cooper³⁶ for he happyly Comeing to work where i was & haveing opportunity he begune to tell me whatt the Lord had done for his Soull i Readily Received his saying & tould him i did intend through Christ to Pursue the same way accordingly he engaed me to go along with him to fetter Lane Society where you was Expounding the Scripturs butt upon whatt point i cannott so well remember for this is aboutt three years ago butt i seemed to Like itt well to god be all the glory he Likewise asked me to go with him on the Sunday morning following to St Lawrences Church wich accordingly i did he asked me to stay to the Sacramentt i tould him no nott then for i thought haveing never bene there must be something of a preparation befor i Chould go, i tould him Please god on the Sunday following i whould go & my wife haveing never bene we did intend to go together & accordingly

³⁵ Barber wrote to Charles Wesley again from London on 27 December 1762, to report on his spiritual condition. It is of interest to see how a workmate, Thomas Cooper, talked about his spiritual life as they worked together. Barber joined Cooper at the Fetter Lane Society (circa 1739) and at the parish church. Barber declined the sacrament because he felt the need to prepare for it and to include his wife, even though he had never received before. After his conversion he and his wife joined the bands. Barber is listed as the leader of one of the married bands meeting at the Foundery in June 1745. (Albin note and Stevenson, *City Road Chapel*, 35)

³⁶ Thomas Cooper/Cowper (EMV 16)

we begune on the monday to prepare our Selves by reading over a form wich we had in the House So we went on all the week till Sunday morning & then the Enemy of our Souls begune to sett himself in array against us by endeavoring to keep us from going for something being amiss with my stockings i was to putt on words arose beteen[?] us butt the Enemy did nott gett his desier of us for we disapointed him of his hope for in the name of the Lord we went god being our helper i belive itt to be the Enemy because the Lord gave me sence then Clearly to see itt was one of his devices to keep us from going because he knows itt is the overthrow of his Kingdom & i trust in the Lord i shall always keep in his own appointed ways, butt to return i did nott find much satisfaction in going butt i thought it was my duty to go & to Lett no opportunity slip of both hearing the word Preached & Receving the Sacrementt as often as Conveniency offered, i heard thatt our Brother John wesly was to preach thatt Same day att St Geiles in the fields & accordingly i went to hear him & he Preached from thes words, To every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters & he that hath no mony come ye, buy & eatt, you come, & buy wine & milk withoutt money & withoutt Price found Something of a Strong alteration in my self under the word such as i never found before for i Chould nott Refrain from tears most of the Time of his Preaching the word Came with power & i begane to see the necessity of a Saviour, i went on mourning for some time, butt i found greatt Comfort often under your word att islington Church butt i had nott found that Pearl of greatt Price nott Long after going to islingto Church & after Sacrament some of us went down to the House for to spend some time together in prayer & Singing & while one of our Bretheren was att prayer then itt was thatt the Lord Reveiled himself unto me, i found Redemption in the blood of Christ even the forgiveness of my sins, i flowed in tears, Butt the same time was transported into joy i went on Rejoycing, for some time till the Enemy came & tempted to think i did deceive myself butt after i had acknowledge whatt the Lord had done for me i durst nott deny itt for whenever the temptation came i always found something greater than my one evill Heart there was a Sacrett hope & a sure a Trust & confidence in god that for Christ sake my sins was forgiven, butt how soon did i forgett the Loveing Kindness of the Lord by proveing unfaithfull to grace given for i went into the Country to See Some freinds nott to do the Lords will butt my own for i did nott Confess the Lord befor them

[page break]

nor did i declare whatt the Lord had done for my soull & hereby i grived the Holy Spiritt & Caused the Lord to withdraw himself from me & the Lord grant itt may be laid to my Charge i went on in Darkness & heaviness for some time till by repentance the Lord was pleased to return to me again, aboutt this time i was putt upon the triall Band & in the time appointed i was admitted into the bands i was putt into our Brother Edmunds Band we went on very well for some time together butt itt was nott Long befor M^r mulltor Came over & he used to attend our band almost every time we mett i remember the first time he came amongst us there was nothing done butt he telling us his own Experience, another time we meet because m^r mulltor did nott come we Chould do nothing among our selves as to what we came upon butt fell into Lightness & vain talking & so we parted i thought these things should nott be so butt i found itt very agreable to nature to come away as we went for the Enemy Laboured hard to keep me away from my band & to often i yeilded to the temptation my wife³⁷

³⁷ Joanna Barber - for an account of her death, see EMV 22.

was then in band & Comeing home from fetter Lane on Sunday night she tould me thatt M^r mulltor or some of them had given outt that the Sacrement was onely for such as was in such a state as she discribed to me i was Surprised att this for i know my Self nott to be in that state wich gave me greatt uneasiness for i never had heard him Express himself in such a manner butt i did intend please god i did Live till Monday night when our band did meett to aske him the question whether or nott such a one as me Should go to the Sacrementt he tould me itt was only for them thatt had attained to the Liberty of the gospel i remember very well there was two or three in bands that Readily received his saying & said they Chould as well stay away as go itt was Equally the same to them thes Sayings gave me greatt uneasiness in Soull for i fell into greatt doubts & Reasoning Concerning itt for i Looked unto man more than unto god I was Halting bettewn two for sometimes i found a desier to go to the sacrament butt oftner i staid away i found no pace in going nor now in staying away butt i was Like the troubled sea att last i did nott go att all & the Reason i gave was when any one asked me that i Chould nott go withoutt trusting in the means now the Deivell had gott his desier of me now i did fall into sin my Saviour was hid from me i was as a Sheep haveing no Sheppard i had no peace to my soull by reasson of my sins for i had Left all the ordinances of god this was a Snare the Enemy had laid for me for i never approved of their ways butt i was Hayoring betewn two & so i went on for some time till the Lord was Pleased to bring me back again in a manner he knows best for me for i belive all things did work together for my good for now the Lord begune to Show me the Corruptions & evill abominations that was in my heart now i had such a sight of my Heart thatt the Spiritt wich he had made was ready to faill before him for i Chould nott go along the Streett butt my desiers whould be almost to every thing i saw Evill thoughts whould arise uncleane desiers whould proceed i Chould nott pray nor my desiers was butt Cold by reason of unbelife now the Devill tempted me Reason with Self from whome the Deity first Proceeded with was the greatest triall i ever meet with butt he who as promised thatt we shall nott be tempted above whatt we are able to bear he did support me under this triall & to this day when i meditate upon the goodness of the Lord & what he as done for me then the Enemy assaults me with this temptation butt be praissed he Cannott approach to hurt me for he only drives me the nearer to my Saviour i tould my mind to my old freind our Brother Cooper & he advised me to keep Close to the ordinances wich by the grace of god i did there i found my Lord again for i know he is to be found in the ordinances for i have had many seewt[?] & precious promisses brought to me in the Sacrement butt i find such a Depth of unbelife in my heart that i Cannott Lay hold of them butt this i can Lay hold of & am sure that he that as begune a good work in my soull he will also Carry itt on unto the end butt i have bene unfaithfull to the grace given i have grived^d the Holy Spiritt of the Lord by a thousand falls & have Caused the Lord to withdraw his Spiritt from me & so i have fallen into Darkness butt by repentance & seeking him in his own appointed ways the Lord as returned to me again i find the Spiritt of the Lord present with me att all times for there is nothing i say or do that is nott to his glory butt immediatly i am Convinced of itt O that i might never sin against him more but that i may Continuly waitt upon the Lord till he as fulfilled all his promisses in my soul & this is my hope thatt if Confess my sins he his faithfull and just to forgive me my sins & to Clanse me from all unrightousness.

now the Lord bless preserve & keep you & mr John & grant thatt you may be father of many generations & that i may be y^r Crown of Rejoyceing that when you give up your accountt you may give them up with joy & nott with Sorrow.

W^m Barber

Reference: EMV/501/21

Date: 1776

Correspondent: Unknown

Document: "Happy death of Elizabeth Appleton"

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Unknown

Annotated: In a contemporary hand: "Betty Appleton happy death 1776"

The Experiences of Eliz Appleton

We bless God for sending our dear sister Betty among us. It has been a great Blessing to our souls; & tho' she is now dead, she yet speaketh. Her conversation, her prayer & praises, her affliction, her lifted Eyes & smiling looks are still fresh in our memory, & I trust will never be forgotten by us. The following Acct is from Sr Sarah who was constantly with her to her dying moment. "Thursday May 9. she found much of the presence of God. She sd Glory be to God I never felt such a day as this in my life; I seem to be in another World. I expect great Trials for this. I sd my dear That is a Temptation from the Enemy who would rob you of your present happiness. She sd I always found it so. Yet she continued praising God, & telling of the great things he had done for her soul. Her afflictions increased much yet she bore all with that patience & submission as I never saw any before. She praised God for his fatherly chastisements & sd I would not be without this affliction for ten thousand worlds. Lord give me patience yt I may hold out to the end. One night she desired we would pray with her yt the Lord would shine upon her & give her an assurance of his favour. after we had pray'd with her she broke out in prayer & praises to God. She seemed as if she could grasp the whole universe. In perticular she earnestly prayed for the Inhabitation of this wicked Town that there might be a shaking among the dry bones. She bid us say the Lords prayer & heartily join'd in it. She said Glory be to God I am better in Soul & Body Her sleep came upon her very suddenly but she did not receive much refreshment from it. When she awoke she was much tempted that she should loose her senses & earnestly praied that the Lord would continue to her the use of her Reason wch I believe was granted to her even to her dying moment She often acknowledged with gratitude the kind Favours she had received from her Friends in London Friday the 17. her body was loaden with affliction & her soul was in great Agonies. It seem'd as if all the powers of Darkness were permitted to try her, but abt 5 o'Clock on Satturday morning the Lord caused all her Enimies to fly at his presence. She sd with a loud Yes Lord I believe! Glory be to his holy name, he hath spoke to my heart these words Look & see how far the heaven is from the earth, so far hath the Lord removed thy sins from Thee! Glory be to his holy name for condecending to a worm, a sinner, saved by Grace! She earnestly exhorted us to beware of every thing that would hinder our growing in grace &c. She said you grieve me much when you pray for my recovery, her constant prayer was to be made ripe for Glory & then to be recived where the Wicked cease from troubling & her weary soul be for ever at rest. On Sunday morning she said I believe I shall die this day; I said then it will be a blessed Sabbath to you. She O yes. A half an hour before she departed I asked her if she found the Lord present with her? She said yes. A little after she seemed as if she was going to sleep, & so departed.

Reference: EMV/501/22

Date: February 1752

Correspondent: [William Barber³⁸]

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Document: "Happy death of Joanna Barber"³⁹

Annotated: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "S[ister] Barber's death February 1752"

Sr

The following is as particular account as i Can give you Concerning my wife.

when She was first awakened itt was under your Brother ministry that very Sabath day that he Preached att St Giles in the feilds, & such an awakening that i have Seldom Seen for the Lord in that hour gave her Such a Sight of her Self had nott the people bene very thick She must a Sunk down to the Ground in a few days after the Lord Convince'd her of unbelife & Sett her Sins in araye before her face in Such a manner that indeed She Chould truly Say the Burthen of them was intolerable She Labour'd under the Burden of her Sins for near two years before She found deliverance in wich time She had many & Sore Conflictes with the enemy. She Could nott go along the Streett aboutt her Buisness butt if Saw any of the Creators that God had made butt Some evill or Blasfamous whould arise in her mind many & various where the temptations that She was assalted with from the enemy while She was under Conviction, butt when the Lord Spoke peace to her Soull She rode as itt where upon the wings of the wind for a season till the enemy Came again with his angels face & Said, now Thy Sins are forgiven thou hast no more to do, She found this the greatest temptation of all & as often Said, She was ready to Sink into the earth att the very thought, butt the Lord had taught her better things, for She Saw the greatt necessity of being fully Renewed in his image wich was her Constant prayer & Deseir when the time came that we parted from our Bretheren att fetter lane She readily agreed there to, for She Saw that Stilness was so agreable to Self & nature, that She Could in no wise agree therein & from that time She never went to hear them more, She was of a fearfull & timorous disposition Least She Should presume to far upon the mercies of God, She whould often putt the blessing's from her, She was often Complaining of her evill Heart & her Corrupt nature, butt her Continuall Prayer to God was for full deliverance.

when the time Came that the Lord was aboutt to take her to himself She was vissited with Exceding Greatt Pain of body, her prayer to God was for faith & patience to Bare what the Lord was pleas,d to Lay upon her, She Saw her end draw near & whould often Cry outt Come Lord jesus Come Quickly being asked if She had any thing that

³⁸ For William Barber's testimony, see EMV 20

³⁹ Joan Barber is listed as a member of the married band that met under the leadership of Susan Roberts at the Foundery, June 1745 (Stevenson, *City Road Chapel*, 38)

Burthou, d her mind She answer'd no, She knew that Christ had taken away all her Sins, She Said i do nott find much joy butt Sweet Calmness & Serenity of mind when the time of departor drew nigh wich was Sunday morning

She Said i must go home, i must go home to my father House, & whould often Cry out in the intervills come Lord jesus come Quickley, She Said this is my Dear Last Sabath my dear Last Sabath.

Her Last words that she spoke was

Come Sheed thy Promise Love abroad & make my Comforts Strong

& then She Laid her self down & Swettly Slept in the Lord

Joanna Barber

Reference: EMV/501/23

Date: 27 Decembe 1762

Correspondent: William Barber⁴⁰

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotated: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Barber [shorthand text - Barber] Dec[ember] 27 1762 alive, humble"

Rev.^d & Dear Sr

Yours i Receiv'd I always find your Letters prove a Blessing under God for Good unto my Soull-----

att this time i find such a Sense of the devine Goodness to my Soull that Tounge Cannot Express i Can t ruly say itt as bene a Christmas indeed to me much to be remember'd by me – The Lord as Given me Such a measure of Devine Light & Love that i have never before enjoyed i mean the same in quality but a larger degree thereof I find my Love so enlarg'd that i can say with open armes of Charity embresing all mankind

o dr Sr help me to praise my God that as done so much for me, o that i may be kept humble that i may be always poor & vile in my own eyes that i may lye Continually at footstole of Christ that i may be nothing that Christ may be all in all.

The Lord as opened Mr [John] Wesley mouth to Rebuke with all authority those many evill that as bene Creeping in amongst us i hope & belive that all thees things will work together for good to them that love & fear God.⁴¹

I hope you love me so well that what ever you think amiss in my writting that you will Correct me indeed i have need of help I mean humane as well as devine -----

D^f S^r once more i desire your prayers – that i may Stand in the good old path for i find none better neither do i desier to be found in any other i trust though we are absent in body we are present in Spiritt

⁴⁰ For William Barber's testimony, see EMV 20

⁴¹ Reference to the perfection controversy of the early 1760s

We joy in love to your Self & Partner & may the Lord bless you both in Soul & Body & i hope it will be the good Pleasure of our Lord that we may see once more each other again in the flesh, but the will of the Lord be done

wich is the Hartey prayers of your affectionate Son in the Gosple
Wm Barber
London Decr 27 1762

Reference: EMV/501/24

Date: 8 August 1778

Correspondent: Joseph Benson⁴²

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "The Rev.d Mr Ch. Wesley at ~~The Foundery~~ at the New Room ~~London~~
Bristol"

Location: Leeds

Annotated: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Benson Aug. 8 1778"

Leeds Aug.t 8, 1778

Rev.d & dear Sir,

Our Conference⁴³ is now ended; the best I was ever at. Your Brother [John Wesley] has manifested the most meek & patient spirit throughout the whole. He has preachd better than ordinary & has had the largest congregations both morning & evening I ever observed at Leeds or any where else. His body is strong & his mind vigorous. He seems more concerned for the prosperity of the work of God than I ever knew him, has closely examined the characters of the Preachers & two have been set aside for misbehaviour. The Lord has indeed been amongst us & has (I trust) made our meeting together profitable to many – I hope we shall go forth with fresh commissions in the

⁴² Joseph Benson (1749-1821). Born into a prosperous farming family at Melmerby in Cumberland, Benson was intended by his father for the Anglican ministry. He received a sound classical education from a Presbyterian minister and became a teacher at the age of sixteen. Converted in 1765 under the influence of a Methodist cousin Joshua Watson, he was introduced to John Wesley and was appointed classics master at Kingswood School.

In 1769 Benson entered St Edmund Hall Oxford but was denied Anglican orders because of his Methodist sympathies. After serving for a short time as headmaster of the Countess of Huntingdon's ministerial training college at Trevecca, he joined the Methodist itinerancy in 1771.

Benson was a great favourite of John Wesley and the two often corresponded. He went on to become President of Conference in 1798 and 1810 and served as its Secretary in 1805 and 1809. In 1803 Benson was appointed connexional editor and in this capacity was a major influence on the development of the Methodist Magazine.

Despite his own experiences, Benson was a staunch supporter of the link with the Church of England and two of his own sons entered the Anglican priesthood.

(Principal source: Lewis and DNB)

⁴³ Wesleyan Conference

power of the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, happy in our souls & blest in our labours. Pray for us dear Sir that the pleasure of the Lord may prosper in our hands, & that he may abundantly succeed our endeavours for his glory. –

In as much as you had signified, in a letter to Mr. Smith, a desire to hear from me & as I remembered you shewd me much love when in London seven years ago, I took the liberty of writing you a few lines. But as I was conscious of my unworthiness & suspected I might inadvertently & undesignedly have dropt some sentiments or expression in my letter wch might have displeased you, I did not wonder so much as I otherwise should have done that you took no notice of my letter; & as I have learnt more than ever to die to persons & things & satisfy myself with the approbation of God & the testimony of my own conscience, I was not uneasy. But tho' I was sorry to loose your regard, yet was enabled to resign this up like every thing else to God, perswaded the time will come when you & all my other friends will see that however weak I am, my intention is or has been save to glorify God in my whole conduct ever since I enter'd this connexion – tho' alas! I have come greatly short. I have talk'd freely with Mr. [John] Fletcher,⁴⁴ (as I have wrote to your Brother) on the subject you

⁴⁴ John Fletcher (1729-85): Born in Nyon, Switzerland, the youngest of eight children, Fletcher studied classics at Geneva and after a short-lived attempt at a career in the military, arrived in England in 1750. He worked as a tutor to the two sons of Sir Thomas Hill of Shropshire and started attending Methodist worship in 1753. Fletcher was converted in January 1754 and his talents and saintly character quickly brought him to the attention of the Wesley brothers.

Fletcher was ordained into the Anglican ministry in March 1757 and was appointed curate of Madeley in Shropshire, serving as Vicar from 1760. As far as his parish responsibilities allowed, Fletcher assisted the Methodists during visits to London. He was also closely connected to other non-Wesleyan branches of the evangelical movement and served as a chaplain to the Countess of Huntingdon.

The Wesleys held Fletcher in very high regard. As early as 1761 it was proposed that he become their designated successor as leader of the Methodist movement and this remained John Wesley's hope, periodically expressed, until Fletcher's early death. Physically fragile and of a retiring nature, Fletcher was loath to commit himself to a prominent role, although in his later years he did show more inclination to travel in support of the Methodists. In the early 1770s, Fletcher played a significant (albeit reluctant) role in support of the Wesleys in their public doctrinal controversy with the Calvinists.

As a parish priest and pastor, Fletcher was regarded as a role model. The purity of his character and devotion to his parishioners overcame early suspicion of his high Christian standards. He introduced informal worship on Methodist lines but centred on complete devotion to the Church of England. He helped to found day schools and Sunday schools and was tireless in visiting the sick and needy. From 1781 his ministry was shared with his wife the famous woman preacher Mary Bosanquet and she continued the work after his death.

Fletcher's most enduring legacy has been in his interpretation of theology. His arguments regarding Christian perfection and the baptism of the Spirit have been very

mention. I do not think my sentiments differ much from those of the former whatever they may do from those of the sentiments of the latter of these eminent ministers. But whether or no I cant think otherwise than I do, till I see (wch I am satisfied I never shall) the Scripture in a different point of light I believe from my heart every thing the word of God teaches concerning the Divinity of our Lord & that in the most plain & obvious sense, & more than this you do not, cannot require of me. I preach the old Methodist doctrine as contained in the Minutes of Conference, & 4 vols. of sermons & have reason to think the Lord blesses my labours. I am happy, in general in my own soul, & know that my one end & aim is to promote the Glory of him who hath called me out of darkness into his marvelous light and hence I have no doubt but you do & will wish me good luck in the name of the Lord even if I have not the same reverence for the athanasian doctrine (wch I think unscriptural) with yourself – a line will be very acceptable when convenient, directed to the Preaching house Manchester.

I am Dr Sir

Your obedient Servant

Jos. Benson

P.S. Mr. & Mrs. are here & beg their best respects to you. My respects to Mrs W. & love to the dear childn

Reference: EMV/501/25

Date: 30 November 1774

Correspondent: M. Berkin

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "Mr C Wesley, The Chappel House. [missing text] Street, 7 Dials, Holborn"

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Nov.30 1774 M. Berkin on prayer, resign'n etc"

Sutton Nov 30th

Dear Sir

the chief use of prayer to a Calvinist, is to beg of God resignation & acquiescence to all his appointments, we are also to pray for all things needful, & for all men, simply because he hath commanded us so, to do, but observe he only heareth his own spirit allways & our spirits according to his will, there is no fear he should alter his eternal purpose to please our fancies, but it is a token for good when we are allowd to make our petition before him, blessings are sweeter when received as answers to prayer, because faith & hope are encouraged, & the soul kept in exercise, God forbid our prayers should alter the Decree of eternal wisdom – but with Submission to his will we may leave our every minute desire at the throne of his Grace, to be answered as he sees fit, knowing he doth all Things well, tho according to the counsel of his own will

knowing the heart of a parent I feel for you & mrs Wesley, fearing the snares & dangers of this life, I can make more prayer for yr resignation than the child's life, yr

influential in the development of holiness theology particularly in the American Pentecostal movement. (Principal source: DNB and Lewis)

prayer for a dying child in the Hymns best expresses my Sentiments – I dare pray absolutely for nothing – May the God of all consolation support comfort & strengthen you both, & may the child live or dye, as is best for ye & him I have no doubt of his redemption if now taken from the earth, & not sufficiently knowing him, to be bias'd by affection, whilst you request his tuneful life on earth, I almost exult in the thought of his becoming a harper in heaven, & signing that song which only the 144000 can learn Rev 14th

I shall be glad to hear when the worst is past, thanks for yr two letters Mr B hath been poorly with a fever, I you know am never well – much as usual remember me in all yr prayers – especialy for more lively ordinances & power to enjoy them, remember also yr promise of takeing a bed with us, believe me with much sympathy

Yr obliged friend & servt
M Berkin

Reference: EMV/501/26

Date: 14 April 1782

Document: Final illness of Ebenezer Blackwell⁴⁵

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: [Lewisham]

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Mr Blackwell's note April 14 1782"

Sir

Mr Blackwell (being exceeding ill and is considered as dangerously so) desires an Interest in Your prayers that the Lord would graciously give him that patience in his affliction & that submission to his Divine Will that shall enable him to bear chearfully all God shall please to lay upon him ... that his Life may be graciously spar'd for much usefulness if consistent with the divine pleasure – or if his Death be determin'd on he may have an happy & gentle dismissal from this world to glory ~

Reference: EMV/501/27

Date: 10 March 1763

Correspondent: Elizabeth Blackwell⁴⁶

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Lewisham [London]

⁴⁵ Ebenezer Blackwell (1711–82). A wealthy banker of Change Alley in London, Blackwell was a distant relative of George Whitefield and assisted Whitefield in handling the money collected for the colliers' school at Kingswood. Blackwell became a close friend and confidant of the Wesleys. He often helped the Methodists financially and was one of the original trustees of City Road Chapel. (Principal source: Harmon.)

⁴⁶ Wife of Ebenezer Blackwell

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "March 10 1763 Mrs Blackwell on her blessed friend"

can you forgive me for not returning my thanks before for your good and obliging favor but alas the Language of my Heart was so deferent from what you Charitably suppose and my spirits so sunk that I could neither write nor speak of my Dear departed friend⁴⁷ nor indeed can I now without that sort of fealing that you wd blame and especially when I shall as I can repeat to you a conversation we had about two or three days before my friend took to her bed – she was in a most sensible composed state of mind & looked with such a Countenance as she did when you last gave her the Communion (Led by the spirit of his Love to springs of Living Comfort Led) She told me she Loved and forgave all mankind as she was forgiven herself & that she had a pleasant path before her & that her way was stew'd with flowers – her neices came to see her a few days after they had Lately been reading the pilgrims progress which had a good deal affected them so she took the oportunity from that as I suppose she thought it might make the more impression to tell them she had her Roll in her Hand and that it was Signd and Seald she gave good advise to all about her. She suffered much Bodyly pain with patience and great resignation- and when she could no Longer speak for her Master as she often called our God & Saviour her actions spoke as if she saw the Great Invisable _ if it should please God that I should have the satisfaction to see you again on this side eternity I could ad to this imperfect acct

I hope your self & dear partner & children enjoy your health & every other blessing. My love & best Respects wait on Mr Wesley who it wd give me great pleasure to see

Mr [Ebenezer] Blackwell⁴⁸ is at London or Ime sure wd ad his best respects to mine
Lewisham March y 10: 1763

I am Sir
With Great Respect & Esteem
Your obedient Sert

Eliz Blackwell

⁴⁷ Hannah Dewal (d. 1762). Methodist of Lewisham in Kent and a friend of the Wesley brothers. From about 1749 she was a member of the household of the wealthy banker Ebenezer Blackwell. Charles Wesley wrote a poem 'On the Death of Mrs Hannah Dewal' after she died in November 1762. (Principal source: Rogal.)

⁴⁸ Ebenezer Blackwell (1711–82). A wealthy banker of Change Alley in London, Blackwell was a distant relative of George Whitefield and assisted Whitefield in handling the money collected for the colliers' school at Kingswood. Blackwell became a close friend and confidant of the Wesleys. He often helped the Methodists financially and was one of the original trustees of City Road Chapel. (Principal source: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism*)

Reference: EMV/501/28
Date: 16 August 1753
Correspondent: Unknown
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Document: Account of Sister Bracey's death
Location: London
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "S. Bracy's death Aug 16 1753"

the account of our sister Bracey
who Died August ye 16th 1753

Reverend Sir

It pleased God to call her in ye first year that ye Gospel was preached in london. But it was only as a pleasant Sound in her Ears untill ye first year ye preaching was in ye Foundry Then She fell under deep Conviction of her lost Estate & was Sorely Tempted by ye Enemy of her Soul that She never Should be Saved. Then She fell in Despair & was incapable of any Business for a Day or two - But it pleased God Deeply to impress in her mind to go to ye Foundry. to Speak to mr Charles wesley under whose ministry She had been awakened - & after her Speaking to him & in Returning Home it pleased God to speak peace to her Troubled Soul & in Extasy She Cryed out oh now I know that God for Christ Sake hath taken away all my Sins - now I feel that I Can love God & all ye world - & from that Time her walking was Such as became ye Gospel - - She was a Good wife tho with a Jealous a Froward & persecuting Husband whom She did [...] love & pity & Continually pray for - & Bore his ill usage with great patience & Composure of mind even unto her Death She was a tender Mother Continually watching over her children for good & providing for them whose unnatural Father would take no Care for She always laboured & often above her Strength least herself or hers Should be Burthensome to any - She had been Several Times visited by Sickness & was then Calm & Serene & Could Cast herself & hers upon God - for two years before She Dyed She was visited with ye Rumathisme & was then warned that She had not long to live - & would often say that She Should not be long with them & often wisht to set her House in order - But none Regarded Her - Believing it only to be Fancy - She Continued Stedfast in ye apostles Doctrine in Fellowship & in Breaking of Bread & in prayer & in Dayly Searching ye Scriptures & at every oportunity She asembled her Self with ye Great Congregation - She walked in all ye ways of God with great Delight - as to her Death it was very suden for going to fetch her child from school She was Sudenly taken ill in ye Street - & when her Kinswoman Desired of her to Speak if She Could She Cryed out my God my God I Come & imediatly Died

Reference: EMV/501/29
Date: 1763 January 19
Correspondent: John and Elizabeth Butcher
Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Jan 9 1763 Butcher faithful & humble of Bell etc"

London Jan 19 1763

Revd Sr I thank you for your Fatherly advice to me & my Wife & your Br [brother – John Wesley] Dind with me on Saturday when my wife took up her Ticket⁴⁹ according to your Request. I was with 20 of your Friends & your Br present for to acquaint him of our Proceedings with Regard to you & of our Request for you to come to London when your Br was absent which we Judgd necessary at these Trying times. & Your Br desir'd for you to Come before he left London, & that you would make him your first Friend as soon as you come to London for he thought he had so little of your Company when you was in Town last time. he Preaches in such a Manner now that the Peoples Countenance seem'd Changed to what appears when Mr Bell⁵⁰ is at Snowfields Chappel on Monday Ev.^s. I am Glad that i can Inform you that your Br has forbid Mr Bells Teaching any more at the Foundery & the Chappel.⁵¹ but my Br [Owen?] notwithstanding that did Publish Publickly that M^r Bell would be there this Night. I did not deliver your Message to Br [Owen?] & you may Judge the Reason why. the Scene is quite Chang'd to what I wrote you last. i think there is but 3 Men that seems to Stand Close firm & Stedfast but what in some degree withdraws, or else Renounces the Common Preaching, for to hear Mr Bell, who is so highly in their Esteem, that he is to much the Subject of Conversation in the Room of Jesus Christ. I have seem'd almost alone, nay i have been told by Mr Colley that i Opposed the Preachers & sett up my Wisdom against the Experience of 500 People. I said to him well i might when he could teach that true Believers are Chang'd in Life but not in heart. I do search & Study the Scriptures, day & Night & I thank God he doth Increase in me every Fruit of his Spirit. & I can speak as freely to my Class as ever. I thank God that i now take nothing upon trust & i prove the Power of the word of God more than ever. The diffence among the Brethren in London seems to rise from those Texts as follows Viz. The Word Flesh what it means or the Deeds of the Body. or the Body of Sin. what these meaneth with Regard to true Gospel Believers. Some of my Brn says they are in no danger of living after the Flesh. & have no deeds of the Body to Mortify. they have but the World & the Devil for to war against & that they can never Sin more or be Hurt by them I Cannot think but St Paul was as Free from Sin as any of my Brethren who say they have a different Salvation from Sin than most of their Brethren & I own them true Believers in Jesus, when he Paul said I Keep under my Body &c. There seems to be something in Nature that arises from Animal Life in Consequence of the Fall of Man, that while Man is Capable of the Actions of Life he

⁴⁹ Class or band

⁵⁰ George Bell (d.1807): Born at Borningham in County Durham, Bell served for a time in the Life Guards regiment of the British army. He was converted in 1758 while living in London and quickly gained a reputation at the Foundery for holiness and powerful extempore prayers. Wesley believed that Bell possessed the power to heal but grew uncertain about his other rather extravagant claims. He left Methodism in 1763 after his prophecy that the world would end on February 28, caused considerable hysteria in London (Principal source: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974)

⁵¹ Probably West Street or Spitalfields

will not be long Free from having some tryal to the Soul arising from the Flesh or Nature as well as coming from the World or Devils. Therefore it appears to me that Christians if they are Chang'd into Holiness to ever [see?] a high degree, if they know whereof they are made & the nature of the Covenant of Grace they will not think their Souls entirely out of danger e'en from the Flesh as well as the World & Devil I must own I have been to Neglectful of the Gift of God, but not so much as to give my Br Authority to say i have not Grown in Grace these 14 Years. Whereof I know i have every Year but i am doubtful of saying i am a Young man yet, but i hope to Grow to a Perfect Man in Christ Jesus. Dear S^r if you know'd how the People seems to make light of your Br i think if you are able to Come you would not be long from London even for the sake of those that are weak as those that thought themself so strong. I believe Snowfields Chappell is Mr Bells Chief Renderviews he said to a Night [tonight] that some Calld him a Madman & that Jn Wesley called him an Enthusiast but said he did not mind that. I hope for to see you at London soon if the Lord permit. my Partner Joyns in Duty to you & Love to your Partner & Remain yr Dutiful Children Jn & Eliz.^h Butcher.

Reference: EMV/501/30

Date: 14 April 1743

Correspondent: Thomas Butts⁵²

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "April 14 Butts 1743 Ten dying malefactors"

Dear Sir

London April ye 14th 1743~

On Tuesday Ten Prisoners were Executed: I got with some difficulty to go with 3 in ye first Cart; two of these seem'd truly Penitent, (one unknown to you, ye other ye Person that laid with Mr Robinson, who gladly heard you from ye beginning) deeply sensible of their lost Condition, & strongly imploring ye Mercy of GOD, for ye alone sake of Jesus Christ; I read your Letter to them in our Passage to Tyburn, which seemed much to affect & Comfort them. I examin'd these two, whether they would chuse to die or live; they declar'd they chose to Die, strongly believing ye Lord would have Mercy upon their Souls; and that, tho' they were sensible there must be a great change wrought in them, yet they also knew ye Lord was able to effect it in a short Time. I had not much oppertunity of speaking to any of ye rest, but by what I could Observe, they were all very Penitent (especially ye two Papists) except two, who I greatly fear were hardned to ye last: (O may I err in my Judgement herein) One of these Persons was a sprightly Young Gentleman, whom I believe you never spoke with; ye other was the Man yt kept company wth ye Woman in Newgate; she is repriev'd.

I call'd Yesterday to see Mr Robinson, who is got pretty well again: he says he Wrote to you on Tuesday.

Mr [Thomas] Maxfield⁵³ Wrote pretty largely to you yesterday, so have not to add, but Remain

⁵² Thomas Butts (*fl.* 1742–60). Employed alongside William Briggs as the first steward of the Book Room, where his honesty and business acumen proved invaluable, Butts wrote *Harmonia Sacra*, which was the chief source for Wesley's *Sacred Melody*. (Principal source: Harmon.)

⁵³ Thomas Maxfield (d. 1784). Born in Bristol, Maxfield was converted in 1739 by George Whitefield and acted as a sub-pastor to Wesley before moving to London, where he was active at the Foundery. In 1741 he became one of the first Methodist lay preachers and for many years remained high in Wesley's estimation. Maxfield broke from the Methodists in 1763 over his alleged sympathy for the views of the visionary preacher George Bell. There was some talk of reunion in later years, and John Wesley preached in Maxfield's independent chapel in London. Despite this rapprochement, the division between them remained permanent. (Principal sources: *DNB* and Lewis, *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*)

Yr Unworthy Servt

T Butts

Reference: EMV/501/31

Date: 28 January 1761

Correspondent: Thomas Butts⁵⁴

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Jan.28 1761 Butts of M. Clark's end"

London January ye 28th. 1761

Dear Sir

I am greatly obleidg'd to you for what you have done: if I shou'd succeed, shall be very thankfull; if I shou'd not, I trust I shall be resign'd, and conclude it is for ye best, and your good will towards me will be the same. I purpose to wait a few days, & if I hear nothing from her Ladyship, to wait upon her.

The particulars that I have been able to gather of poor Mrs Clarke's death, are these: She had din'd & order'd the Servants to their dinner; and told her Maid not to come up stairs till she knock'd for her. When they had been at dinner some little time, they heard her up about ye Room; & presently after she knock'd with her Stick against the Floor, not in a hurry, but as usual. Her Maid ran up, but when she came to her Chamber-door, was struck with such a pannic (she could not tell why) that she could not go in, but call'd up the other Servant; they went in both together, & found her standing up right in the middle of the Room, all in Flames. They endeavour'd to smother the Fire with Cloaths but could not, so were obleidg'd to call up the Man with a pail of Water; upon which she complain'd, & ask'd them if they intended to starve her to Death. She was burnt in a terrible manner, & died early the next Morning, but never complain'd of any pain only at the tip of her Tongue. She was earnestly entreated by the Apothecary and other people about her, to tell them how the Accident happen'd, but wou'd not give them the least Satisfaction. She express'd no concern about her Soul, though conscious that she should die; nor any desire of being pray'd by; her greatest uneasiness was about a purse of Money that she had left behind her Chair. These Circumstance of her Death I think are as disagreeable as the nature of it; but we must leave her to the infinite Mercy of GOD: And may our Souls be profited, by this & every other alarming Providence.

I deliver'd your Message to Mr Franks. My Wife joins in love to you & Mrs. Wesley. I remain

Yr Sincere Friend & humble Servt.

⁵⁴ Thomas Butts (*fl.* 1742–60). Employed alongside William Briggs as the first steward of the Book Room, where his honesty and business acumen proved invaluable, Butts wrote *Harmonia Sacra*, which was the chief source for Wesley's *Sacred Melody*. (Principal source: Harmon.)

Tho Butts

Reference: EMV/501/32

Date: 12 December 1771

Correspondent: Michael Callender

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To the Revd Mr Charles Wesley at the Foundery in Upper Moorfields, London"

Location: Newcastle on Tyne

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Dec. 12 1771 Calender Inundation"

Additional: Postmarked: "NEWCASTLE" and "18 DE[cember]"

Newcastle Dec 12th 1771

Revd Sir

I thank you for your kind Letter sent me sometime agoe, I Rejoice to find I am still thought by you worthy of your Notice, which favour I wou.^d answer.^d sooner, but I was affraid of being Troublesome - I think if I shoud Live to Survive you, I wou.^d on hearing of your Departer Cry out with the Kings of Israel over Old Elisha. "My Father, my Father, the Charriot of Israel and the horsemen thereof" it has been no Small Comfort to me, to find you Like Minded with me, in Seeing the Judgements of God Ready to Burst on the Guilty Land to which we belong, what has kept it from us so Long, but the Intersestion of the Blessed Dresser of the Vineyard. O that we may All now Bear Fruit, so that we may not be cutt down to be for Ever Destroyd – you wou.^d hear how the hand of the Lord was Lately upon us in this Part of his Vineyard, when all was Saying Peace, than Came Sudden Distruction, Surely the Lord came at Midnight, and found many Sleeping: and some awake,^d no more in this world. how soon Can Jehovah make a Fruitfull Land Barren, a Disolation, for the Wickedness of them Who Dwelld therein. yet in this, Mercy was Mixt with Judgement, for had it happend at any other time than Saturday Night Late, some hundreds of Lives more woud been Lost. but it had its Commission Like the Rageing Sea, "hitherto shall thou Go, and No further". all here Religous and Prophane, agrees it is the hand of God. I have made the Most Strickt Enquirey I can of them who has been at Liverpool, Whitehaven,

[page break]

and other Parts Around us, and do not find any Such Quantity of Rain or Snow fell, as Coud, Cause so Sudden, so Impetuous a Deluge of waters, Either the Almighty on the Mountains near the heads of the River of Tyne, Wear and Teas, Poured down Water Spouts. or he by an EarthQuake Caus,^d it to Burst out of the Earth, and sent it to Dstroy and take Away a Great Deal of the Riches of this Country, that all Seems so Greedily Pursueing: or it might be Caused by both, for the Riseing of that Moss in [Cambute?] on the Revd Mr Grahams Estate so high as to be Even with the Tops of the Chimneys of the Villages, where it Suddenly Spread over, seems to Confirm this. May the Lord Grant it may have the Effect for which it is sent on our Future Conduct, may it Rouse us all from our Spiritual Drowseyness, from our Love of this Presant world, and our Conformity to it, I wish I had no Reason to say that some of. "the hand of the Rulers have been Chiefly in this thing" if the Shepherds themselves Go Astray,

no wonder the Sheep follow;- Example is more Prevailing than Precept, but I hope what was done at the Last Conference will Roll away that Reproach, those who Love the Cause of the Lord Jesus will Shake themselves from the Dust – I was Much Refresh^d by Reading the Rev,d Mr [John] Fletcher⁵⁵ Letters. if it woud not be thought Impertinent in me, I woud, Send him a letter of thanks Many in this Age, who thinks they are the Only Builders Pull down the work of God – because they were not the Hewers of the Stones – if Mr [John] Wesley is with you give my Dear Love to him, Let him know though I do not Trouble him with Letters, I Bear the Same Love to him as formerly, whisperers Seperates Chief Friends if in any Respect he has Conceived a Bad oppinion of me, and by that have done to me what otherwise he woud not have done – I Freely Forgive it they time will Come when Every one will appear in their own Collours

⁵⁵ John Fletcher (1729-85): Born in Nyon, Switzerland, the youngest of eight children, Fletcher studied classics at Geneva and after a short-lived attempt at a career in the military, arrived in England in 1750. He worked as a tutor to the two sons of Sir Thomas Hill of Shropshire and started attending Methodist worship in 1753. Fletcher was converted in January 1754 and his talents and saintly character quickly brought him to the attention of the Wesley brothers.

Fletcher was ordained into the Anglican ministry in March 1757 and was appointed curate of Madeley in Shropshire, serving as Vicar from 1760. As far as his parish responsibilities allowed, Fletcher assisted the Methodists during visits to London. He was also closely connected to other non-Wesleyan branches of the evangelical movement and served as a chaplain to the Countess of Huntingdon.

The Wesleys held Fletcher in very high regard. As early as 1761 it was proposed that he become their designated successor as leader of the Methodist movement and this remained John Wesley's hope, periodically expressed, until Fletcher's early death. Physically fragile and of a retiring nature, Fletcher was loath to commit himself to a prominent role, although in his later years he did show more inclination to travel in support of the Methodists. In the early 1770s, Fletcher played a significant (albeit reluctant) role in support of the Wesleys in their public doctrinal controversy with the Calvinists.

As a parish priest and pastor, Fletcher was regarded as a role model. The purity of his character and devotion to his parishioners overcame early suspicion of his high Christian standards. He introduced informal worship on Methodist lines but centred on complete devotion to the Church of England. He helped to found day schools and Sunday schools and was tireless in visiting the sick and needy. From 1781 his ministry was shared with his wife the famous woman preacher Mary Bosanquet and she continued the work after his death.

Fletcher's most enduring legacy has been in his interpretation of theology. His arguments regarding Christian perfection and the baptism of the Spirit have been very influential in the development of holiness theology particularly in the American Pentecostal movement. (Principal source: DNB and Lewis)

I must now conclude with Desiring an Intrest in your Prayers for me & mine and
must Subscribe my Self your Affectioned though unworthy Br & Servant in Christ –
Michael Callindor

PS Please to Give my Best Respects to Mrs Wesley, Perhaps she Can Remmember
something of me though many years Since I saw her.

Reference: EMV/501/33
Date: 14 September 1748
Correspondent: Eliza Cart⁵⁶
Addressee: [??]⁵⁷
Location: London

London Sept ye 14.th 1748

I Should have much Sooner acknowledg'd yr receipt of my Dr Friends kind and
acceptable favour, but waited to Speak w'th Brown Asron, who being a perfect
Stranger to me I could not immediatly find out, & going but Seldom to ye Chapel⁵⁸
lately it was but a few days since I Spake to her. She says she is not Sure if Sam.¹
Gillibrand Esq.^r is a member of Par.^t but all their Letters comes under cover to him,
free to them.⁵⁹

Alass my Dr ffriend thy expressions of gratitude for kindnesses received of me realy
puts me to ye [Polush?] & makes me reflect how little very little it is in my Power
even to Shew comman civilitys to Strangers & more especially to my Superiours in
Fortune, & I always feel my Self oblig'd whenever Such will be kind enough to
dispencc with my free blunt manner of converseing. w.ch Surely must appear quite
Strange to Persons use'd to more ceremony

It was a pleasure to hear of your getting Safe home, and that ye Journey answer'd thy
expectation O what a comfort is it to meet wth a Company Travilling ye Same way,
w:^{ch} our feet are Set in & haveing ye Same end in view, (viz:) an Heavenly Country,
every real Christian we meet Seems like a light to our Path & Spurs us on to quicken
our Pace, chearfully joining our ffriends and Singing that Prayer

Uphold me in ye Doubtfull Race

⁵⁶ Early London Methodist and close friend of Charles Wesley

⁵⁷ The identity of the person to whom this letter was sent is problematic. Unlike most
of the testimonies, it is clear that it was not written to Charles Wesley - the reference
to "our dear friend and minister" being en-route from Ireland to Bristol in the near
future ties in with Charles Wesley's movements, while the reference to shared
interests in female fashions similarly confirm that this letter was not written to either
of the Wesley brothers. It is probable that this letter was not an original part of the
conversion testimonies collection, but an item that was added in later years

⁵⁸ In all probability, either West Street or Spitalfields Chapels

⁵⁹ Some government officials, members of parliament and senior military officers
were entitled to send mail free of charge

Nor Suffer me again to Stray
Strengthen my feet with Steady Pace
Still to press forward in thy way
My Soul and flesh O Lord of might
Fill. Satisfy, with thy Heavenly Light.⁶⁰

Then how we look back on ye world & our former friends with what pity & compassion are we ready to call to them in ye Language of ye Hymn

Ah foolish Man where are thine Eyes
Lost in a crowd of Earthly Cares
Thy Indolence neglects to Rise
While Husks to Heaven thy Soul Prefers
Careless ye Starry Crown to Seize
By pleasure bound or lull'd by Ease⁶¹

Doubt not but God who has begun a good work will carry it on both in thy own Soul & in your Family, if we Importunately Plead for ye Blessing

I conclude you will Soon See our Dr friend & Minister [Charles Wesley], in his way from Ireland to Bristol his Dr Bro.' [John Wesley] is just gone from us, his visit was Short⁶² but very acceptable for he both brought a Blessing & has left one behind him, of which I Sincerely partake, O may I be truly thankful for it

All thou wert So kind to Remember, make Suitable returns of Love again in which number is my Daughter who likewise joins in thanks for thy kind notice.

Pray make my Best Love acceptable to thy Papa & Mama tho unknown I Shall be Sorry if ye Holland does not wear well, it is not a Scotch but a Swiss Holland & those of them I have tryd wear exceeding well

Why did not my friend acquaint me of her health, or how ye mediation agrees, of which I claim a right to know
I trust we shall remember each other when we are enabled to offer up our Petitions to ye Father of all our mercies, in His Love I Salute thee
And Am tho weak & unworthy
thy Real & aff' Friend
Eliza Cart

⁶⁰ Published in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739) as verse 5 of the hymn, the first line of which is "Thee will I love, my strength, my tower". This was a translation by John Wesley of a German (Moravian) original.

⁶¹ Published in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1739) as verse 8 of the hymn, the first line of which is "Lord, let the angels praise thy name." This was a translation by John Wesley of a German (Moravian) original.

⁶² John Wesley made a short visit to London in early September 1748 where he examined the classes before leaving for Cornwall

Pray inform me if ye Pays double because I am told if there is only a Single letter and ye Cover be not wrote in it is alow'd at ye Post Office
If I could easily get franks I would not let it pay at all

Reference: EMV/501/34

Date: 3 March 1770

Correspondent: Ann Chapman

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To the Rev'nd Mr Charles Wesley, To be left at The Foundery Near Upper Moorfields London"

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "March 3 1770 Ms Chapman Ms Edw's bl death"

Additional: Postmarked: "Bristol"

Revrd & D^r Sir

Although much indisposed I think It my duty to acquaint you of my D^r friend,s Death, my beloved M^{rs} Edwards whose loss I deplore, but sorrow not as Those without Hope, believing She Sleeps In Jesus. The particulars of it as far as I am able I will lay before You knowing it will be some satisfaction to a Friend who was interested in Her Spiritual Welfare.

On Thursday two Days before Mr Fletcher⁶³ left Bristol He gave Her The Sacrament in the Parlour, Spake Close but very Comfortably to Her after which She was greatly

⁶³ John Fletcher (1729-85): Born in Nyon, Switzerland, the youngest of eight children, Fletcher studied classics at Geneva and after a short-lived attempt at a career in the military, arrived in England in 1750. He worked as a tutor to the two sons of Sir Thomas Hill of Shropshire and started attending Methodist worship in 1753. Fletcher was converted in January 1754 and his talents and saintly character quickly brought him to the attention of the Wesley brothers.

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distress^d in Soul, Crying to The Lord for mercy Night & Day; Saturday She took to Her room, rather despairing Sunday morning I was Call,^d early & to my great grief found Her distracted as much as two could do to hold her in Bed, She strove with us till all Her strength was exhausted & then lay quiet for a time till the fit came on again with double force, She had intervals of sound Reason, which She mostly employ,^d in Strong prayer, but did not appear to have any comfort or Hope till ye Thursday following, in the afternoon Miss Norman⁶⁴ came to see Her Spoke to & pray^d sweetly with Her, afterwards I ask if she was anything comforted how She found Her Soul? She answer,^d Satan had been with Her the whole time & that She was lost it was all over with Her, She was undone undone forever

Upon hearing This My Soul was fired with Zeal for The Lord & Revenge to the Tyrant Foe I burst forth in an agony of Prayer to Jesus I presumed to say if Thou art God The Mighty God Seize The Purchase of Thy Blood out of the Teeth of the devouring Lyon appear O Lord Maintain Thy own cause &c Oh what did I then feel for Her, and She for Herself; at length She broke out & pray^d as I scarce ever heard before, such sensible, strong, heartfelt expressions The Spirit of Supplication was indeed pour,^d upon Her. Just then She was more deeply convinced of Unbelief Said I can make no amends tis Faith I want, I can,^t believe, Lord give me Faith, give me Faith, &c Soon after She Said, it is God that Justifieth Who is He that Condemneth. It is a free Gift Free Grace, Free, Glory Glory be to Thee With a Countenance that discover^d inward Joy & Love, She said I trust I have had a Taste a Glimpse of His Love Lord (said she) Wrap Us both in ye Mantle of Thy Love much more was Utter^d by Her at that Time which I cannot particularily remember as I was myself Lost in Wonder, Love & Praise Tea being got ready, She ask,^d a Blessing Sat down eat &

As a parish priest and pastor, Fletcher was regarded as a role model. The purity of his character and devotion to his parishioners overcame early suspicion of his high Christian standards. He introduced informal worship on Methodist lines but centred on complete devotion to the Church of England. He helped to found day schools and Sunday schools and was tireless in visiting the sick and needy. From 1781 his ministry was shared with his wife the famous woman preacher Mary Bosanquet and she continued the work after his death.

Fletcher's most enduring legacy has been in his interpretation of theology. His arguments regarding Christian perfection and the baptism of the Spirit have been very influential in the development of holiness theology particularly in the American Pentecostal movement. (Principal source: DNB and Lewis)

⁶⁴ Mary Norman was born probably in Bristol into a prosperous family called Oxford. At the age of 21 she was married to John Norman, a wealthy brick-maker. The couple had one child.

Norman and her husband were among the first Bristol Methodists and entertained Wesley and Whitefield at their home. When Wesley was refused access to the pulpits of Bristol's Anglican churches, he preached on a plot of land belonging to Mr Norman.

When her husband died in 1744, Norman was left virtually destitute. From 1749, she lived with the family of the wealthy Methodist James Ireland of Brislington Hall. Source: *Arminian Magazine 1789*, 240-245 and Samuel Rogal, *A Biographical Dictionary of 18th century Methodism*.

drank, made a good meal, receiving it with thanksgiving (tho before we had been trying all the Day both by fair means & by force to get something down Her throat to little or no purpose) We then Sung Praise God from Whom all Blessings flow 'twas my Class Night So I thought it right to go & return Thanks, but as I was leaving the room She call^d me to Her & said softly I begin to doubt I bid Her look to Her Saviour who was Able to keep Her from falling when I return,^d She was closely engaged in Prayer I ask,^d how it was,^d She reply^{ed} I fear I shall lose It I told Her She must be kept by the Power of God thro Faith She continued praying for a Considerable Time about Ten She went to Bed, I sat up with Her & intended it alone, but at twelve O clock She awoke in great agitations threw the Cloaths off & I was obliged to knock for assistance all that night we had hard work & She against us as if we were the Foes She ought to try to overcome many times calling for help from ye Lord.

In this way She continued for the most part till Tuesday morn when She got out of Bed (with difficulty They got a little of Her Cloaths on) & went to the Door, & Scarcely could 3 of us keep Her In as cold almost as a Stone & Death Sweats upon Her, She at last Sunk into Molly^s lap & then said, Thou Art The Resurrection & The Life & Molly heard Her say He Quickeneth me &c Soon after with great labour we got Her on the Bed She then repeated what She Said before adding Thou art Life Lord, Thou art Life, & more that I could not hear.

She then lay down more compos^d (& resisted but little when we gave Her anything) till between 6 & 7 at night when She was lifted up to take something She repeated the Lords Prayer afterward Cry^d Miss Miss Miss (as She had lain quiet along time I was gone of an errand) & then scream^d out 5 or 6 times (Paty Paty as they thought) whether it was Her Sister (or Chappy as She often Call^d me we cannot tell She then prayed to The Father of mercies to look upon Her for His Sons Sake & continued in prayer after She could not be heard when I came in (which I think could not be more than half an Hour after) I Saw plainly She was dying, & very quietly I would not disturb Her as I had not a doubt Concerning Her Happiness, She did not Speak more a few minutes after nine without a Struggle a Sigh or groan She Expired Her Soul is escape^d as a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler & I am left to mourn for myself D^f Sir pitty & pray for me. I must own to the Praise of my God, mercies have been mixed with miseries, my Sorrows have been greatly mitigated by Her Joys above related & my Spirit at present Seems call^d away from all things here below to Rest in the Center of all Good, please to excuse the many imperfections of my Epistle it is Simple Truth & less than might be said I was an Eye & Ear Witness but my Ears are dull of hearing & my memory very Short may it never be altogether forgotten by me.

If it would not be too great a favour I Should be very glad to Her from you or M^{rs} Wesley & more so to see you had you been here believe I should almost have tired you out with my late exercises but the Lord saw best I should have little help M^r Edwards & M^{rs} Pearce joins in Duty to you & Love to M^{rs} Wesley master & miss with D^f Sir Your affectionate Daughter In Christ

Bristol March ye 3:^d 1770

Ann Chapman

M^{rs} Pearce begs you'l be so kind to send the little parcel from M^{rs} Guillam by a safe Hand or what will be better bring it soon yourself there being a piece of money in it to pay for Her

Reference: EMV/501/35
Date: 3 November 1774
Correspondent: Ann Chapman
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Location: Bristol
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"Nov. 3 1774. N. Chapman of Vigor loving God"

Bristol Nov^r ye 3^d

My dear & Honrd Friend will excuse my not haveing trouble^d Him with a Letter for a week past, as I hear Miss Jones, M^r Southcote, & Miss James have all wrote, & the two first particularly about D^r M^{rs} Vigor;⁶⁵ She is Yet in the Body, but weakens dayly, as her appetite & digestion are gone – She probably cannot hold it much longer, Her sisters & M^r Simpson think She may linger on for sometime, Nurse is of a different opinion, & I am apt to believe that Nurse,^s judgement (in the present case) is the best, She supposes the swelling & tightness in her Stomach to be water, wch if it is, will soon put an end to a wearisome painful Existence: Happy indeed will be the release, & welcome the Rest to Her; She often expresses Her longing to depart, & at times in a kind of meditation (that She does not know is heard) They can so far understand that She is talking about God & Heaven. I have not seen Her since Friday last with Miss Jones, since that I have Call^d I believe every day, & yesterday was up in Her Room but did not see Her, I had been sent for while I was out as She heard I was going to write but before I return^d She was incapable of speaking to me & her sister becon^d to me not to appear in Sight; M^{rs} Ann came down Stairs with me & told me how exceeding bad She was that you & M^{rs} Wesley had been so kind as to send her a Letter each, Saturday last but that They could not shew 'em to Her that Day, but when She Saw 'em She was greatly affected; & Said tell my D^r M^r & M^{rs} Wesley it is not want of Love, no it is my great Love for Them, that I cannot see Them, my weakness could not bear it, it would be too much, I Love Them with an increasing Love, I Shall Love Them to Eternity, many endearing expressions drop from Her lips, to Her Sisters thanking them for their tenderness & Love to Her, & even to Nurse Saying She is fit for ye Queen, at times She mentions everybody that She has any acquaintance with by name & says I Love Them dearly, I have the Love of God, I know it is His Love. M^{rs} Stafford & M^{rs} Ann desires to be most affectionately rememberd to You, M^{rs} Wesley, Masters⁶⁶ & Miss⁶⁷ They thank you for sympathizeing with Them in Their affliction.

I calld to day on M^{rs} Howel, She is not yet released, but waiting till Her change comes in a Blessed peaceful way, the Enemy woud often disturb Her, but the Shield of Faith

⁶⁵ Elizabeth Vigor (d. 1774). A close personal friend of the Wesleys and one of the earliest converts in Bristol, Vigor was a lady of means who provided hospitality to many of the preachers and left over £100 in bequests to the Wesley family upon her death in 1774. (Principal source: MARC: Methodist papers.)

⁶⁶ Charles junior and Samuel

⁶⁷ Sarah junior

& Hope of Salvation are Her defence & keep Her soul unhurt, it was to me a very Solemn & yet a Sweet sight, She seems scarce in the Body, by her fainting, then Struggling to Believe & then Praising the Lord. O may I give all dilligence to make my Calling & Election Sure even Then it will be enough to do to Die. it just now comes to my mind that the post goes out early to night, I must haste to a conclus[ion] begging an interest (with My Friends) in Your Prayers.

M^{rs} & Miss Farley M^{rs} Edwards & hoⁿ D^r Edrds Join in Duty to You & Love to Mrs Wesley & Family, with D^r Sir, Your truly affect[ionate] Child in Christ

Ann Chapman

Reference: EMV/501/36

Date: 12 November 1774

Correspondent: Ann Chapman

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“N[ancy] Chapman. F[riend] Vigor released ! Translated ! Nov 12 1774”

Dear & Hon:^d Sir

The long expected news of Dear Mrs Vigor,⁶⁸ happy release, I have now to acquaint You of, She died this Morning a quarter before Eleven. The Lord was better to Her than her former Fears. He granted her particular request in an easy & quiet dismissal from the Body; she had little or no pain for a week past, last Monday she expressed an inclination to have Dr^r Ludlows Advice (ocasion^d by dreaming abt Him in the night) which was satisfactory to Her Sisters, as They had often press,^d Her to have Him before, but she wou^d say, what can any Physician do for me, I cannot take medicine, however at that time she consentd. He came & prescribed something, which she took & by God,s Blessing it gave ease. She was perfectly sensible to the very last; but so very weak that M^{rs} Ann Stafford (who hears the best) with the greatest difficulty could understand what she said & that was very little, it being painful to her to speak. She was favord with great composure of mind, Death was indeed disarm^d of its sting & with good Old Simeon She departed in Peace, so exceeding gentle was the transition that Her Sisters in the Room & almost close by did not know when She breathed Her Last. surely it is no hard thing to say, O, let my last End be like Her,s. I had like to have forgot to mention one very pleasing circumstance – She received a great deal of Comfort by Your last Letter. Mrs Stafford,s are all as well as can be expected & desire Their best Respects to You & Mrs Wesley & Love to Masters & Miss. finding that I could have no access to Mrs Vigor as She was so very weak, I

⁶⁸ Elizabeth Vigor (d. 1774). A close personal friend of the Wesleys and one of the earliest converts in Bristol, Vigor was a lady of means who provided hospitality to many of the preachers and left over £100 in bequests to the Wesley family upon her death in 1774. (Principal source: MARC: Methodist papers.)

went to My Friend Griffin,s for a few Days & returnd this Morning; being a little fatigued I must beg to be excused from a longer Letter at this time, please to give my best Respects to Dr Mrs Wesley & Love to the Family with All Duty and affection to Yourself from Dr Sir Yr sincere tho' unworthy Friend & Serv.^t

Ann Chapman

Bristol Nov^r y^e 12th Saturday Night
PS that late poor prisoner M^{rs} Howel is also fled

Reference: EMV/501/37

Date: 2 November 1778

Correspondent: Ann Chapman

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Rev'd Mr Cs Wesley at ye Foundery near Upper Moorfields, London with speed"

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"Nov 2 1778 N[ancy] Chapman Tudway departed in peace"

Additional: Postmarked 'BRISTOL' and '4 NO[vember]'

I have the comfort of telling my Dear & Hon.rd Friend, that his newly adopted Son is escaped to Glory; He departed ab,^t half past 10, O Clock this morning, the last week Brother Valton⁶⁹ visited him every Day & found very great liberty in prayer with & for him, but could get little answer to his Questions except that he believed the Lord would not take him before He had forgiven him, but sometimes He would tell his mother it was a great comfort to have the Preacher come & Pray with him; when I came home Monday he seem^d glad & said, I miss,^d you ye D^r has been but twice, I told him M^r Valton was return^d, & wou^d constantly be with him, & so it proved, for he saw him this morning scarce a q^r of an hour before he fetch,^d his last Breath, & gave him Signs of his happy state, when M^r Valton spoke Solemnly to his Mother, Sisters & their Husbands who were waiting around his Bed. Very aful & sweet was the Season, I hope not soon to be forgotten by them or Me / I have very improperly related all hitherto, but I'll endeavor to be plainer if I can in ye next [page?]

⁶⁹ John Valton (1740-94): Born in London of French Roman Catholic origin, Valton was partly educated in France. He became an Anglican and after learning accountancy, worked for eighteen years in army ordnance.

Valton came under Methodist influence while living in Burfleet and became a class leader. He entered the itinerancy in 1775 and was appointed by Wesley to be a member of the Legal Hundred. Ill health forced him to withdraw from the itinerancy although he continued to preach. In 1792 he wrote a pamphlet against West Indian slavery. (Principal sources: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974): Lewis, *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*)

from ye time You left him, he has been growing weaker in Body but more patient at last. Yesterday a Purging came which I knew must Soon take him off, last night a change for Death commenced between 5 – & 6. (as his Mother told me), afterward when wanting Something to wet his mouth they offer^d him Chocolate he said No, I want no more of that food, I,ve made my Peace with God, I have, I have, O how Good is Jesus, the first Words struck me as odd, but immediately that scripture darted into my Mind, “Let him take hold of my strength & make Peace with me & he shall make Peace with me”, then I rejoiced, especially that He added O how Good is Jesus. Mrs Tudway sent to tell me this Morning he was Dying, I went, & she telling Me in the next Room what I've related, I went in & rejoice^d with Him, his Countenance was smileing & sweet He long^d to tell but could not utter his Joy, said a great deal but not a Word could be understood but when ask'd if he had any doubt, no, was plainly express;^d & with a smile a instead of Yes, when ask^d if Jesus was precious to him & comforted him & when told he should soon Join the innumerable Company to Sing the new Song his whole soul seem,^d ready to fly: & mine seem,^d almoste ready to go with him. I do thank you D^r Sir for leading me there, & You will Praise ye Lord that hath added another Jewel to y^r Crown

time fails for more at present, M^{rs} Tudway desires to be affectionately remember^d to You I beg to be to D^r M^{rs} Wesley, for ye present farewell

D^r Sir Your sincerely affect^{le}

Ann Chapman

Bristol Nov,^r ye 2^d : 1778

Reference: EMV/501/38

Date: 24 May 1786

Correspondent: Ann Chapman

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Rev^d and D.^r Sir

It is a long time since I had the pleasure of a line from you, I hope you have not given me up, because I am not so constant a Correspondant as you wish. I often feel languor & great indisposedness to writing tho' I love at all times to hear from my Friend[s] & should be very happy to see them, of which I hear there is some hope in the course of y^e Summer. Uncertain indeed is everything below, I should have thought M^{rs} Horton [wife of John Horton⁷⁰] as likely to live as any one I know, but how soon alas was the Flower cut down, tho' to bloom (I trust) in the Paradise of God. Her poor D.^r Father as well as her Husband, is much to be pittied, I hope Miss Hetty will see it

⁷⁰ John Horton (d.1802): Wealthy London merchant active in both civic affairs and Methodism as a member of the influential London committee of prominent laymen. Horton was a good friend of the Wesleys and acted as one of the executors of John Wesley's will. (Principal source: *Methodist Magazine* 1803, 211.

right to come home, every one must acknowledge her Father has the only claim to Her company as his chief earthly comfort, which he has been too long deprived of: I sometimes meet Him, He is very much broke, & cannot help pouring out his sorrows into every bosom that will receive them: He is very thankful that you visited M^{rs} Horton & for y^r kind consolatory Letters. So much for M^r D.

Our Friends Stafford send their kindest Love, they are nearly as usual in health Miss [Elizabeth] Johnson⁷¹ is just now from home, but is expected in ab.^t a Week. there is cause for thankfulness I believe upon good ground we may say there is a revival of his Work here, the seed sown begins to have a blessed Effect: so that we hope there will be a good Harvest even from Bristol to the praise of His Grace: I feel I much need the divine vivifying power, to keep me from the stupefaction which steals on nature thro' infirmities in the decline of Life, as well as to prepare for a better State: and I am certain every provision is made, & to be had for asking I apply too seldom & y.^t but faintly, yet sometimes I am greatly refresh.^d, help me dear Sir to call for constant Life, constant Fellowship, stablishing Grace, till it in Glory End.

My kindest Love to M^{rs} Wesley & Miss [Sarah] Wesley wishing you & every part of y^r Family store of Blessings, conclude y.^r very affect

Ann Chapman

Miss Morgan sends Her Love
Bristol May y^e 24th: 1786

Reference: EMV/501/39

Date: 5 January 1737⁷²

Correspondent: Sally Chapone (nee Kirkham)⁷³

⁷¹ Elizabeth Johnson (1720-98): Born in Bristol, the daughter of a West India Merchant, Johnson was disinherited by her father when she joined the Methodists. She lived thereafter on an annuity bequeathed to her by her uncle.

Johnson was named by the Wesleyan minister John Valton as one of the three most pious women in Methodism. Her home in Hilgrove Street was a centre of the movement in the city of Bristol and she was described by John Wesley as 'deep in grace, and lives like an angel here below'.

Johnson was opposed to separation of Methodism from the Church of England. Her memoir was published in 1799 as *An Account of Mrs Elizabeth Johnson*. (Principal source: *A Biographical Dictionary of 18th century Methodism* by Samuel Rogal (Edwin Mellen Press 1997)

⁷² See below for a note regarding dating

⁷³ Sarah Kirkham (1699-1764): Born at Stanton in Gloucestershire, the the eldest daughter of Lionel Kirkham, Rector of Stanton and Snowscourt. Her brother Robert was a member of the Oxford Holy Club and the Wesley brothers made regular visits to the Kirkham family home. Sarah was a correspondent of the Wesleys and was referred to as 'Varanese' in their letters. She married a schoolmaster John Chapone in 1725. (Principal source: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974)

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Gloucester

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Sally Chapoon, my friend Jan 6 1736 of her fathers death"
2. "Jan. 5 My friend"

Gloster Jan: 5:th1736⁷⁴

Alas! my Good Charles! how shall I discribe that tender sorrow, which fill'd my Eyes and heart at reading your letter! Why I should be your Peculiar Consolation, God only knows, I am truly sensible that I am not worthy of that happy distinction. I must confess, I found it very difficult, to give up the delight I expected from your conversation. I trust we shall meet – I hope in Paradise – for alas! I have no Expectation of that full freedom of Soul here – I have had great tryals this last year – but God has graciously supported, and made me happy under them. my father⁷⁵ suffer'd more in the flesh, than I ever saw any mortal Endure his last Vocal Prayer was this, oh! my Lovely God! Enlighten me with the Bright Beams of thy mercy, and Support me by thy Strength, and accept of my weak endeavours to bear these great Pains as I ought. he not only Dyed without fear, but even ~~with~~ with desire, the toils of the longest life, would be well repaid, by the Comforts and Blessing of such a Death. if yours is near, I Pray God, it may be like his, and that we may meet in fulness of joy! I hope and Pray, for your recovery, in order to it, you will find on the other Side of the paper, a Receipt for the disorder, with w:^{ch} your worthy friend M:^r Whitfield,⁷⁶ tells me you are afflicted. M:^{rs} Granville's great concern for you, furnished me with this prescription, which she recommends to you, in the Strongest terms – may God, bless it, to the health and ease of my friend! I shall return home soon – direct a line to my mother at Stanton – for I shall be impatient to know your Condition. you may be as open-hearted as you please – no one shall see your lines. our friends in this House are in great concern for you and desire their particular respects – mine you can never doubt of – tho' how few and trivial are the testimonies I have been ever able to give you of it? [Be sure?] have a full Trust in the mercies of God, heaven and Earth shall pass away, e'er charity shall fail, or a Soul that desires to please God Perish. Pray for me God will hear you for me, Since it has pleas'd him to inspire you, with that christian Love for me, which can come only from him. Selima,⁷⁷ is, I think, as perfect a christian, as I have seen. adieu-

Reference: EMV/501/40

Date: 15 March 1787

Correspondent: John Colman

Addressee: Charles Wesley

⁷⁴ The fact that this is old style dating rather than new is revealed by the reference to the death of Sally Chapone's father Lionel Kirkham, who passed away in December 1736 (clergy of the Church of England database)

⁷⁵ Lionel Kirkham (1675-1736): Rector of Stanton in Gloucestershire (clergy of the Church of England database)

⁷⁶ George Whitefield

⁷⁷ Pseudonym for Anne Granville

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"Mar 15 1787 Colman's daughter rec'd up"

Bristoll. 15th March 1787

Revd & Dear Sir,

I hope this Will find you and your Worthy Family in health I have the satisfaction to Informe you that outward peace is Once more Restor.d to me and my Family; M:^{rs} M: C. is gone to live by her self: O when shall saving grace fill Every Heart _ My dear Daughter Bulgan.^{s78} Sperrit was yesterday about 8 in the Morning translated to the Blessed Mantion [mountain?] she had been for some weeks past so filld with Consolation & Triump in Such a manner which often made her Cry out my Cup runs over. I can hold no more: Every day Longing to be with Jesus: she told me two days before her Departior that She Should not Die but Sleep; and that She had not the least shadow of the fear of Death past her mind; How can Suffitiant Adoration be given to ye god of love. Our Rev.^d Father Your dear Bro:^r has offerd his Servis to preach her funrall sermon on Sunday morning next at ye Room⁷⁹ Where he has desired she may be brought;⁸⁰ may it prove a blessing: & leave a Lasting impression on every heart.: I Conclude with my Duty to you & love to Whole Family & am Rev.^d Sir

Your Unworthy Bro.^r & Serv^t

John Colmen

P/S Could I receive a line from you I should think my self happy;

Reference: EMV/501/41

Date: 24 July 1738

Correspondent: Martha Clagett⁸¹

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

⁷⁸ Sarah Bulgin (d.1787) was the wife of the printer William Bulgin, one of the trustees of the Bristol New Room. An incomplete account of her death is published in the *Arminian Magazine* 1787, 301. (*John Wesley's Works*, 24: 8n)

⁷⁹ Bristol New Room

⁸⁰ "Yesterday that blessed saint, Sarah Bulgin, went to rest in the full triumph of faith. Sunday 18 [March 1787] I preached her funeral sermon to a listening multitude ..."
(*John Wesley's Journal*, 18 March 1787)

⁸¹ Mrs Clagget, along with her daughters Sukey [Susanna] and Betsey, was converted under Charles Wesley's ministry in June and July of 1738. He saw them regularly during this time and his brother John visited them regularly after his return from Germany. She later married Mr. Clifford and remained with the Moravians. All references to the family stop after 1739. (Albin note)

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "July 24, 1738. Blessed Mrs. Clagget, one of the First Witnesses."

July 24th 1738

In my infancy from the time of my having learnt to Read, which I believe as very Early, the Scriptures was so much my Delight that I was seldom prevail'd upon to leave that pleasure, to play with my Sisters, or take any other Diversion, My Father was so pleas'd with me on this account that He procur'd me a folio bible with cutts which I was so taken with & found to be of such use that I soon got so much of it by heart & wou'd give such an account where every remarkable pasage was to be found that I was always call'd for by my Father whenever he had any Company come to visit him that liked such things to Sirprise them with what I had learnt. My mother hath often told me what I had my self forgot, being so very young when it hapend, that at a time when She was big with Child and very Disconsolate, & in pain both of Body & Mind & Siting very pensive I went to her with my Bible & desired her to read, & pointed out to her these Words of our Lord O thou of little faith wherefore didst thou doubt? which gave her Immediate Ease & removed all her doubts. I continued Some years in this Happy way tho' under great disadvantages, having no one ~~to~~ to Improve this disposition, I was almost left to my self, my Parents being greatly Engaged in Worldly affairs. The Devil (Provok'd at my growth in grace) Made use of an Uncle of Mine to perswade them that if they let Me thus alone it wou'd certainly be attended with fatal consiquences such as ill health or Dispaire advising them to Employ & divert me some other way they did so & from this time I seldom had the comfort of my Bible but by Stelth.

I was sent abroad into the World to boarding Schools (the Place of my Birth being but a mean Little Village) to learn to Dance & some other things which did me great harm I began to love the Pleasures & Vanities of the World & to grow Cold to Religious Exercises & as the former increased the latter decreased thus they took me from my Eden, but such was the Continued Mercies of God to Me that in order to call me back from this dangerous condition He was Pleas'd (about the 13th year of my age) to visit Me with a disease which continued upon me abt 2 years after all likely means had been used & having had advice of the Most Eminent People, without any Success, it brought Me again into a Serious way of thinking. I considerd My Selfe an ungratefull wicked wretch that cou'd be negligent in My Duty to so kind & Gracious a God I beged most Earnestly that He wou'd again receive Me to Mercy, it came to My Minde that if it was His Pleasure (unworthy as I was) He cou'd Immediately remove this Complaint, perticularly My Saviours words & all things whatsoever ye shall ask in Prayer Believing ye Shall receive being perswaded He who cured the 10 Lepers cou'd restore me also often crying out Lord I Believe help thou My unbelief for I saw no obstacle but the weakness of My Faith nevertheless I believed that God wou'd grant me this thing also. I continued instant in Prayer till at length God had respect to My Importunity He granted me my Hearts Desire and fulfilld all My Mind I had left off Medicines but My Distemper Immediately abated & in a Short time I was perfectly recover'd but alas I was of those who did not return to give Glory to God I was then sent to London to Improve in Vanity My lot fell among the careless Lukewarm or as the World terms it good sort of People. in the 22nd year of my age I marryd & plunged My Self into the cares of the World a large acquaintance & innumerable perplexities took intire possession of Me I had uncommon sufferings in Child bearing

which kept me in continual fear the Enemy took advantage of My weakness & when I had conceiv'd of my 5th child obligated me to use some means to disappoint Gods Providence in bringing it to perfection, & that way free My Self, from the Pain I so much dreaded sometimes I thought it would be Murder He answered No, that as yet there was no Life, He also pour'd Temptations on me of other kinds. He thrust sore at me that I might fall, but the Lord was my Helper He had now almost made an end of me upon Earth, & if the Lord had not Helped me it had not faild but my Soul had been put to Silence. But how shall I express Gods mercy in giving me this Child, whose Singular goodness not many of her years have attain'd too, as She far excel'd any other I ever had, Her Sweetness of Temper & compassionate Disposition was such, that from her Cradle She took all opportunities of making Peace & doing good, and at about 13 seem'd utterly to have renounced the World & gave her Selfe wholly to God. I now see what before I had no notion off how far she has been made Instrumental to the bringing about my own Salvation, She every day watch'd for opportunities of Shewing me y^e Danger I was in by being too Anxious about temporal things whilst I neglected the one thing needful, telling me that she desired not to be Rich or great at the Hazard of my Eternal happiness, desireing me to leave her to God who was sufficient to Sustain her, my great Love to her gave force to her arguments & made me endure these unwelcome truth's which I shou'd not have excused from any other, I trust her Prayers & Labours have not been in vain, but how many ways Shou'd I have wroung'd my own Soul, if God had Suffer'd me to accomplish my Sad intention. At the time when She was about a year old, I lost a Brother whom I intirely Loved & altho he was a Sober young man had such fears concerning the State of His Soul as threw me into a deep Moloncholy I applied My Self to Reading the Scriptures & Souths Sermons⁸² but receiv'd no comfort from them constring every thing against myself. This was another of the Devils stratigems. He perplex'd me about My Brothers Salvation till I Dispaired of My own. after this I had a violent feaver on my Spirits but my Physician told me my case was out of His Sphere that My Distemper was out of the reach of Medicines He enquir'd into the State of my Mind (which the Minister who attended Me forgot to do) but could get no answer from me. during this time the Devil tormented Me with the most horrid Illusions & Blasphemous Suggestions particularly the Words of Jobs Wife: I often attempted Saying the Lords Prayer but found it Impossible, the only thing that accord to me which any way resembled Prayer was [whither Shall I fly from thy Presence my Fever was att Length removed which was beyond expectation I still went mourning all the Day long, & was Seldom able to give a rasionel [rational] answer to any thing that was Said to me. after some months I began to Pray, & Said My God my God why hast thou forsaken me & in the anguish of my Soul Intreated the Almighty that this thing might depart from me tho I Deserved punishment Still More Intolerable nor, was my Prayers wholly Ineffectual, I had a Succession of Feavers, they were attended with many Terrors & gloomy Suggestions from the Powers of Darkness, tho less than the former. I had 6 more Children, my Sufferings in bearing these were more remarkably greivous than before, my Cares & disapointments w'ch also increased, gave me a Strong propensity to anger & impatience, w'ch was the Sin that did so easily beset me, I practised Some outward Duties & now & then heard the word Gladly but it fell among thorns, I was Still Sore Bound in misery and Iron, I knew not what to do having none to Guide me till God sent Mr Whitefield amongst us. He told

⁸² Robert South (1634-1716), whose published sermons were very popular in the early 18th century

me of Original Sin & mans fallen estate,⁸³ this by Sorrowful experience I had proved to be true. He talk'd of a new Birth & Change of Nature, w'ch I tho't I had understood, but since finde I did not, I was pleas'd with his conversation, & was delighted with Singing Hymns when I was sure no one heard me, & perswaded my Selfe that I was becoming a New Creature. I had a Sort of Peace, & some Joy, & began to think I was alive indeed, but quickly found my Self Sadly mistaken, my Sins w'ch for some time lay conceal'd, attack'd me again with greater force than ever, I Pray'd, resolved, Strove, but all in vain, the impetuous torrent soon Prevaild notwithstanding my feeble Resistance. I renew'd my Indeavours, the Enemy his assaults, till wearyd with constant defeats own'd my Selfe vanquish'd & Sin to be Irresistable these conflicts greatly impair'd my Health. My two eldest daughters began to talk to me of free grace, of faith in Christ, w'ch alone cou'd Justifie & deliver us from the power of Sin. & make us partakers. of y'e divine nature. They had lived a great while in constant use of all the means of Grace, but now declar'd they had not this Faith. I gave Some heed to what they Said, own'd it was agreable to Scripture, the Devil greatly alarm'd at these proceedings, employ'd a friend of mine to dissuade me from Such dangerous Doctrine. He told me as floods of tears wou'd permit, that my Daughters were entangled with a Set of Enthusiasts w'ch if not speedily prevented wou'd put them out of that good way w'ch [he] knew they had so long been in, & greatly hazard their Salvation. I took his advice, began mightily to oppose the only thing whereby I might be Saved; I took all possible pains to restrain my Daughters who still persisted in what they first alledged, the younger affirming that now She knew her Sins were forgiven thro' the Satisfaction of Jesus (xt), I told her I fear She deceiv'd her Selfe notwithstanding this, God who Saw me while I was yet a great way off, wou'd not Suffer me any longer to resist his mercy, Accordingly on St Peter's Day He sent ye Mr Reverend Wesley to my Rel ief who like the Apostle's good Angel open'd the Prison door, bid me arise up quickly & told me that Christ Loved me & Gave himself for me, that if I wou'd only Believe I might that moment receive the attonem't I heard him with great attention, but having hitherto had Christ represented as a Lawgiver & Severe judge, I ignorantly imagin'd I cou'd not receive it then because I was unworthy, not considering I must infallibly remain so till His Righteousness was made over to me. we Spent great part of the afternoon in Prayer & Singing. After Mr Wesley left me my Sirprising Cure thro' Prayer of Faith came Strongly into my mind w'ch I had almost forgot, having till then wholly neglected Giving Glory to God by Declaring it. In a few days Mr Wesley made me another visit his Prayers & discourse affected me more than before. I thot' Christ Smil'd upon me, & I cou'd then Say, My Lord & my God. my happiness encreased all that evening & I went to Bed in great Tranquility, the next morning between the Hours of 3 & 4 in Such Joy as I never felt before, my Heart overflow'd with the Love of God, the Spirit also bearing witness that I was a Child of God, & cou'd not help joining the Immortal Choir in their Halleluahs.

Reference: EMV/501/42

Date: [1741]

⁸³ George Whitefield first preached on the new birth in London during August 1736 (Albin note)

Correspondent: Francis/Fanny Cowper⁸⁴
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Location: London
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"1741 Fanny Cowper Confessing Faith."

Dear Sir,

I heartily thank you for your Pious Prayes which you have offer'd up to Almighty God for me a poor destress'd miserable Sinner. they have reach'd ye ears of Mercy, I have now tasted & seen how sweet ye Lord is, I see in Christ all my sins forgiven that his most precious Blood shed for my sins that tender Body scourg'd wounded, and crucified, O holy Jesus I see thy meritorious Suffering plead for me, O Lamb of God that takest away ye Sins of the World, have mercy upon me. thou hast shew me thy goodness in ye Land of ye Living O thou that boughtest Heaven for me, guide me thither, Oh my Redeemer may thou never leave me but be present always, and help to overcome all Temptations, enlighten Thou my my Soul, direct it, crown it. O Wonderfull how is it, that thy Mercy shoud thus follow me, the chife Sinners Jesus answers for such I died, from henceforth I will Rejoyce that I the chief of Sinners am, but Jesus Died for me, My heart was set upon and I Rejoyced in thoughts of having that shoud Glorifie God with you at the Foundery, but God woud not permit it, but directed us to East Barnet and there to render him our Sincer Praise and thanksgiven and after my Dear Lady Hunttindone⁸⁵ carried us home with her, where wee again did with her Rejoyce Glorify God.

I am much obliged to you for sending me the Prayre Book, & may too, ask that I may Receive all I Pray for.

I am very sorry to hear that you have been overturned by Malice of of Wicked Men. May you spedily Recover, May your Patiance and long Suffering turne there hard hearts and be turned to Love that they may see your good Works and Glorify Our Father which is in heaven. I have nothing more to add but that I am Dear Spiritual Guide

Your most

Affectionate Sister in Christ

I know you will pray for made me not ask it

F Cowper

⁸⁴ Francis Cowper (d. 1742) was a friend and traveling companion of the Countess of Huntingdon and well-known to the Wesley brothers. She died of consumption at the Hastings family seat of Donington Park in May 1742. John Wesley attended her deathbed. See also EMV 44 (*Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon* by a member of the family (London: 1840), volume 1, pp.52-53; JWJ, 22 May 1742)

⁸⁵ Selina Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Reference: EMV/501/43
Date: 8 March 1741
Correspondent: Charles Wesley
Addressee: Fanny Cowper⁸⁶
Location: Donington Park, Leicestershire
Annotations: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
1. "F. Cooper Mar. 1742 or 1741"
2. "F. Cowper Mar 1742"

Donington Park.⁸⁷ March ye 8.th 1741

Dear Sir

I am sorry to hear you have not receiv'd the letter I wrote, I know your goodness would excuse my Nonsense, But that cannot be expected from Strangers. If there had been any thing in it, that could have been of any Advantage to those who have it I should have Rejoyced. You don't know how much I am oblig'd to you, for your kind Remembrance of me, when you must have thought me so ungreatfull, disobedient, and Idle, as not to write to one of my best Friends, for such I must always call you, and Spiritual Guide, 'The Lord hath inclined your heart unto Me, and I humbly hope He will continue this blessing to me Unworthy of all. We all of us joyn in thanks to you, for the sweet Hymns you have sent, wich we have sung every Day since we have had 'em, and Rejoyce over them, waiting the second coming of the Lord, When we shall be Released from Sin, our busie Enemy who is always haunting us, I can easily hope for this great Gift knowing that nothing is impossible with GOD, and that He can bring a clean thing out of an unclean. I know that in me dwelleth no good thing, and that my Heart is deceitfull above all things, I cannot find out its depths of Iniquity. Dear Lady H[untingdon] continues her Labour of Love to my Sister & I, by Reading and explaining the Holy Word of GOD, Singing Hymns and Praying with us, Not missing any Opportunity, at which times Wee All of us bear you on our Hearts. I believe we are often joined in spirit tho' absent in Body. I will bless, the LORD of Heaven, of his great Goodness to me, and for cuseing You, to Pray for me, a poor worm, and unworthy all those blessings I possess. I beg Dear Sir you will continue your Good Prayres for me, For the prayres of the faithfull peirce the skys and cannot return unanswered. I will not try your Patience any longer. I now commit you to care and protection of our Dear LORD, and Saviour.

I am Dear Sir your Affectionate
But weakest Daughter in the Lord

My Sister Desires her Affectionate Love to you,
We desire you would Remember us to Mr. G_____

F Cowper 1742

⁸⁶ See also EMV 42 and EMV 44

⁸⁷ Residence of Selina Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Reference: EMV/501/44
Date: May 1742
Correspondent: Fanny-Francis Cowper⁸⁸
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Address: "For the Rev'd Mr Charles Wesley at the new school in Bristol"
Document: Dying words of Miss Francis/Fanny Cowper (d. 1742) of Donnington Park, friend of the Wesleys, Whitefield and the Countess of Huntingdon
Annotations: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"May 1742; Fanny's Dying Words."
Additional: Postmarked: 3 May and "Free Huntingdon"⁸⁹

I cannot be unmindfull of all your Dear labours of Love to me a poor worm unworthy of all things. the Lord Jesus bless you in time and Eternity and give us to meet in Glory.

The [unreadable text] to the sun will no more, but desires you to comm[en]d her to your broth[er].

Reference: EMV/501/45
Date: 1763
Correspondent: Anonymous
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Location: London and Bristol
Document: Happy death of Jane Cowper
Annotations: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"Jane Cowper's death 1763."

I received yours a few days ago with great thankfulness & had it not lain all this time I should have answer'd it sooner. I still find most assuredly that our souls are closed united to our Bristol Community we are one in him who joins us. The Lord has been pleased to honour us with several glorious Deaths of late, The most striking of which I have had on my mind to send you an account of, as Miss March⁹⁰ took it down who

⁸⁸ See also EMV 42 and 43

⁸⁹ Indicating that the letter was sent free post courtesy of the Countess of Huntingdon

⁹⁰ Jane C. March (c. 1743-1816): Born probably in London, the daughter of a prosperous merchant Thomas March (d.1754) and Jane Lisle, a member of a prominent Wiltshire family.

The March family was apparently of French Huguenot origin and had been settled in England since the 17th century. March had at least one brother and a sister.

Her brother Thomas assumed the name of Phillips in 1777 on the death of his cousin Samuel Phillipps. In 1797 he succeeded to what had been the Phillipps estate of Garendon Park and Grace Dieu, worth an estimated £6000 per annum. His side of the family continued to prosper well into the 19th century and inter-married with several noble houses.

was with her the whole time: for I always find when anything is profitable I long for my Bristol Sisters to partake of it, the person was Miss Coppes of whom I suppose you may have heard often. During life she was an uncommon steady walker & adorned her profession in all things & a few years ago misfortunes happening to her mother's Husband she gave up as soon as she came of age all her little fortune & went out into the world as a companion to a Gentlewoman of our society here she was exceedingly tried but proved that the way of the Cross was the way to the Kingdom.

After GOD had spoke peace to her soul about 2 years he began to stir her up to seek a farther blessing convincing her she had been an unbeliever of his power - altho she had tasted of his love limiting the Holy one of Israel. She continued sometime seeking with much earnestness till at length the LORD gave her power to last her whole soul by faith on Jesus as made unto her of GOD Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification & Redemption, From this time she rejoiced & loathed herself in her own sight, often saying "I feel no desire but to please Jesus CHRIST & know not of anything in my will but what is sanctified to him. I depend on him every moment as my Advocate with the Father & daily feel my short coming without Condemnation. The Blood of sprinkling speaks me clean & If I could perform the obedience I desire I should still be ashamed before him & tho; I do not glorify GOD as I would I am not condemned but abased before him."

In sickness as well as health she lived in the will of GOD, she abode in faith, & dwelt in Love.

A few days before her last Illness she said to one of my Band "I have always, from a Child had a fear that at the hour of Death I should have great conflicts & not be able to endure, but this day GOD has assured and I shall finish my Course with joy.

Soon after that she was constrained to sin[g]"

"When pain on my weak flesh prevails
With Lamblike patience arm my Breast.

And when she sent for Miss March she wrote in her note,
"I suffer the will of Jesus, all he sends is sweetened by his Love.

Jane March settled in Bristol and was a devout Methodist. She was friendly with John Wesley, who described her as a 'lady of fortune and piety,' and the two exchanged letters between 1760 and 1777. She was also intimate with several important female Methodists of the late 18th century such as Sarah Ryan, Sarah Crosby and Elizabeth Ritchie. She was a regular correspondent of Mary Fletcher - the two knew each other from as early as 1766 and may have initially become acquainted as a result of their similar wealthy Huguenot background.

March's correspondence with Fletcher is an important source of information concerning Methodism in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, with particular regard to female spirituality. (Principal sources: *Burke's Landed Gentry 1853*, *Alumni Cantabrigienses 1752 -1900* (under Samuel Phillipps), Rogal, and Fletcher-Tooth collection (MARC)

I am as happy as if I heard a voice say –

For me my elder Brethren stay
& angels beckon me away
& Jesus bid me come.”

When One told her you will not be frightened my Dear but it is the smallpox”

I answered “I can’t be frightened at the will of GOD.” Sometime after she said

“I shall dye a lump of Deformity, but I shall meet you all glorious
I shall still have fellowship with yr spirit.”

When Mr Morgan came in, He asked her what she thought the only way for souls to walk in: & what were their chief Hindrances? She answer’d “I consider these Dangers as partly Constitute” it was mine to be of a reserv’d temper of mind, to be very quiet to suffer much & say little: are of a different Disposition. Some may think the one more Excellent, some the other. But I see the great thing is to live in the will of GOD; & for some months past, when my soul has been more particularly devoted to GOD, I have felt such a being guided by his Eye, & the union which I have rec’d from the Holy One teacheth me all things. &c

He asked her if she had particular Conviction she should Dye? She answer’d

“No only from the nature of Disorder, but I feel his will so precious that it is impossible to chuse.” On Friday morning, she said “she believed she shou’d Dye & sitting up in the Bed prayed, “LORD I bless thee that thou art even with me, & all that thou hast is mine: Thy Love is greater than my Weakness, Greater than my Helplessness, Greater than my Unworthiness

Lord thou sayest to Corruption thou art my sister & Glory be to thee O Jesus thou art my Brother, Let me Comprehend with all saints the length & breadth & depth & height of thy Love.&c some hours after the agonies of Death came on her teeth were clean & & her Face at the same time full of Smiles of triumph, She clap’d her Hands for joy & soon after said “The Enemy is as a roaring Lion.”

Mrs C ___ said but you my Dear are more than Conqueror thr’o the blood of the Lamb! She said ___ yes – O yes sweet Jesus, O Death were is thy sting?

When Mr Wesley came, he said “Do you believe now you are saved from Sin?”

She replied, Yes I have had no doubt of it these many months, that I ever had was because I did not abide in the Faith: for while I believed I always felt it But I now feel I have kept the faith & there is no fear in Love, perfect Love

out fear &c She accepted all that came in her way, to be wholly given up to GOD, she was near 20 Hours without swallowing anything & at the end of that time said she should be content to live a 12 month for the will of GOD was so dear she could feel no Complaining in her soul &c

Sometime after Mrs D, said my dear we have not long to enjoy each other or suffer together. She reply'd "My Dear our Enjoyments are eternal never to have an End!" On Monday, she was lightheaded and sensible at times. one said "JESUS is your mark" She answer'd with a low Voice I have but one mark, I am all spiritual. Miss. M ___ once said "You dwell in GOD! altogether" said she, she then said, the Lord keeps my soul above all or I don't know what would become of me. "He is very good"

She was in strong convulsions 15 hours before she dyed. Her pain was extream She said you are made perfect this sufferings" "more & more so" said she. She then lay sometime & said Lord thou art strong." Then pausing sometime she said my Jesus is all in all to me, Glory be him in time & to all Eternity." In half an hour after, she quietly fell asleep in him her soul Loves.

May we dye the Death of the Righteous & our last End be as hers.

Having so much to write of this account (w'ch indeed I have been forced greatly to shorten) I shall not have time to say all that I would.

Reference: EMV/501/46

Date: December 1760

Addressee: "To The Rev'd Mr Charles Wesley"

Location: London and Bristol

Document: Death of Mrs Clark

Annotations: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"M. Clark's death Dec. 1760"

From a Child, She discern'd great Drawings of the Father, for Want of Improvement, They wore off, She then fell into Sin, but GOD in Mercy to her Soul follow'd Her wth the Terrors of Sinah, which made Her roar for the very Disquietness of her Heart; ___ She was vile in her own Eyes: _ In this Distress the Lord pointed out a Remedy, _ She heard the Word - was diligent in all the Means of Grace, 'till at length the Lord spoke Peace to her Soul. Herein She rejoic'd for some little Time in glorious Light & Liberty, 'till the Lord began to unveil & show her Her Heart; which made Her groan Day & Night for Deliverance, & that the Lord wou'd renew Her Nature:- In this State She liv'd for some Time, __ Her Love to the Poor was unbounded -- In Her Business She was always diligent ___ Her Fervency of Spirit was very great ___ Patience with & Pity & Love for Her Enemies ___ Integrity to Her Lord & Master Jesus Christ, & Faith unshaken. Friendship so great, that Nothing but an infinite Degree of the Love of GOD can compensate for Her Loss.

About nine Months since the Lord was pleas'd to lay His Hand upon Her ___ In Her Affliction She was apprehensive She shou'd soon depart hence, which made Her more fervent in Spirit - She was soon incapable of either performing Her Business or attending the Means of Grace, which last, She own'd She never found the Loss of, being faithful when in Health ___ At this Time She was greatly tried & buffeted by Satan & her Evil Heart, But soon

Her Faithful Lord 'appear'd

And bid the Tempter cease.

[page break]

He brought a Divine Sweetness into Her Soul, which in her Illness and dying Moments was visible to all about Her __. Nevertheless, the Desire of her Soul, That the Lord wou'd give Her a new Heart, & renew a Right Spirit within Her.

Thro the Goodness & Mercy of GOD, Her Pain of Body was not very great, but when within a few Days of her being set free, She was almost continually delirous:- One Hour before She died, Her Senses return'd. She then said, I am going, I shall die, I shall die, __ I am going to Heaven, I am going to Heaven, Stretching Her Arm abroad She said, Holy Jesus: __ Stopping a little, She cried out, How faithful is GOD! - as 'tho He had seal'd all the Promises to Her Soul, __ Turning Herself to Her Friend, She said, You shall come soon, & desir'd those that were around to comfort Her: __ Speaking a few more words which cou'd not be understood, The Lord Jesus sweetly stole Her Life away.

O Jesus may I live Her Life,
And may Her latter End be mine.

Reference: EMV/501/47

Date: 25 April 1766

Correspondent: Ann Davis

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Red'd Mr Charles Wesley, Bristol"

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"April 25 1766 S[ister] Davis dying daily"

Rev'd Ever Dear Sir

I thank you for your kind & Comfortable letter witch is allways a Cordial to your week unworthy Servant you ask me if I am still groaning to be delivered from Sin & pain, I am my dearest sir opressed beyond Expression with this painful body & to often my Spirit as well as flesh is Ready to fail Which makes me groan with bitter groanings indeed for patience to bear & suffer all the Lord shall please to lay upon me to his Glowry, for it is a time of sore trial & temptation with me I see much of my want of Faith & every Grace of the Spirit & the Nesesity of a Closer Union with the Lord Jesus that I may be enable'd through faith in Him to tread in his steps & be a thankfull pertaker of his sufferings without a Mummering Groan, & there is times that I think I may say I am thankfull for the Rod & count it an Honner to be admitted to tast of his cup but alass those happy Moments a short & I sink again beneath the Cross which lyes heavey & long upon my Weary back, but yet heather to the Lord heath helped me & I stand all Glowry be to him as a bush burning but not consumed⁹¹ & he gives me to hope he will make me more than Conquerer⁹² at last & I am determined by

⁹¹ Exodus 3: 2

⁹² Romans 8: 37

his Grace if he slay I will trust in Him he is my only hope & I have nothing Elce to fly to I beg your prayers that I may be kept to ye End

[page break]

I give you joy of your Dear family safe Recovery & another son⁹³ my heart has been with you tho I have been Silent I have felt your Burden & bless the Lord tho: there has been such a Report of Death you are all Alive & Miss Gwynne⁹⁴ tels me you intend to make us a short visit better Short than not atall for the site of you will do me good I beg my kindest Love & Respectes to my Dearest Mrs Wesley & the little ones but I am not able to write to her at this time for I am very ill & much worse than Ever I still Comefort my self with the hopes of the End being nigh & if it is far of Blessed be the Lord there is a time when it will Come O happy Day.

I pray the Lord Jesus be Ever with you & yours is the Ernest desire of Dear Sir your Ever Affecttinate & Much oblige'd Servant & Daughter in ye Lord

Ann Davis

Reference: EMV/501/48

Date: 1 July 1758

Correspondent: Anonymous

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London and Bristol

Document: Account of Mrs Davis's mastectomy

Annotations: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "M. Davis's breast cut off"
2. "Mrs Davis's trial July 1 1758"

An account of Mrs Davis behaviour during the Operation of her breast being cut of.

While the Surgeon went to put his Dress on, I was left alone with her, she said I wish he wou'd come and do it now, for I am quite ready, and am Sure the Lord will be with me; she was perfectly resign'd and very compos'd, and ask'd if Mr Davis was come; when I answer'd no, she seem'd Equally Satisfied; I said I'm sure God will be present she said I know he will, as I repeated these words: ye ~~Souls~~ Souls of the Righteous appear: if any are waiting around: her Soul Seem'd fill'd with prayer, When the Surgeon came in; to make the Operation, she gave me one hand and ask'd me if the other must not be held; but she Stir'd neither, but only to lift them up in prayer to

⁹³ Samuel Wesley (1766-1837) was born on 24 February

⁹⁴ Rebecca Gwynne (d. 1798). Daughter of Marmaduke and Sarah Gwynne of Garth, Brecknockshire, and sister to Sarah, wife of Charles Wesley. She helped Wesley in his relations with her family at the time of his courtship of her sister, and the two remained very close. She never married and died in London. (Principal source: MARC: papers of the Wesley and Gwynne families.)

God. she receiv'd the first cut without a groan: when her pain increas'd she groan'd, and pray'd to God, she once said its very sharp pains but did not complain; three or four times, she sh~~e~~ said aloud, Lord Jesus, be thou my help: when the inside of her breast was taken out she ask'd if they had done cutting; I answer'd yes, and some thread being call'd for, she immediately Said their is some in my work basket on the table: while they sow'd up the blood vessel, she said this pain is very great, she call'd on the Lord to Strengthen her and Said I'm faint, and while she was going to receive some Drops from the hands of a friend: I fainted away: the cause of my fainting is quite hid from me at present: For during the whole time I found my soul intirely Stay'd on the Lord, I was assur'd if she dy'd Death wou'd not Separate us from Christ; and being confident that every pain she endur'd wou'd be Sanctified to the Good of her Soul, I felt no degree of fear. I was intirely happy and the Language of my soul was: Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace; for mine Eyes have Seen thy Salvation.⁹⁵ When I recover'd my fainting, I thought I was with my Redeemer, and ~~H~~is Love constrain'd me to Praise him aloud

Reference: EMV/501/49

Date: 27 February 1786

Correspondent: A. Shoreland

Document: "Some few Remarks concerning the late Mr J[oh]n Davies by an intimate friend"

Soom few Remarks concerning the late Mr Jn Davies by an intimate friend.

Before he was like unto others, It is about 22 years since he was first brought to a spiritual light, and the means that it pleas'd God first to use, was a person who work'd with him, who he in soom degree with the rest had used to ridicule, but when it pleased God to give him a View of what he was, and his danger, He like a drowning man was will to catch at every straw, so he was running after all oppinions in his own mind, for he was at one time minded to joyne the Quakers, at another the Romish church and so on, but as his advise was, so was his conduct to try all things and hold fast that which was good, and as such he joined himself to The Rev Mr Wesley's Society about 16 years since, with whome he continu'd to meet &, as long as his Health would permit, a great part of which time he was a Leader, and I very believe a more exemplary man was not amongst the Methodists.

In him Godliness or the knowledge of God was profitable in all things, for he had from school no further learning than the Grammar, but since by his thirst for a better comprehension and knowledge of things, with close application and study had acquired the knowledge of the Latin, French, Greek and Hebrew but for want of being known, he who those fine flowers which in the Wilderness blows whose beauty is lost for want of being seen, so was that brilliant Character of his great abilities, And though he had such a great blessing of being impowerd to do Justice and Iove Money to such a great degree that even his Ennemies, who would not speak well of him freely was constraind, to say, "that if their was an Honest man in the World Jn Davies was one", And tho it pleased God to increase his Subs[t]ance so as to be of the World

⁹⁵ Luke 2: 29-30

independent, which is so great a Temporal blessing, tho so great a snare, but was to him a Blessing, for as was his Day so was his Strength, for as a good Steward he could give an account of his Stewardship, for in purse and person was found willing to administer as far as in his power, both knowledge of things spiritual, and temporal relief. And was one of the first that established that most Excellent Institution the *Bible Society*, and at last was able amidst all his affliction to declare to me, tho not in these words, but to this purpose, "That there was nothing in Heaven or Earth that he desired equal to such of the presence of God which he had experienced to that degree of knowing of Him, in Him to be Unity peace and Concord, and that he was willing to do His Will, either to depart or stay, but to depart and be with him, which was far better seem'd to be his prevailing choice", which he did on Monday the 27 day of Feb last in the 48 year of his age, after a long affliction of near three years.

A. Shoreland

Reference: EMV/501/50

Date: 2 February 1742⁹⁶

Correspondent: William Dallaway⁹⁷

Addressees: Charles Wesley

Address: "To the Revd Charles Wesley in Bristol"

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "W. Delaway, Feb. 2, 1742."

2. "Feb 1742 Delaway"

Note: Postmark: Oxford

Oxford Feb 2 1741⁹⁸

Dear Sr,

I design'd to have wrote to you saturday but was prevented. I'm now on a journey which will detain me from home near a month. I'm persuing my lawful calling in which God I hope will prosper me, that I stumble not to distraction.

For ever blessed be that holy spirit that instituted you an instrument to my salvation; for ever be ador'd, that gracious Saviour, who stretched forth his hand, after a few hours seeking to raise me up, and bring me to the knowledge of his divine truths; may his mighty arm still hold me, may his heavenly spirit still guide me, that I may persevere unto the End, and that which he has begun in grace may he perpetuate in everlasting glory.

Your Faith was strong may heaven increase it, may he long preserve you in this world to administer the Gospel truths unto the lost house of Israel, may your virtues still

⁹⁶ Dallaway dates the testimony to 2 February 1741, but Charles Wesley's annotation dates it to 2 February 1742. While it is possible that Charles Wesley is a year out on his date, it is more likely that Dallaway's date is old-style rather than new

⁹⁷ A clothier, probably from Bristol, converted by means of Charles Wesley (Albin note)

⁹⁸ See the date field at the head of the letter

flourish and abound in the souls of all those who are happy in your ministry; and may the Eternal pow'r spread abroad to all People, that light which shineth in darkness.

No sooner had I felt the divine Influence in my Soul, but the love of God was shed abroad in my heart, and I went home in that Peace of mind which passeth all understanding; my saviour manifested himself within me; all was calmness, freed from Fear, or Guilt; the sting of death is remov'd, for my saviour hath redeemed me; and I'm assur'd through his blood, he will sanctify me, and cleanse my Soul from the bondage of Corruption before I go hence; for his enlightening spirit hath greatly enlarged me, and taught me the misterious truths of his Gospel; I have felt his gentle breathings of instruction, and he hath shew'd me the wonders of his almighty love; Oh! My saviour do thou still teach me, that I err not in the ways of righteousness.

I expect much Tribulation in the flesh, Satan has begun in my own Family, and is greatly enrag'd against me, he attacks me in the Tenderest part and like a roaring Lyon seeketh to devour me, but God is my strength and my Redeemer: I have need of the whole armour of Christ to support me under his Cross, I desire therefore yours Prayers, & that God will give me a spiritual Brother to assist me in my own house, for I fear others will be deny'd me, & that I may still be supported to rejoice/as I do now/under the Cros w^h God for my Good hath appointed me to bear.

Remember me to dear Mrs Norman⁹⁹ and Miss _____ for my Soul loveth them. I desire their prayers, they have [mine] that god may preserve them: I hope and trust that God will make me an instrument to bring some to Christ, and doubt not but the rage the Devil has is levelling at me, will awaken some to truth, and that his infernal envy will be undermined by the all blessed spirit of Eternal Grace.F

If you write to me directed as under twill [it will] be comfort to my Soul, and I hope your time will permit it, as it may strengthen your faithful Brother, though but a Child in Christ, and in the flesh your assur'd Friend & Servant

W^m Dallaway

Direct to me a Clothier to be left till call'd for at the Post office in Norwich I shall be there about the 10th or 11th Just and not stay longer than the 12th.

⁹⁹ Mary Norman was born probably in Bristol into a prosperous family called Oxford. At the age of 21 she was married to John Norman, a wealthy brick-maker. The couple had one child. Norman and her husband were among the first Bristol Methodists and entertained Wesley and Whitefield at their home. When Wesley was refused access to the pulpits of Bristol's Anglican churches, he preached on a plot of land belonging to Mr Norman. When her husband died in 1744, Norman was left virtually destitute. From 1749, she lived with the family of the wealthy Methodist James Ireland of Brislington Hall. (*Arminian Magazine* 1789, 240-245 and Samuel Rogal, *A Biographical Dictionary of 18th century Methodism*).

Reference: EMV/501/51

Date: 18 March 1742

Correspondent: Susanna Designe¹⁰⁰

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Mar 18 1742. S. Design
2. "S. Design Mar 1742"

Bristol March ye 18th 1741/2¹⁰¹

Dear & Revd. Sr

according to the power ye Lord shall give me I will relate his gracious dealings with me since I saw you: unworthy as I am he daily poureth blessings upon me great shame and confusion of face doth often cover me at ye sight of my own vileness I see it without fear and grieve without pain I almost hourly feel ye power of God & a deep sense of my saviours love but yet my heart wanders from him I want to serve him with a holy worship & in every thought obey him I can say Lord thou knowest all things thou knowest I desire to love thee I find my hatred to sin increase and ye lest stirrings thereof is grievous to me but ye grace of God is sufficient for me I hunger and thirst after Jesus and although I often feed on ye manna of his Divine Love my soul is not satisfied theirwith for I am not risen up after his lickness I want to drink out of that fountain till I am filled with all ye fullness of God I find an unspeakable peace yet a wrestless striving attended with a pleasing pain my heart flows with love & pants & reaches after God but I am not fully happy in him but I doubt not but I shall O my blessed Jesus make me holy then shall I be happy in thee fulfill these longing desires of my soul & let me know ye depths of thy sanctifyin Love but O Lord my time my life my all is in thy hand do with me what thou wilt only take my heart unto self & let all I am be lost in thee I truly experience I want ye blood of Christ every moment applied to my unrenewed soul I feel I hang upon him for I am weak & helpless O who is strong but those that are renewed in ye image of God yet it is strength to see my own weakness for then I trust in Christ alone

Sister Robertson Davis & Lucretia Smith give their Duty to you Likewise Betty at y^e new Room¹⁰²

S Prn¹⁰³ write She thinks to be at Bristol y^e Latter end of next month

¹⁰⁰ Susanna Designe was born about 1712 near the Isle of Ely of French parents. After marriage and the destruction of their home by flood she moved to Bristol with her husband and began to teach private students (Albin note)

¹⁰¹ i.e. 1742 new style dating

¹⁰² New Room Chapel, Bristol

¹⁰³ Probably Sarah Perrin (1721–87). A native of the West of England, Perrin was from a Quaker family. She made her first appearance on the Methodist scene in 1740 when she started to correspond with Charles Wesley. From as early as 1741 Perrin was testifying her faith in public gatherings and she should be regarded as one of the earliest Methodist female exhorters. In February 1744, at John Wesley's invitation, Perrin became the housekeeper at the New Room in Bristol. In the early 1750s she

much private prayer is profitable to my soul at some times it brings my soul so near to God till I can power tears of love & contrition into my saviours bosom then I am tempted to think now I am cencere [sincere] now I am in earnest those thoughts is dreadful to me for some moments till I throw myself upon my dear Jesus & am helped o what Can stand before that name called upon in faith & what shall become of all my corruptions when ye Lord shall come with power to take vengance on his enemies that would not have him to reign over them surely ye time is coming when I shall see them again no more for ever O that I may not rest on this side Jordan or ever think I am any thing but a poor helpless sinner waiting at ye feet of Jesus till his cleansing blood hath washed my soul from all sin I have to have a hope full of immortality I seem as sure as if I had already received it I listen for ye sound of his feet & hears a voice saying surely I come quikly even so Lord Jesus come when thou wilt but O my Jesus come I have lately received another letter from my Dear Sister Sarah Perrin it is a great quikning to me she grows in grace daily I find my love encrease to her and am drawn to prayer for her we are greatly united in spirit & seem as one soul I have great hope ye Lord will shew her what is his will in all things that she may be more cosely Joined to us and become a burning and shining light she is not apprehensive of my writing to you but I can answer in her sted her love flows freely towards you & her prayers is not slackned for you ye more desirous we are to love God ye more we love and pray for his ministers I find a greater hunger after ye word than ever I Did & an encrease of love to you & your dear brother and all ye children of God O that earthly affection may find no place in me but that as I draw nearer ye fountain I may drink deeper of ye stream even of that spirit ye Lord hath given you a double portion oft may he encrease it an hundred fold the rest of our friends in Stokes Croft pays their best respects to you Mrs Vigor¹⁰⁴ bears her trial with great patience it is ye Lords Doing I hope ye work of God goeth on in her Soul I Believe ye Lord took him her Heart was Set upon to make Room for himself & he will be more to her than ten Sons O ye abundant Love of God to take one into ye storehouse of ye dead to drive ye rest to Christ and make them eager to hasten after : when this soul was received into ye outward church by holy baptism it was unknown to me before I came ye power of the Lord met me the moment I entered into ye place & that scripture came to me cast thy bread upon ye waters & after many days thou shalt find it & looking up to ye Lord say what thanks shall I render unto O God for all thy mercies & while I was yet speaking ye Lord showed me how to thank him by asking for all ye rest O what a gracious God have we

married the Wesleyan itinerant John Jones and in 1758 the couple moved to London, where Jones had charge of the Methodist society. At the end of the 1760s he severed his connection with the Methodists and in March 1770 was ordained into the Anglican ministry and eventually became the Vicar of Harwich in Essex. Virtually nothing is known of Perrin's life after her marriage, outside of the framework of her husband's ministry. (Principal source: Gareth Lloyd, 'Sarah Perrin (1721–1787): Early Methodist Exhorter', *Methodist History* (Apr. 2003), 79–88.)

¹⁰⁴ Elizabeth Vigor (d. 1774). A close personal friend of the Wesleys and one of the earliest converts in Bristol, Vigor was a lady of means who provided hospitality to many of the preachers and left over £100 in bequests to the Wesley family upon her death in 1774. (Principal source: MARC: Methodist papers.)

to serve desires no other return for all his numberless mercies but to ask for more & which way shall I continue faithful but to look every moment for fresh supplies of grace to improve that already given: Dear Sr I shall be glad to see when it is our Lords will to send you unto us in ye fulness of ye gospel of peace I find greater ties both of love & duty to your brother and you than my natural parents after ye flesh O that I may always be obedient as unto ye Lord esteeming you very highly for your works sake giving all ye glory to God praying for you with all supplication your unworthy sister Susannah Designe

Remind me in your prayers

Mar 18 1742

Reference: EMV/501/52

Date: 28 October 1774

Document: Account of the death of John Downes¹⁰⁵

Correspondent: D. D. [member of the Downes family]

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Place: [London]

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“J. Down’s death October 28 ~~Nov~~ 1774”

From the Time that we began to spend our Evenings (which was about this time twelvemonth) in reading the Scriptures & prayer Mr Downes’s soul was greatly blesst, & ^{he} was soon shewn that he must preach ^{again}, which call of GOD with great thankfulness & deep ~~humili~~–humiliation he obeyed, & always testified he had the approbation of GOD in a particular manner every time he preached, & the uncommon power ~~with~~ which attended it many (not to say most) of the hearers can testify; from the time he began to preach his ^{soul} grew amazingly in the knowledge & love of GOD & of our Lord Jesus Xt, the exeeding great change GOD had wrought in his Spirit was manifest to all who conversed with him; the Days he preached were always ^{days} of close medita[tion] & prayer, as well as of deep Communion with GOD, & yet ^{he} always ~~accom~~ went to preach ~~with~~ much bowed down, & in great fear, ^{tho’} mixt with

¹⁰⁵ John Downes (c.1722–74). Born, possibly in Horsley, Northumberland. Very little information survives concerning Downes’s life before the age of 21, when he is listed as a member of the Methodist Society at Horsley in Northumberland. He began to preach with the encouragement of Grace Murray and joined the itinerancy soon after. In 1744 he accompanied Wesley and John Nelson on a tour of Cornwall and later that year was press-ganged into the army but was eventually released. Also in 1744, he was one of the four lay preachers who attended the first Conference. Regarded by John Wesley as one of the most outstanding men of his generation, Downes was highly gifted in mathematics, mechanics, and the arts. After his health failed, Downes left the itinerancy in 1751 to take charge of Wesley’s printing operations. He continued to preach in London chapels, and it was while he was in the pulpit of the West Street Chapel that he collapsed and died. (Principal sources: Harmon; Lenton; Lewis.)

much trust in GOD that He wd be with him; ~~but this time he said he~~ insomuch that ^{^he} used to say ~~that~~ he believed the Martyrs did not suffer ^{^more} when going to the stake than he did when going to preach; (& yet his heart delighted in it,) but this last Day he said he was entirely delivered from all that fear, & suffering, ~~¶~~ says he “I go to Day triumphing into the pulpit, I find the Lord so with me, that I cant doubt of a blessing, I ~~find him so approving~~ ^{He} tells me He so approves of my going, tho’ says he if I was to consider my illness & weakness I should not venture out to Day but I will try to speak to them”, he mentioned one thing as remarkable, that he had such a particular Communion with the Holy Spirit ^{^all Day} as he never had experienced before, & that all his Petitions were adressed to the Holy Ghost /&

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therefore ^{^he} expected some extraordinary blessing, ever since he began to preach again he said he found the West Street¹⁰⁶ people particularly laid upon his heart, & used to wrestle ~~with~~ in prayer ^{^with many tears} for them as for his own soul, & I have often heard him say that if it would be a blessing to their Souls he would be glad to die in the Pulpit before them, if it wd be a means to perswade them to lay aside all hindrances & give themselves up to GOD to be wholly His, & often expressed his soul grieved that we were not as ^{^a} people in closer communion with GOD & more dead to the world & often desired if the Lord wd give him strength to assist Mr Wesley in this great work now in yr old age, I think says he the Lord wd give me to be faithful to Mr Wesley & not seek my own things, but the things of Jesus Xt, & to serve with him as a son, he has long says he been wanting [?these] people to live to GOD, but he wants help, & I wd be glad to assist him & strengthen his hands.

For some Months past his soul has been taken into an exeeding Close communion with GOD, for he said he formerly he used to find his mind apt to wander from GOD, & that it was a labour to ~~to~~ keep it to GOD, but that of late he found it [^]was become as it were natural to him to rest in GOD, & that when his attention at any time by

106 London – West Street chapel (also referred to as Seven Dials): 24 West Street, Seven Dials (English Heritage Building ID: 478551)

Built as a French Protestant Church in about 1700 by John Ardowin. The congregation moved elsewhere in 1742 and in the following year, John Wesley signed an agreement to lease the premises, probably through the good will of the rector of St Clement Danes, Thomas Blackwell. Wesley preached there for the first time on 29 May 1743 and it quickly became one of the most important Methodist meeting places in London. It had particular significance as a centre for the celebration of the sacraments, because of its status as a consecrated building.

West Street was superseded by Great Queen Chapel in 1798 and the Methodists gave up the lease. It later served as St Giles (All Saints) Mission Church. The building still stands, although it is now commercial premises. It is grade 2 listed as a building of historical/architectural significance

Principal source: Sugden; listed building description

(<http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-478551-24-west-street-greater-london-authority>) and *Survey of London: St Giles-in-the-Fields, volume 5, pt II*. ed. W.

Edward Riley and Sir Laurence Gomme (1914) (<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=74291>)

business &c was diverted, yet as soon as that was over his Soul naturally returned to GOD, he mentioned his experiencing in a particular manner the first verse of the 125th Psalm, ^{^& remarked} it does not mention an exemption from Storms &c, but as being so fixt on GOD as to stand firm, O says he what will that Religion avail, that when trials &c come does not keep the soul in peace & power to abide it, O how did his

[page break]

Spirit mourn over formal profession, that had Xt & the power of Religion to seek when they most want it & thereby dishonoured instead of [bring^s] Glory to the Lord Jesus, he often said he was ashamed that his preaching formerly was ~~not~~ too doctrinal, & not simple enough, & that he did not enough lead the people to Xt, to perform in them what he had purchased for them (but all his latter Sermons tended to that) ~~for~~ in the course of the 2 or 3 months last of his Life, he often expressed that he found his Soul now just right for he saw every thing in GOD; that he expected nothing nor desired ^{^anything} ~~nothing~~ from any Creature, or thing but what GOD would have them to be to him, & therefore says he I now find Rest, he dwelt often upon the word Rest, & perhaps [twas] that made him choose the 28 & 29 v of the 11 of Mathew for his text that night he went to Glory, his last words in his sermon, when speaking of that, Rest Xt promised were ~~that the only way to enter into that rest Xt there mentions was~~ that by following his example, & treading in all his steps, as set forth in his precepts in the scriptures, we should enter into that Rest, & that there was no other way to obtain unto it, he then stopt, - sang a verse or 2 of that Hymn

“Father I lift mine eyes to Thee endeavoured to pray, & died to seal the truth of his doctrine.”

~~Follow after he cries as he mounts~~

“Follow after he cries as he mounts to the skies

Follow after your Friend to the blissful enjoyments that never shall end”
May I, may all follow him as he followed Xt Amen, Lord Jesus Amen.

D D

Reference: EMV/501/53

Date: 13 April 1742

Correspondent: Elizabeth Downes

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Elis Downs ~~Janu~~ April 1742 Exp. Justified in the Sacramt of the Dissenters”

April the 13th 1742

Sr

When your Brother Came to Bristole first i had not Experienced any thing of the work of God in my soul though i was a Constant hearer of the word and as duly Communicated as for Mr Whitfield¹⁰⁷ i never heard him above twice and that was [before?] he was Going to Georgia the first of my hearing your Brother was in the Bowling Green upon the pharisee and publican from the Expounding upon the different states i perceived my Case was dangerous and began to be very thoughtfull and Restless yt i did never think my self safe before but fear'd i sh'd be Lost i had still some what within me told me i was not right i still strove to help my self by my works that afforded me no peace i knew if i died as i was i sh'd be dam'nd but had a hope God wd forgive me when i came to die yt perfectly ignorant of any inward feeling in my soul not so much as the drawings of the Father to distinguish itt some time after i heard yr brother being one morning att private prayer i felt my self so drawn to Christ i thought i was thrusting my head into his wounds in his side after that i often felt those Drawings ~~after~~ and began to think itt was not so hard to Gett to heaven as some did imagine i often said Mr Wesly teaches us an Easy way to Gett there he says tis but to believe and heavens yours Glory be to God for his Grace but att that time i was not Convinced of one spark of unbelief soon after this the Lord showed me i was an unbeliever yt i thought before nothing Could be Easier then to believe but itt causes me now to shut my mouth against any any one that is not Convinced of itt knowing itt is by the mighty power of God then i found the spirit of God begin to move and work in my soul i was very restless and deeply convinced i was in a Lost state yt constantly directed to apply to the Blood of Christ i knew not what course to take but was filled wth Horror and Dread since there was but a poor Breath that separated me from Hell i went to yu and told yu my case you bid me Look to Christ i said i could not because i had Crucified him afresh yu asked me how long i had been convinced of that i told yu under your brother's ministry i asked yu if there was any hope for me yu told me yu could give me none then i thought my case was worse than before and was Exceedingly troubled yu bid me Look to Christ there was my hope i Continued in Great distress for several weeks att Last i went to Sister Rawlins and told her my condition she said i had frequent offers of Grace but could not believe itt was for me she said i would not Lett God work wth me but keep him out of my soul through my unbelief one of the Society came to me wth Great joy telling what the Lord had done for her i was struck with amazement and concluded that God was a Respector of persons and did think i was reprobated and was for three days in a miserable condition and [...] i often wished i had never been born i could been Glad to quit my self of the world but i so dreaded the torments of Hell the Sunday following i went to meeting Mr [Daper] was to deliver the sacrament he took his text out of the Revelations and i be held and lo in the throne and of the Four Beasts and in the midst of the Elders stood a Lamb as itt had been slain his Discourse upon that subject was very affecting yt itt did not touch me i was troubled att the Hardness of my heart and thought there was no help for me i continued in that Dead stupid condition till sermon was Ended i began to think i am dead and cold and have neither Life nor power if the Lord pleases he can remove this in a moment and if itt Be the will of God i shall be thus his will be done then i said Lord thou art not confined nor Limited to the narrow comprehension of my understanding thou workest when and where and how thou pleasest i beg thou wilt give me a Resignation to thy

[page break]

¹⁰⁷ George Whitefield

will and Deal with me as seemeth thee Good i felt a Great Calmness in my spirit then Mr Diaper said now Look up and behold yur Saviour see him pouring out his Blood for yur sakes my heart was touched in a moment the Lord Revealed himself to me in his crucifixion Evidently by faith i saw him wth his Blood running from his wounds in Branches Down his arm his body in Great paleness and his mouth as Gasping his Last Breath i felt i recd a quickning power and the Benefit of his Blood aplied to my Soul that moment after sacrament was Ended Mr Diaper Gave out the hymn and att mentioning the Cross particular i felt as itt were a change as i thought in ward and out ward my heart fluttered as though itt w.d have tore out of my body i seemed as though i had been convulsed my mouth was filled wth prayer and praise as fast as i could utter from thence i believed i was justified yt i had a continual witness i should have a Clearer Evidence but rested very much upon what i had recd and was very much Lifted up but itt pleased the Lord to suffer me to fall into Great Doubts and i felt my heart turn to the same centre then i dreaded i was falling asleep again i was so Dead to Every spiritual work soon after itt pleased God to send Mr John Wesly amongst us again from London wch was the ninth week after i Received as i do since believe the Earnest of my justification the Friday i went to intercession the Lord Gave me Great power of importunity but soon fell again into Great heaviness i went att Evening to Expounding and soon after Mr John Wesly began i felt my my heart lift as though an hand Graspt itt the Greater he was in power the stronger i felt my pain att Last itt Extorted strong Groans from me i was not able to sitt but Laid my self on the floor the Excessive pain and workings of my heart made me think itt was Death pangs yt att that time i found no terror of Death but seemed to be so far resined that i could say itt is the Lord Lett him do what seemeth him Good but as soon as [...] [...] had done i found i was some what released but itt Left a Great soreness in my heart the Sunday morning following Mr Wesly was showing the marks of justification i found i came short of itt and could not say by the witness of Gods spirit my sins was forgiven but i Remembered i had heard Mr Cynick¹⁰⁸ say a person might be forgiven when they felt

¹⁰⁸ John Cennick (1718-55): Born in Reading, Berkshire, into a Quaker family, Cennick was converted in 1737 and two years was invited to assist the Wesley brothers at Kingswood. In June 1739, Cennick preached as a layman without any complaint from John Wesley and can therefore be regarded as the first official Methodist lay preacher.

Cennick sided with Whitefield in the debate concerning predestination and in 1741 parted company with the Wesleys. Later that year he opened a Calvinist Tabernacle at Kingswood and traveled with the Welsh evangelist Howell Harris.

Cennick was an evangelist of outstanding ability, who preached widely across the south of England. In 1745 he joined the Moravians and offered them his associations of converts. Cennick visited Germany in December of the same year and was sent by Count Zinzendorf to Ireland where his ministry was to last five years – perhaps as many as 220 religious societies were formed there through his work. He was ordained into Moravian orders in 1749.

Cennick died in London following a period of poor health which was exacerbated by financial difficulties and disagreement with the Moravians.

the atoneing Blood though they could not boldly say itt i thought Either your Brother or he was wrong this i concluded was i to trust my salvation upon mans opinion i would sooner be Led by the minister than him one thing i observed i never found my heart to him as itt was to yu and yr Brother and i found in the End itt was the Great mercy of God itt was not otherwise i might been Led into those Errors as he is invincibly opiniated but by the power of God the [...] the word sank Deep into me that morning and Drove me at most to dispair i could have Dispatched my self but by the preventing Grace of God I wright to yur Brother and told him the distress i was in and sorely wounded i found there was no help for me but immediately to fly to Christ i Earnestly besought the Lord to Give me some token for Good in Great anguish of spirit i cryed to the almighty he answered from his Holy Habitation therefore i can say God Deals familiarly wth man while i was in prayer i Laid the Bible before me and the Lord directed me those words in Zachariah turn to thy strong hold ye prisoners of hope Even to Day do i declare that i will Render Double unto thee al Glory be to God Even as he promised so was itt done unto me yt not withstanding i Received Doubtful and thought itt was to Great for me to Receive but not to Great for God to Give i resolved in the morning to Carry the cobby of what i had wright to yr Brother that yu might see itt yu was att that time recovering of the fever yr brother [...] sett out for London so that i had not the opportunity of seeing him but my purpose of Going to yu was immediately stopt by those words strongly aplied to me put not thy trust in an arm of flesh trust thou in the Living God i answered Lord i will from that moment the intent of going to yu was taken away

[page break]

in the morning i meat the Band being then upon tryal i found a more than usual desire to pray as soon as i began i was Led to plead the Benefitt of Christs Death and sufferings i felt the power of God in such a manner as i cannot Express i was filled wth joy and Love wonder and amazement that the Lord should reveal him self in such a distinct manner as i thought then few had seen or felt the Like as St John describe him so did i clearly behold him wth the Eye of faith wth his garment as white as snow and a Glittering belt about his paps that my soal was filled with decent raptures Sr itt was no formed imagination i know the father did wth Love reveal his son to me yt he communicated the influence of his Love to me by the power of faith but for the time i was in a strong sense of my justification and very Clear wch was about fourteen Days and the continual sight of him as Described before the Lord to Give me a full assurance of pardon aplied those words to me i have blotted out thy transgressions i have Redeemed thy soul this is the way walk thou in itt and continually strong promises which i was in this Comfort wch i never could receive before but after i went home from the Band the morning i Recd forgiveness i satt Down to think what the Lord was about to do wth me i never had felt the Like before i felt some what pouring over my heart i cannot describe what itt was Like particular but itt was as an odour that perfumes i felt that Every sinew and joynt was Effected itt ran through the very marrow of my Bones and sink me as itt were into nothing that i was ready to Cry out several times in a Day Lord i cannot Contain itt att Last i felt the overflowing of

In addition to publishing his sermons, Cennick also wrote many hymns and published one of the first hymn-books of the revival, *Sacred Hymns for the Children of God* (1741). (Principal source *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*, edited by Donald Lewis (1995) and *Dictionary of National Biography*)

the Love of God so in my heart that nature began to sink and i said to sister nichols i believe i shall be forced to take to my bed she said the Lord will inlarge yur Capacity he knows yu are but an Earthen vessel i often felt such shootings within that my soul wd seem to be all of a quiver ready for the wings to soar to Christ i write to yur brother to London to Lett him know the Lord had answered his Last petition for me and Given me the Benefitt of his Blessing [when] he Left us the Wednesday following about noon i was in private prayer i was immediately Caught as itt were out of the body jesus held out his Left hand wth a Crown Exceeding bright i cannot tell yu what i felt in my soul att that time but i beheld itt wth Great amazement and about the space of two or three minutes after he held out his right hand wth the Length of half a sheet of paper white and Clear i Looked Earnestly but Could not perceiv any wrighting as to the mentioning this itt consisteth not but upon your desireing me to be perticular i find by daily Experience neither sights nor Gifts availeth to make the Christian Complete till Christ be formed in me i do not remember the Loseing the sense of my justification any otherwise then by this while one was reading Mr Swards¹⁰⁹ journal i sate by and found immediately i was disafected to the author then i felt instantly i had Lost that sweet peace wch before i enjoyed but att that time i did not fall into any Doubt which was Sunday Evening till Wednesday following then this Devil came upon me Like a roaring Lyon telling me twas all Delusion what i had recd and i had deceived my soal then i began to reason wth him how can this be nature could not work this in me i Surely have had a foretaste of heaven and that thou could not Give me i found my adversary to strong for me i saw there was no other help for me but to fly to Christ and Lay hold of him i strongly importuned him in prayer the strength of the temptation was Defeated for a season yt i soon fell in to Great Doubts and Continued for several weeks till yur Brothers return from London the morning he took his journey for London again Mr nowers¹¹⁰ read in the Desk while he was in prayer i

¹⁰⁹ William Seward (1703-1742): Born at Badsey, Gloucestershire, the fifth of seven sons of John Seward, the estate steward of Lord Windsor. As a young man, Seward moved to London and embarked on a career as a stockbroker. During his time in the capital, he was an enthusiastic promoter of charity schools.

In 1738 Seward was introduced to Charles Wesley and in November of that year, Charles recorded in his journal the fact of his friend's conversion. In January 1739 he attended a conference of Oxford Methodists and came increasingly under the influence of George Whitefield. Seward joined Whitefield on his American tour of August 1739 and was a generous financial sponsor of the mission.

In April 1740 he returned to England to transact some business on Whitefield's behalf. He published his journal of the visit to North America and this increased the tension that was developing between the party that looked to Whitefield for leadership and people who were gathering around the Wesleys. Seward travelled to Wales with the preacher Howell Harris and in October 1740 received a fatal injury at the hands of an anti-Methodist mob while attempting to preach at Hay in Breconshire. (Principal source: *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860*, edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995))

¹¹⁰ Edward Nowers (fl. 1740-1745): Member of a Moravian church at Herrnhag but joined with the Wesleys after moving to London in 1740. He was closely associated with the brothers in the early days of the Methodist movement and is referred to several times in their personal papers.

felt first a Great burning in my heart and immediately my soul was filled with the Love of God and sweet peace and those words aplied to me again i have blotted out thy transgressions i said Lord if itt be thy voice i beseech thee Give me a farther testimony and itt came again thou shalt not die in thy sins from thence to the monday Eight Days i enjoyed Great peace and comfort in my soul that Evening i went to meet my band but i found there was none Likely to meet but the Leader and my self i directly went home but had not been many minutes in the house before i fell into discourse wth one that Lived in house wth me of a matter that concerned me not but to Rob me of my peace i withdrew my self instantly for i perceived the Lord was Departed from me then i was ashamed and

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confounded i thought i dared not to ask one petition more of the Lord i had so often forfeited my pardon and made Breach upon Breach i had often made strong resolutions when i Lost the first sense of pardon if the Lord would but once more try me again wth his Love i would walk so circumspect and have such care over all my thoughts words and actions that i would not Grieve his holy spirit again but i made those promises in my own strength i know the Lord would have Enabled me to perform this and more if i had been faithful to the Grace Given me after this my causing the Lord to wth draw himself from me by unnecessary talking i fell into Great Darkness and continued so for [...] till as near as i can remember but Last ash wednesday was twelve month Mr Humphrys¹¹¹ preached att the Room in the horse fair¹¹² he Expounded on the seventeenth of saint Johns Gospel i believe then he had the power of God and the spirit wth him i felt the aplication of itt to my soul when he Expressed those words jesus is praying yu up to the father i said Lord wilt thou Give me an inheritance in thy Kingdom itt was aplied to me again thou shalt have all inheritance in my Kingdom my soul seemed as though twas taken into another region itt Lasted but a few moments i cannot be particular but i think itt was that time only i received power under Mr Humphreys to receive any promise by faith i mean under his preaching but as soon as yu returned from London i found yu came not alone i Know of a truth the Lord was wth yu i felt the Gospel reach my heart Continually Great workings and strong struglings for many months Even to this Day frequently under such a Deep sense of the Love of jesus to me though such a Deep revolter and Great Back slider that i stand amazed att the Boundless mercy and Long suffering God the Lord shows me more that Every Breath i Draw Loudly Calls for praise i am not in [...] Hell i do very often stand astonished and wonder i had not been there Long ago the Lord hath brought to my memory [...] not very fresh Great Deliverances he wrought for me above twenty years ago as i thought then was of Chance but the Lord shows me he have watched over me for Good from my youth up until now yet i feel in

In November 1742 Nowers was listed among the married men in the bands for those 'on trial' at the Foundery and by 1745 he was a member of the regular bands there together with his wife Margaret. (Principal source: *The Works of John Wesley (Letters 1740-55)* (Oxford: OUP, 1982), edited by Frank Baker).

¹¹¹ Joseph Humphreys (b.1720) was born in Burford, Oxfordshire. He entered the Wesleyan itinerancy in 1739 and laboured for two years before withdrawing from the work (John Lenton's list of Wesley's preachers, GCAH website)

¹¹² New Room Bristol

me a spirit of ungratitude i want to be more thankfull i feel a continual desire of being sett free that my whole Life might be spent in praise i seldom come under the Gospel delivered by yr mouth but in an Especial manner i feel the workings of my heart Longings reaching panting after jesus that sometimes i have faith as i think to be healed att such my soul will be inflamed with Love to Christ but when i feel my heart cold and hard i fall into Great heaviness and am ready to think i deceive my self and am presumptuous because i cannot doubt of a Deliverance this i find the Lord hath so far wrought in me i am contented [...] pleasure for [...] accomplish [...] i have Endeavoured to write what may be necessary though i have been [...] tempted not to write but i Know i believe and feel by the Continual witness of Gods spirit yu are the true ministers of the Everlasting Gospel and God forbids me to disobey yu i do desire to praise God wth the uttmmost sincerity for his Great mercy in sending yu amongst us far be itt from me that i should do any thing to Grieve yu this i Know is of the Lord also my heart have been often Grieved att our ungratitude to yu when we have such continual manifestation of yr Love and faithfullness witnessed by the Daily Care and pains and trouble yu Go through for our sakes yur sufferings are Great but yur reward shall be Greater sir i beg yu will hold me in Continual remembrance and bear me upon yr heart before the Lord pray for me that the Lord may direct me in my prayers what petitions to ask for yu as my faithful pastor and shepherd that am a prisoner of hope

Elizth Downs

Reference: EMV/501/54

Date: 11 April 1773

Correspondent: [Isaac Duckworth]

Addressee: [Charles Wesley]

Location: Hanging Heaton, near Batley, Yorkshire

Hanging heaton Jan:31 1779

Sir:

Whereas you desire^d to know y^e peticulars of the Case of Eliz: Hurst I being her husbands Brother & Class Leader & he present while I am writing I shall give you as Breif an account as I can.

In y^e year 1761 it pleased God to Convince her of Sin. She [closed?] in with y^e Conviction & Joine.^d y^e Methodist Society & soon after found the Lord: & She walk.^d orderly & Kept Close to God in private prayer & had Sweet Communion with y^e Lord for about 10 year & not often either Cloud or doubt. But she begun allmost to idelise her Children I Reprove.^d her for it severall times - - for one year she was Harris,^d with Doubts & fears - & on y^e 31 of August 1772 She went with her husband to our publick meeting, when they Got home my Brother Said we have had a very Good meeting tonight – She answer.^d “to you and Some more it hath been So but there is no Good for me” – then her husband went to prayer with her & when he had done She began to pray but soon Stopt & Cry.^d out “alas alas I cannot pray her husband pray^d for her again, but she Continued 5 days as one in Dispair.

September ye 5 her husband being tire.^d with hard work after prayer went to Bed - she Brought ye young Child to him _ & soon fetch.^d it back he fell asleep & when he wake.^d found neither Wife nor Child, but geting up he found her on another bed in her Cloaths. when he could get her to speak she said “after you fell asleep I was in Great distress & Cry^d to ye Lord for mercy” She Said on a sudding She thought She heard a Great noise under y^e parler Window and on a Suding found herself Carried away to ye Borders of hell & Begun to Sink into ye pit among ye Damn^d were She Saw thousands in Torment & there She was Reprove.^d for ye same things my Bro: had Reprove.^d her for – that was Seting her affecttions more on her Children than on y^e Lord - & thought She Sunk deeper & deeper & ye flames were more & more feirse, in this Distress the Lord Jesus appear^d as from behind a Curtain & said to her _ Give me thy Children and I will help thee out of this place. She Reply;^d “Lord all but my Sucking Babe” – then ye Lord Withdrew from her & She Sunk deeper still ___ Soon after he appear.^d again then She said “Lord take y^m all for thine they are” he Still hid his face for a few moments then took her by ye hand & brought her out – as she was coming out She Saw an Neighbour Come tumbling into hell as It were neck & heels together & according to appearance

[page break]

he died at that very time he went to bed drunk & was found dead in the morning in ye very posture in w^h She had Seen him Come tumblind into hell.

When She was Brought into heaven the first ~~thing~~ person she saw was my late Wife her Sister in Law who died happy about ten Month before. The next that she knew was Paul Greenwood¹¹³ - & She Said his face Shone Like a Beam of ye Sun. & She Saw Severall of our preachers in Glory as well as ye people but did not Name them. She Saw Likewise the Manton of Mary get alive – She Desire.^d to see M^r John Wesleys place but was not permitted, she thought it was for fear ye people Sh.^d [Idolise] him. but She was Shew^d ye place of John Nelson¹¹⁴ & She thought it was as high a place as any She Saw among all ye Glorified in y^e Regions of Bliss – So we fear he hath not Long to help us on in our way theither.

¹¹³ Paul Greenwood (1723–67), who was born near Keighley, Yorkshire, and associated with Jonathan Maskew in the important Haworth circuit during the 1740s, Greenwood entered the itinerancy in 1747. He spent a year in Dublin in 1752 before returning to England, where he itinerated mainly in the north. Greenwood died in Manchester. (Principal sources: MARC; John Lenton’s list of Wesley’s preachers, GCAH website)

¹¹⁴ John Nelson (1707–74). Born in Birstall, Yorkshire, Nelson was converted in 1739 while working as a stonemason in London. The next year Nelson returned to Yorkshire and commenced preaching tours which introduced Methodism to much of his native county and adjoining areas. In 1742 he was appointed by Wesley to the regular itinerancy and exercised a highly successful ministry in many parts of the north of England and the Midlands. His experiences were used by the Wesleys in their preaching and publications and helped to establish Nelson as one of the best known of the lay-preachers. (Principal sources: Lewis; John Lenton’s list of Wesley’s preachers, GCAH website)

She beg.^d of the Lord to Let her Stay there but he Said not so thou must Go back for a few days & this shall be thy place.

This was on September 5 & She took her bed the next night and died ye Eleventh. the day after she had Seen these things She was very happy and in perfect peace. I went to see her that night myself & I said Sister do you Love the Lord Jesus Christ? She said "Yes Verily I do"

This Sir is as simple Narritife as I can Give Both from my Brother Joseph Hirst her husband & myself John Hurst that owns myself as a Son in the Gospel.
N B. with Regard to what She Saw in that Vision she confirm'd y^e whole to her death.

Reference: EMV/501/54a

Date: Easter Sunday 1773 (11 April)

Correspondent: Isaac Duckworth

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To the Revd Mr Charles Wesley at the Foundrey, Upper Morefields, London"

Location: Bradford

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"Isaac April 11 1773. Triumphant deaths. Vision !"

Note: Postmark: Bradford 15 April

Revd & Dear Sir

Bradford Easter Sunday 1773

I am still willing to lett you know that am in the land of the living & Thanks be to God I feel my soul is alive To him. Sir you are often in my mind & could & doth often wish to see you but this must be when the Lord will but lett not our love to each other grow less but oh may our love To god increase then doubtless we shall love ~~another~~ another my brs [brothers] and Sister joyes with me in dute & love to you my eldest br has been much afflicted this winter by an Impost in his Head which broke inwoodly & discharged itself at his Left ear but he is better while he was bad the whole cair of our bisness
& family
lay upon me
but he is much

Recovered again I hope you do not forget me Indeed I do not nor I cannot forget you & work seems to prosper much in those parts & a great many added to our Sociaty this year in Bradford Searkit [circuit] & a great many is gone to glory Br otley one of our preachers has two funerals to preach this ~~day~~ day at Bradford one for Sarah Tettley aged 15 years The other Mary Garnet aged 19 years They both dyed very happy oh that my last end may be like theirs and none sin please to Lett me have a line from you soon. Please to give my Dute & love to Mrs Wesley to master C¹¹⁵ to

¹¹⁵ Charles Wesley junior (1757-1834)

miss S¹¹⁶ & & to all friends and now Sir may peace peace peace be with you for ever
amen & amen This from your unworthy but loving Son & Servant

Isaac Duckworth

PS

The remainder of this is an account of Elisbath Hurst who lived and dyed near Birstol¹¹⁷
Mrs Bosanquit¹¹⁸ joyns with me in dute & love to you & would be glad to have a line
from you So no more at present but love fair well in the Lord

Reference: EMV/501/55

Date: 4 September 1739

Correspondent: John Edmonds

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Charles Westley at Mr Granvil's, a grocer in Vine Street,
Bristoll"

Locations: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Edmonds Sept 4"
2. "Sept 4 1739. J. Edmonds in his first love"

London Sept 4: 1739

Revd Sir,

My Dear Bro in Xt. The Love I now feel In My Heart for you move me to take pen In
Hand O may our Hearts burne with this Fire & yt Continually Amen. My Dr Bro what
shall I tell you. But wht My LORD hath Done for my soull. Before you left us & soon
till almost this time Nay for 2 months Hath my Soull walkt in thick Clouds &
Darkness But My feet hath My Lord taken out of ye Deep Waters. O my Dr friend we
must follow our Dear LORD & Master who was crucified in Weakness But rais 'd in

¹¹⁶ Sarah Wesley junior (1759-1828)

¹¹⁷ Birstal near Leeds

¹¹⁸ Mary Bosanquet-Fletcher (1739-1815) was born into a wealthy Essex family and was converted at an early age. After opposition by her family to her religious leanings, she moved to London and became actively involved with the Methodists. In 1762 she returned to her hometown of Leytonstone to found and manage an orphanage cum Christian community with Sarah Ryan. It was also at about this time that she began to exhort and expound the scriptures. The community moved to Yorkshire in 1768 and Bosanquet, after consulting with John Wesley, began to preach, one of the the first Methodist women to do so. In 1781 she married the Anglican Evangelical John Fletcher and moved to her husband's parish of Madeley in Shropshire. They pursued a virtually joint ministry until Fletcher's death in 1785. Bosanquet continued to run the Methodist society in Madeley until her own death, the only woman in early British Methodism to exercise such oversight. Source: *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860*, edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995), *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974), *Holy Women* by Zachariah Taft (1825) and Fletcher-Tooth collection (MARC)

power. It is HE. it is HE. wth His own Right Hand & Holy Arme yt Giveth ye Victory. HE hath put a New Song in my Mouth Even a Thanksgiving Unto Our God. Sing now to Our GOD above praise Eternall as His Love. Now my Dr Bro the tryals ye temptations I underwent where Many & very Great ones But The LORD Jehovah is Our everlasting Strength. Now many of our Dr Bros are I find Under Some of ye trials I through my LORD got ye Victory over. I was tempted to Slight ye Church ye means of Grace & Such Like temtations beset me much. Nay So Strong the Convictions yt My LORD would teach me Himself. yt All ye Arguments ye Reasons My Brothers Used were so frivilious & Vain to me yt I Slighted them much. Now I Observe I was carred on by Degrees for a Long while All publick Worship was Deadness pain & Uneasy Now had I Given way as being in Much dout so either it was ye Dictator of my Enimiey as of ye [impressions] of ye Spirit of GOD. I say had I given way to this temtation & not have Hung to my LORD a Blind & Weak Ignorant & Helpless wch Conditions movd His Gracious Compassions. I find it would have been a false Joy yt would have Desired me, for when I gave way to & Reasond wth ye temtation I could percieve joy to arise. this false Joy deceiveth I fear many. O pray pray for Us for ye Enimie Desireth to sift us as wheat. But I dout not we Shall be more than Conquerors through our Suffering Conquering LORD. who loveth Us & Gave Himself for Us Now as I mention Love The Knowledge of wch None Hath. No nor ever know But ye Soull yt Is first Born of Love. The Naturall Man The pharisey The Logisist those those have not tasted nor found out this Christ of ten thousand The predestinarion Beholdeth not ye full Glory & Extencision of it who ascribe and attribute/His Infinite Knowledge/ but Rob Our Glorious and Gracious & Mirscifull & Loving & Just LORD. of wt He most delighteth In. Even His Mircis & Extencive Love. O my Dr friend ye Subject of predestination Doth my Soull Abhor. Was we to Ask our Dr LORD. Concerning it would not He give us this Answer wt is yt to he follow thou me ,Now wt fruit Doth it bring forth but Variance Strife Contention, & this Among ye Children of one LORD and King I Observe ye in writing as well as talking it Robs Us of Better things. O ye I could never never Hear it Mentiond more Amen. Is not ye Subject of Love more praise Worthy. Behold this as Extencive as Our Infinite Loving Dying Dear LORDs Arms on ye Cross Extended to Every Creature Man to All ye will come wth ye power Given /As our LORD macks His creatures/ I say to All ye will come to Jesus Xt yt they might have Life. O Let us Drink of this Fountain this Fountain of Love wch can never be Drawn Dry.Drink O my Dr friends Drink Abundantly.O my Dr friend Cry aloud till ye people you tell All ye peoples to come to come to this fountain of Our Dr Masters Blood Quickning Clensing Healing Life giving Blood. Freely poud flushing Out of Jesus for Every Creature. O my Friend proclam Abroad Glad tidings of Great Joy to All ye Cursed Race of Adam Speak of ye New World yt Grace will Make in their Hearts O may your Words be Mighty through ye power of Jesus Amen. Now my friend How can we Speak Good of Sufferings In Jesus. Many Excellent Things might be Spoken of Thee. It was by this Our Lord Learnt Obedience and if we will Raing wth Him we must also Suffer wth Him May we Look for no Other Way to Glory. Now my LORD Hath learnt me not to Look not to look¹¹⁹ at wt I feell of Love or Joy Humility or Weakness or any other Graces in my Soull But wt my LORD was made unto me of GOD, though I change yet Doth not He By this I experiently feel our Xt St Paull ment having nothing I profess all things for whom I am Cold & Dead He is my Life. Weakness my

¹¹⁹ The preceding repetition occurs at a line break. It was a common practice in the 18th century to repeat the last word of the preceding page on the next page

Strength. Darkness my Light poor my Riches. O The Lord is become the Strength of my Song & my Salvation O let our tal kings be of this Wondrous Work. Our Dr Dr Bro is now by ye Guidance & Blessing of God once more Among Us O may He prove a Great Blessing Unto Us Amen. His beginning was prosperous at our Womens love feast Our Lord wrought Wonders amongst us. The fire of Love was kindled amongst us. The Hard Rocks brought forth living stones of comfort. Our mouths was fild with laughter & our tongues with joys. His your Bro countenance was Most pleasant unto us. Our prayers was heard. This promise of our Master was fulfilled upon us. The light of His blessed countenance shone upon us. O sing praises sing praises To Our God. Sing praises sing praises unto our king Amen. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Dear Bro Charles I Love I Love you I esteem you Highly for your works Sake O May ye Spirit of your Master be plentifully pourd on You Amen May He teach you wisdom secreatly. O may your thoughts, words & works tend only to His Eternall Glory Amen. May you see of the travial of your labours and be satisfied. May your LORD work for ever prosper in your Hand Amen May you wax bold & Vailiant for your Dying Master. O may you Increase Stronger & Stronger in ye LORD. & in power of His Might tred Down All Opposition Amen. O may you Know your LORD[s] will & have power faithfully to fulfil the same may the Lord reveal ye [knowledge of himself] more & more to your Soul I may you be fild fild fild with Love & Cloathd wth Humility Amen Amen Amen

Bro faill not to pray pray for & If worthy saviour with a line or 2 Grace mircie peace Love & Joy Amen

From your poor poor weak Bl ind Sinfull
Bro in Xt In O Edmonds

Reference: EMV/501/56

Date: 23 December 1762

Correspondent: William Ellis

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“W. Ellis offended Dec 23”

Rev:nd and very Dear Sir

Dear indeed are the Ministers of the most high, who Like St. Paul guard not against Evils only but also against the very appearance thereof and with all his might against Errours creeping into the Church, and I believe yea I know that many will have reason to Bless God to all Eternity that he gave you to tread in the apostle steps for Errours indeed have Crept in among us and abound for as the People so are the Priests, and with a great Deal of truth the Cry in London might be where shall we go to hear a genuine Gosple Sermon, Oh that you would come to Town, and I pray God that he would answer many of his Peoples Prayers & bid you git up, indeed I should like to open my mind to you, but how can I without either Grieveing or offending you, Considering he who his near and Dear to you¹²⁰ is nearly Concerned indeed when I read the 15 of the first of Samuel & the 24 verse my heart ackes for him for I think I

¹²⁰ John Wesley

see his Picture, but his he the only one that God had a Controversy with for giving way to the Same Spirit, nay there was Eli also for not laying a Restraint upon his Sons, only telling them of their Sins upon, whose account the ark of God was took by the Philistines, at the news of which the anger of God was Displayed against Eli by Permitting him to fall and Brake his neck, Oh how Jealous is that God of Israel of his Honour with whome we have to Do, how strict then ought his ministers to be and to the End that they may Christ himself has left another Circumstance upon record which is to the angle of the Church of Thyatira in the 2d of the Revelations. Now indeed there is great Danger of being Carried away with Such a Spirit for there is a shew or the appearance of meekness, Long suffering, Patience, Forbearance, and thinking meanly of my self, Preferring another because he is wise and Can Command his own Spirit better than I, but wether it is thro Pretence of Seeming Graces or any excuse whatever God will not Leave those unpunished who Restrain not the sins of others, when in their Power, and more so if they Deceive or Suffer his People to be Deceived but if it is said God as Placed Mr John Wesley as head or Leader of this People therefore he knows best how to Guide them, and what to do better than any Can tell him, how, shall I Contradict this when they were my own words and thoughts not Long ago, but God has took my Idol from me, and now I am Constrained to Cry out all men is failable, yea Liable to fall in to gross Errors. So that the head Cannot Say to the foot I have no need of thee, so that saying God has made him Leader of the People is Just saying nothing at all, for God annointed Saul to be King but it Does not apper that Saul executed Gods Command, also God Required or Looked for Elli to Restrain the wickedness of his sons but he did not, tho he was a Prophet and for aught I know as wise and good a man as Mr Wesley, Likewise our Lord gives the Bishops of the Church of Thyatira a blessed Character as tuching many things, but threatens to Punish notwithstanding for not Removing Errors or Deceivers out of the Church,¹²¹ but is this all that Lays against Mr Wesley I wish it was but prehaps I have been to Plain already tho I Cannot tell how that can be if we Consider the Nature of the thing Especially if we see the Dreadful Effect it as I mean in those who call themselves Perfect, Even the very heads of them cannot bear a Civil Question to be asked without falling in a great Passion, Even to the Calling of horrid Nams, I have met with this treatment from them myself as well as many others, and on thursday last in my Band it was insisted upon they Could not say the Lord,s Prayer for themselves, Neither did they stand in need of the attoning Blood (oh what Socinianism is this) but it does not stop here, Last night I heard a worse account of one of there Principle ones, which was that he was Ill upon his Bed Cursing and Blasphemeing, I being willing to see and know for myself went this Day to his house and found it Even so, Oh my God lay to thy hand, stop the torrent of Errors, I Can add no more my grief and sorrow overcomes me. Pardon the abruptness of this, and throw a mantle of Love over all you may see amiss Considering it comes from one Greived in Spirit for the Cause of God and for the Souls of my Brethen. I am Revnd Sir
your sincer Friend and well wisher

Willm Ellis

it is through Mrs Butterfields

Informing me you would be Glad to hear from any of your friends in London made me take the Liberty if you are so oblidgeing as to favour me with a Line Please to Direct for me in Kings Gate Street, Holborn next Door to a Farrer

¹²¹ Clear reference to the controversy over Christian perfection that was causing deep division within the London Wesleyan society

Reference: EMV/501/57
Date: 17 December 1767
Correspondent: Miss L. Elliott
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Address: 'To the Rev. Mr Westley, Bristol'
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"Dec 17 1767. Miss Elliot happy deaths"

Dec^{br} 17/1767

Rev^d & Dear S^r

I am exceedingly obligd, for the favour of your kind & agreable Inteligence concerning Dear M^{rs} Westley, I desire to thank God with you, for this Renwed Instance of Mercy, w^{ch} I hope will be continued to M^{rs} Westlyss perfect Recovery, & that the little New Born¹²² May be an additional Blessing to those God has before given You, May they all with our Selves, by Divine Grace be Heirs of Glory & then well were it for us that ever we were born, I thank God My Sister is perfectly Recoverd of Her Many Months Most painful Indisposition by the Medicine Blesd for y^e Restoring Her health & some Symptoms besides, we have reason to think Her disoredr was Inward piles to an Exceeding great degree, The Day was fix^d for Docter Hunters Attending Her in a most Disagreeable operation, When Providentially a person calld at our House that had been a Sufferer in y^e like case

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& had found Immeadiate Relief by taking the Lozenges, My Sister directly made trial of them, She found Ease the Next Day & in three Days was as perfectly free f^m that Disorder as She ever was in her Life, This happy change has continued ever since without the least return & its now a month since it took place. My poor Sister cant be Sufficently thankful, she says cd we know what She constantly Sufferd we must think Her cure almost miraculous, Ive been thus perticular & Enclose y^r Bill in case any of y^r Friends sh^d be afflicted in y^e like case, as I know you w^d have a pleasure in directing to a medicine for Ease, but in perticular I think of D^r M^{rs} Westley, as I beleive she has known somthing of y^e painful disorder.

¹²² Charles and Sally's son John James Wesley was born in December 1767 and died seven months later

I Bless God I found Renewed strength of Body & Mind at Margate,¹²³ but I was not without the Cross there, one Exercise was in the Loss of two valuable Friends, both taken off by the Smallpox. The first was a Dear Female Fr^d, I trust now a Saint in Glory, as she lived the Life & Dyed the Death of y^e Rightious, was Enabled under the Severest pain of Body, to Rejoyce in the Lord, & give

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Comfortable Testimony to those ab^t Her, of Her happy Intresst in Christ, She call,d her Self, a monument of Mercy & Free Grace, giveing all the Glory where it was due, The next Awful Dispensation of that sort was in M^r Perronets Family,¹²⁴ I suppose you have heard, that M^r John P Died [as] [...] at Margate of y^t Distemper so fatell amongst them, He Sufferd Eleven days, more pain of Body than can be Expressd. He was very desirous to die, if that was the will of God, but begd His Frnds wd only pray that the will of God might be perfected in Him, He gave a happy Testimony of His Sure & Certain hope in Jesus, & quietly breath^d His last whiles Joining in prayer wth a Christian ^{God} y^t was kneeling by his Bed, The Consolations y^t Abounded, towards His D^f Bro^r Charles¹²⁵ & Miss Perronet, were such as I never before saw on y^e like Ocation. God gave me strength to be assistant to Miss P in attending him to the last hour of his Life. It was in Mercy Made, an Awful profitable time to my soul, w^{ch} I hope & trust will be lasting, In my way fm Margate, I spent Some Days at Shoreham,¹²⁶ & I found the

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Hand of the Lord was not shortned there also, as the Good old Man¹²⁷ was supported in a manner y^t every day ocationed on Mee thankful amazement, it was moving to see some of y^e poor people of y^e place, in tears Lamenting their Loss of y^s valuable young

¹²³ Salt water bathing in the sea at Margate was a popular 18th century activity

¹²⁴ Family of the Anglican evangelical Vincent Perronet (1693-1785)

¹²⁵ Charles Perronet (1723–76). Born in Sundridge, Kent, son of the Anglican evangelical Vincent Perronet, Charles Perronet joined the Methodists in 1746 and accompanied Charles Wesley to Ireland in 1747. Perronet entered the itinerancy in 1751 but withdrew in 1754 because of his advocacy of separation from the Church of England. In later life, he was resident in Canterbury with his brother Edward. (Principal source: Lewis.)

¹²⁶ Residence of the Perronet family

¹²⁷ Vincent Perronet (1693-1785). Born in London, the son of a Swiss surgeon, Vincent Perronet received his BA from Queen's College, Oxford, and MA from Corpus Christi, Cambridge. He was ordained in 1719 and, after serving a curacy at Sundridge in Kent, was appointed Vicar of Shoreham in 1734.

Perronet was a close friend and advisor of the Wesley brothers. His influence as an elder statesman of the evangelical movement was such that he was sometimes referred to as the 'Archbishop of Methodism'. (Principal sources: *DNB*.)

man as I find He was not only to the greatest degree Dutiful & affectionat[e] to His worthy parent, & kind to all his Family, but also to all others within his Reach, My Brother & Sister desires to Join in affect best Respects to yrself & M^{rs} Westly may every Needful Blessing of time & the greatest Happiness of Eternity attend youꝛ & yours. I trust we shall have yr kind Remembrance in y^e best manner I am D^r S^r wth Most Grateful Respect & Esteem Much Y^{rs} L Elliott

Reference: EMV/501/58

Date: 6 April 1763

Document: Account of the death of Mr Evans

Addressee: [Charles Wesley]

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
“Evans bl[essed] death”

Mr. Evans lived till about the age of Seventy five – was a sincere Serv.^t of God from his youth. When he was about 12 years old the convincing Spirit of the Lord wrought very strong on him particularly on acc.^t of his breaking the Sabbath, & from that time he walk.^d in all the outward ordinances Blameless, seeking Salvation – as it were by the works of the Law.—

when he was about 60 years of Age X The better Hope was Darted into his Soul so that he had then a Clear sence of the remission of all his Sins & the Love of God shed abroad in his Heart & those words in particular were applied to his Soul ‘Thou hast kept the Good Wine untill now.’¹²⁸ He never after lost sight of Christ till he was call’d to his Glory.

He walk’d on constant & steady in true Simplicity of heart & uprightness in his Life & Conversation - & was particularly Exemplary in regard to keeping the Sabbath Day Holy & in searching the Scriptures. He bore his last Illness with extraordinary patience & resignation & yet longing to be dissolved & to be w.th Christ. The night before he Died when he found an alteration in himself, for Death, He said my Eye sight fails me, but I shall soon see Clearly. I am going to Join the General assembly & Church of the first born. Jesus Christ has been my Redeemer & preserver & now he is come to be my Deliverer, praise the Lord o’ my Soul & forget not all his Benefits, praise the Lord Jesus Christ my Saviour. praise Father, Son & Holy Ghost, for all Three persons are concern’d in my Salvation.

X When he heard the Gospel preach’d at Kingswood He was convinced that by the works of the Law he could not be Justified.

The Text he chose was 1.st peter. 2.^d Chap: ver: 21.^{st129} & desired his Funeral Sermon might be preach’d from, the words.

¹²⁸ John 2:10

¹²⁹ 1 Peter 2:21 “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps”

Reference: EMV/501/60

Date: 15 March 1777

Correspondent: Hester Farley

Document: Death of Sister Arthurs

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: 'C. Wesley Sen'r Foundery, near Moorfields, London'

Location: Kingswood

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"March 15 1777 H'r Farley of S[ister] Arthur's release"

Note: Postmarked "BRISTOL"

Kingswood March 15th. 1777

My dear friend Wesley

I am sorry to have occasion to date a Letter from this Place, but I am requested by the family to acquaint thee with the very unexpected Change that has been made in it within these few days _

Our dear & valuable friend Arthurs was last Wednesday morning seized with an Appoplexy and some symptoms of a Palsy on her right side, in which situation she continued 'till six o'clock this evening, when it pleased the Lord to receive her to Himself__ The nature of her Disorder will not allow me to give so clear an account of her as I wish, yet imperfect as it may be, I know it will be acceptable, shall therefore say something on that head The morning she was taken, her Husband & Son Charles were preparing to set off to attend a Trial at Gloucester, & wishing to take their leave of our friend, she was desired to rise; after waiting some time & not seeing her, Charles gave her a second Call, she answering him as one awaking from Sleep, he went to

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her Bedside, & perceiving her voice to be very low, apprehended she was Ill, and on his Fathers coming up they both shook her to endeavour to rouse her, w^{ch} she was not the least sensible of: Doctor Dromound (to whom she was partial) was immediately sent for, who gave it as his opinion that she was taken for Death, to the surprise & shock of all around her; her Daughters in-Law & myself (with several of her Neighbours) had the painful pleasure of attending her in her Illness thro' the whole of which she did not I believe endure a quarter of an hours pain, such was the Compassionate Love of God, to fulfill the request of her Soul, which always was, that she might not have a long & painful Illness. _ She appear'd to have some intervals of sense, and to be often in prayer; and when her Husband & Children where yesterday morning at her Bedside, she seem'd to know them all, tho' having lost her speech, could testify it only by smiling on them; to her Son Charles, when he shook

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hands with her, she imperfectly said “there go” and then lay quite Calm & Easy since then she has not known any one _ What her family and friends feel upon so awful an Event, can only be conceived by those who have experienced what it is to be seperated from them, to whom we are united by the tender ties of nature & affection .. the Visitation I believe is for good, & I hope will be made a lasting Blessing to all belonging to her; to me it has been a solemn & affecting season, I deeply feel it is a solemn th[...] ¹³⁰ & an awful [...] ¹³¹ [...] Die [...] ¹³²

Agreeable to her own desire, she is to be In[terred] at Marshfield; ¹³³ it was always her wish that her beloved friend Wesley should attend her Funeral, and her family would be glad could it be so, but the distance will not admit of it __ they unite in kind Respects, & beg to be remember’d at the Throne of Grace __ I heard from home today, my dear Mother & Brother are tolerable well, our very kind love attends thee, & each of our good frds in Chesterfield Street ... I remain in haste,

thy respectful & affectionate

Hester Farley

Reference: EMV/501/61

Date: 28 June 1745

Correspondent: Mary Francis

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: ‘To The Revd Mr Charles Wesley, Bristol’

Location: Kingswood

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Jun.1745. Francis of S[ister] Rogers’s death”

Revd Sir,
1745

Kingswood Jun th 28

The Most that St Rogers spok she spok to me Thearfore he Desird Me to Wright it She all the Time her Illness seemd Resind to The Will of GOD Exepting Wonce for a lettel season She was Tempted to Take it Hard that She Cold Not go to Hear The Word but as She grue Nearer her End She Was Resind in That allso, She was in a Grattile of Bodly pane but she Never Seemd the lest Inpatient but Crid out Lord give Me but Patience and lay wat thou Will upon Me When she Was in the Gratest Extremity of Pane She Wold say Well is it for me that My Pice is Made With GOD She Exorted every Won that Came to see her to be Inernest to Seek the Lord And Not put it of to a sick bed for What Shuld I do if Jesus was not my Lord but I no he is, She had no fear of Death all the Time of her Illness for She sad She Was as Shure of

¹³⁰ Damaged manuscript

¹³¹ Damaged manuscript

¹³² Damaged manuscript

¹³³ Gloucestershire

Heaven as if she was thear allrady tho she Nue the Work was not finest in Her Soul but She Belived He that had Promisd Wold allso Proformit before She Went Hence, for about a Fortnight before her Death She Sad Nothing Interrupted her Pece Night Nor Day but She Was In Continual Prayer unto the Lord and so She Continued

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Till She Died, the Day before her Death she sent for Me and Told Me her Departure Was at Hand I ast her if She Was Willing To Die and live her famely She Sad she was for she Committed Them into the Hands of the Lord Wome She Nue Wold Care for them She Sad dont ye Dubt if me if I cant speak Much before I Die for I no I Shall be Eternily Happy and be forever With Him Whome My Soul loveth, She Chose her Text the 23 Psalm and she Desired That her Funarall Sarmond Might Not be Precht till you Came For She Sad you Nue more of her then any won els, about Three a Clock the Next Morning she sent for me agane and She was then a Dieing I ast her if she had a full ashurance of her Happeness She Sad I have I No I shall be Happey forever, but I have not strenth To Speak her Hole Chri was Come LORD JESUS come quickly Sume Minnets before She Died She seemd to have a Strong Combat with the Deavel but She Turned her Self about like a Lamb and Cride Come Lord Jesus and so Departed, o May My End be like unto hers
O Sir Pray for me

Your Daugter in the Gospel
Mary Francis

Sir

I hear that Hanna Barrow at the Chapel hath Sent for you to Give her the Sakrement I Shu[d] glad to Speak With you furst

Reference: EMV/501/62

Date: September 1748

Document: "A short account of the death of Daniel Galvin, late of Dublin"

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: [Dublin]

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Sept[ember] 1748 Dan Galvil. Papist, happy death"
2. "Sept [shorthand] 1748. Death of Dan Galvil, Papist, once. Now a Saint in Glory"

A Short Account of the Death of Dan.¹ Galvin Late of Dublin

He was Born in and brought up, and educated in the principles of the Church of Rome. in the year 17 He was put prentice in Dublin to be a Cabinet Maker. He Liv'd as the Generallity of young people do, in pleasure and sensual Delights, not regarding the one thing needfull. thinking it sufficient if somtimes He attended the mass.

But about the latter end of last May or the Beginning of June He went to hear Mr Williams,¹³⁴ the seed fell on good ground He not only Heard but kept the word of GOD, it was to him as a Hammer which breaketh the Rock in pieces, He was presently awaken'd and felt himself a sinner which He no sooner did, than He left his sins and the Church of Rome together. He was a penitent indeed, and brought forth fruits meet for Repentance.

When He left the Church of Rome He join'd in Communion with the Church of England, and soon became a member of the society here.

from that time He was remarkably serious, and never wilfully lost any opportunity of hearing the word, meeting his Class, and attending the Church & sacram[ent]

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He warn'd all that came in his way, to flee from the wrath to come¹³⁵ and to seek the Lord while He might be found, but did not press on others what himself did not do, his reproofs were so reasonable, that all who were Acquainted him Blest GOD for him, and Deplor'd their Loss when He took him from them.

About the Beginning of September He Caught a violent Cold which introduc'd a spotted fever. Yet it did not hinder him from coming to the preaching three or four times, but it soon grew too hard for him and at last Confin'd him to his Bed

He express'd a very great desire to see me, but something or other hindered that I did not go for the space of 2 or 3 Days, in which time Brother Wasley (who was then in Town)¹³⁶ visited him. He found him very ill both in Body and soul. The spirit of a man may sustain his Infirmities but a wounded Spirit who can Bear?

Still He grew more and more uneasy to see me. I now went to see him and found him exceeding Bad, but tho' he was Delirous He knew me and was glad to see me. I spoke a Little to him and spent some in prayer with those about him, and then departed, but did not neglect to visit him frequently after tha[t] time.

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¹³⁴ Thomas Williams (1720–87 was from a respectable Welsh family and received a university education. He entered the itinerancy in 1741 and worked with John Wesley in Newcastle. Early in 1743, he was appointed by George Whitefield to be superintendent of his societies in parts of south Wales and attended the Conference of Calvinistic Methodists held later that year. The following year Williams re-joined the Wesleys and in 1747 became the first Wesleyan preacher appointed to the Irish work. His ministry was exercised between 1747 and 1752 and was attended by great success. Williams withdrew from the movement in 1752 and obtained Anglican Orders. (Principal source: Charles Henry Crookshank, *History of Methodism in Ireland* (Belfast and London): R. S. Allen, Son, 1885).)

¹³⁵ Matthew 3:7; Luke 3:7 and 1 Thessalonians 1:10

¹³⁶ Charles Wesley visited Dublin 13-16 August 1748 and did not return to the city until 27 September. This does not tie in Galvin's death (14 September), so the date of Wesley's visit to Galvin must be wrong (CWJ)

His Disorder had some Intervals, at which times He Labour'd hard to enter in at the strait gate, particularly on the Sunday before He Died. He then seem'd Confident that the Lord wou'd visit him with his salvation and said to one that was with him he wou'd not take ten thousand [wounds?] for that Confidence. and added "if I had a thousand Lives they shou'd all go for Christ", and again "if Christ wou'd but reveal himself to me I shou'd not Care how long I lay on this Bed "where is the Physician of souls, "where is the Blood of sprinkling: "oh that thou wou'dst look upon me as thou didst upon the thief on the Cross. speaking of the Blood of Christ, He sd "that Blood is warmer than all the Blood in the world. and turning to them in the Room He sd Don't be afraid my Brethren Xt will Come He hath sd look unto me and be ye saved I know I shall see the Lord before I go hence to Be no more seen on the Morrow Morning he was sensible again and Continued so till about 3 or 4 o Clock. He was now Quite Impatient to see me, and no marvel for Glory be to his name who sends by whom He will send, GOD Design'd me to be the welcome Messenger, tho [neither?] of us knew it. one of our Brothers who Liv'd in the same House Came out to Call me, but I was on my way thither

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before He set out.

When I came in I found him past hopes of Recovering, but Earnestly wrestling with God for the Blessing for still he was without the knowledge of salvation which is given by the forgiveness of sins I spoke a few words to him and then went to prayer, I soon felt that GOD was there. My own Heart was Broken as was most of theirs who were then present. I found access to the throne of Grace, and beg'd the Mediator to Remember his own agony and Bloody sweat and by his Cross and passion to Deliver his Servant who was appointed to Die.

I rose up and began to speak of the sutablness of Christ to save them that are ready to perish and of his willingness to do it, but I had not spoke long before the Lord came suddenly to his temple, took away the vail and Reveal'd himself unto his sorrowfull Dicile.

Immediatly He Cry'd out, "I see him, I see him" – The Lamb, the Lamb. Now sorrow and sighing fled away while He eat and Drank of the Bread and water of Life. Delight and satisfaction sat upon his Countenance, & the Name of Jesus was like ointment pour'd forth, when I stopt speaking He cry'd out with eagerness "a few words more." I ask'd him if he had any Doubt or fear, he answer'd "No none at all and sd "I have no pain: I never had such pleasure in all my Life" it runs all thro me" meaning the Love of GOD. The words which He now spake were spirit and Life. for turning himself to them in the Room we not only heard but felt him say, My Brethren make haste, give all Diligence, for now is the accepted time, or words of that Import

One of our Brothers call'd to see him, about 2 Hours after I left him and ask'd him how He did, He answer'd "full of peace and Joy in Believing and squeezing him by the Hand sd to him praise praise.

Soon after M.^r Williams call'd and found him rejoicing in GOD his Saviour, He now bore his affliction with great patience and was never heard to complain either of pain or sickness

[Best part of Tuesday He was Light in the Head 'till towards evening, when the minister of S.^t Johns¹³⁷ came to see him. He ask'd him how he did Dan'l reply'd very well with the blessing of GOD, the minister then ask'd him if he had no Doubt, He told him no none at all, He then bid him take care he did not deceive himself

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He told him He did take care.

To one that came in to see him He sd 'twill be but a Day or two we shall see one another here before we meet in Glory. he sung and rejoic'd often even to his last moments which was on Wednesday the 14 of September in the 21st year of his age after about 14 Days sickness

o let me Die the Death of the Righteous, and let my latter end be like his

Reference: EMV/501/63

Date: August 1760

Correspondent: Nicholas Gilbert¹³⁸

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Locations: Cornwall, Ireland and other places

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Nicholas Gilbert's experience to Aug 1760”

A Short Acct of Gods Dealings with a Siner from his Infancy.

I had a real revorance for the name of God ever since I have any remembrance of any thing, & Death was dreadful to me alwais, and my Meditations on it have been very Deep and frequently very distressing. Religious Persons, and religion itself were aimiable in my Sight. And often have I wish'd to be good, when alas goodness was far from me. For as I grew in Years, Sin grew upon me, tho' my convictions and resolutions were many, yet my Evil wou'd not be restrained, but Anger, Prid, and Vanity Captivated my whole Soul, and prey'd upon me continually. Sermons indeed wou'd make impretions on my Mind, and fixt good purposes in my Heart, such as a determination to leave the Comity of the wild unthinking Boyes with whom I was brought up. Of a Lords day I frequently resolved to stay within, and read the Scriptures knowing that to be found trifeling away my Time was all wrong, and for it

¹³⁷ Probably the Anglican church of St John the Evangelist, Fishamble Street, Dublin

¹³⁸ Nicholas Gilbert (d.1763) entered the Wesleyan itinerancy in 1749 and laboured in England and Ireland until his death. Principal Source: Lenton's list of Wesleyan preachers: GCAH website

Shame has often covered my Face. But my Resolutions were like Ephrims goodness, They passed away – Thus I went on from my first Dawnings of reason till I was about 19 years of Age. Then it Pleas'd God (The Methodists being in Cornwall 2 years before) to bring me in the way of one who had known something of the goodness of God to his Soul, and as I was before this convinced y^t the Methodists were the most religious of any People I had ever seen, was therefore easily perswaded to fix a resolution of going to hear 'em. And my first hearing after my Mind was thus resolved was on Good Friday in the year 1744. Soon after I joined the Society of the Methodists, and near Midsummer it Pleas'd God to manifest to my Soul the forgiveness of my Sins by Faith in JESUS CHRIST. And in the begining of the year 46 the Lord opened my Mouth to give a word of Exhortation to a few of my Neighbours who used to meet together to sing and Pray &c.

Soon after I began to speak from a portion of Scripture, this I did 2 or 3 Times a week sometimes oftener while I continued my Business for about 3 years Time. Then in Feb. 1749 Mr. [...]¹³⁹ sent for me to attend at his Conferance at Bristol, which was to begin in Mch,¹⁴⁰ accordingly I left Cornwall and came to Bristol and began my Work as an Itinerant in the Wiltshire Sircute [circuit], where I continued till August when I went to London. There I remaining till in December I sat out for Newcastle Upon Tyne. In these parts I labour'd till July 1750. I came into Yorkshire, remaining in Yorkshire till May 1751. It was the Determination of the Conferance that I should go into Ireland. Being detailed at Liverpool about a fortnight began Preaching for the first Time in the Fields. I embarked for Dublin in the beginning of June & in 3 Days landed at the end of the Nar wall in Dublin Bay. I continued in Ireland Labouring principally in Dublin Cork and Limerick till May 1756. I came into England and after spending a few weeks in Yorkshire sat of with Mr. Greenwood¹⁴¹ for Cornwall after being away upwards of 4 years. Here I continued till July 1756. I came to Bristol and in September embarked with Mr. Hoper¹⁴² Mr. Massiot Mr. Marling¹⁴³ and Mr. Olivers¹⁴⁴ for Corke. We left Bristol on Tuesday and Landed in Ireland the Sunday.

¹³⁹ Unreadable letter – based on the context, it is probably W for Wesley

¹⁴⁰ No Wesleyan conference took place in Bristol in March 1749. However, a conference was held in Bristol in March 1750, which indicates that Gilbert's date of 1749 is based on the old style calendar rather than the new. Other dates that he proves until 1752 (when the calendar officially changed to new style dating) should therefore be treated with caution

¹⁴¹ Paul Greenwood (1723–67). Born near Keighley, Yorkshire, and associated with Jonathan Maskew in the important Haworth circuit during the 1740s, Greenwood entered the itinerancy in 1747. He spent a year in Dublin in 1752 before returning to England, where he itinerated mainly in the north. Greenwood died in Manchester. Principal sources: MARC: Early Methodist papers; Lenton's list of Wesleyan preachers: GCAH website

¹⁴² Christopher Hopper (1722-1802) was born in County Durham and worked as a school teacher before entering the Wesleyan itinerancy in 1750. He accompanied John Wesley during the tour of Scotland in 1751, which introduced Methodism to that country and Wesley later placed him in charge of Northern Methodism. In 1780

After spending 4 months in Corke I went to Dublin where I continued till May 1757. I went into the North for wel nigh three months then returned to Dublin, and soon after went to Limerick where in November and part of December I had a very sever fit of the Feavour, which brought me very low insomuch y^t my life was despared of by allmost all that saw me. I returned to Dublin in Jan. 1758. where I remain'd principaly till the beginning of August Mr. Hoper Mr. Greenwood Mr. Johnson¹⁴⁵ & I embarked for Parkgate We left Dublin Bay Sunday Noon & landed at Parkgate Monday Evening.

In a few Days came to Bristol and in the beginning of Sept went to Norwich continued in Norwich Colchester & London till Feb. 1759 - came to Bristol and in May returned to London where I continued till September and after spending a little while in Sarum and the placis contiguous thereto returned to Bristol where I remain'd Principaly till August 1760.

Hopper was appointed to preside over the Conference in Wesley's absence. He retired from the itinerancy in 1790 but continued to preach and remained one of the most respected figures in the Connexion. Principal sources: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860*, edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995)

¹⁴³ John Murlin (1722-99) was born in St Stephen near Brannel in Cornwall, the son of a farmer. After serving an apprenticeship as a carpenter, he was converted in 1749 by the preacher John Downes. He began to preach locally and in 1754 left his prosperous business to join the itinerancy. His circuit ministry was exercised in England and Ireland. Upon his superannuation in 1787, he and his wife settled in Oxford. Murlin was one of the preachers at the centre of the Norwich sacramental dispute in 1760. An exceptionally gifted preacher, his emotional style earned him the nickname 'The weeping prophet'. Principal sources: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860*, edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995)

¹⁴⁴ Thomas Olivers (1725-99) was converted in Bristol by the preaching of George Whitefield after a dissolute early life and subsequently joined the Methodists. He entered the itinerancy in 1753 and after working in many parts of the country, settled in London as the corrector of John Wesley's printing press. (Principal sources: *Arminian Magazine 1779*, 77ff, and *Methodist Magazine 1799*, 511.

¹⁴⁵ John Johnson (1725-1803) was born in Somerset, of Roman Catholic parentage. He joined the Church of England at an early age and moved to London after completing an apprenticeship as a shoemaker. Johnson was converted by the preaching of George Whitefield and after joining the Methodist itinerancy in 1758, was sent to Ireland. He travelled throughout the country for the next ten years, before settling in Lisburn where he set up in business while still acting as a local preacher. Johnson was highly regarded by John Wesley and was for a time employed as General Superintendent of the Irish work. Principal source: Robert H. Gallagher, *Pioneer Preachers of Irish Methodism* (1965), 40-42.

Reference: EMV/501/64
Date: November 1764
Document: Death of Elizabeth Gill
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"Elis Gill's happy end. Nov 1764"

Worthy Sir If you think proper to Speak a word or to of my Wif's death it might be a blessing to Som. Elizabeth Gill when I married her I believe She loved god with all her heart. Soon after She was carful about many things Loosed her peace with god tho still Continuing in the way to ~~god~~ heaven. the day before She was taken Sick a person came to see her She was givin the Child Suck She said to the person I do not know what I Should do If the Lord was to take this Child from me I find my heart Sett upon it so and what do you think I was thinkin upon just now Somthing Said to me what art thou a going Eternity is at hand and thou art in this Unhappy State. the nex day She was taken Sick and She Cryed out I am Lost to all Eternity If I dy in the State I am in She Continued Cryin lord have mercy upon me Come Lord Jesus Come quickly now Com Come now till three days before She dyed She Seemed to pray but little that morning in the after noon the nurs Said to her Cant you pray now no Said She I Cant pray at all I wish Som person would pray with me. they did the next morning. She Said now my burden is gone I Can pray and Said it is Easier to Loose faith than to get it then She Said what a wretch I am to doubt the Enemy Sais to morrow but her Cry was Come Lord Jesus about Eleven a clock two or three friends Came to See her and went to prayers with her and there was a Shakin a mong the dry bons¹⁴⁶ and the Lord seald her pardon upon he Soul when they had don prayin She Could hardly Speak a person said to her now do you love Jesus Christ She could not speak a person said If you do heave up your hand She did and put it to her heart. her friends Left her

[page break]

and then She Sung'd that verse
and wilt thou yet be found
and may I still draw near
then Listen to a plentif Sound
of a poor Sinners prayer¹⁴⁷

After that She Sung'd Prais god from whom all blessings flow Almost as Clear as Ever I herd in my life then two or three more friends came and asked if She Loved Jesus Christ Is I do Is I do and then She Sung

Oh the Infinite height
of our Solem delight
While we look on the Saviour and walk in his Sight
The blessing who knows
the Joy he bestows
While we follow the Lamb where so Ever he goes
not a Spirit above to perfection can prove
Or count his Unsearchable Riches of Love

¹⁴⁶ Ekekiel 37:7

¹⁴⁷ Hymn by Charles Wesley

But we all Shall obtain
What none can Explain
And in Jesus is Bosom Eternaly Reign

And then he said to them that Stood by her why dont you help me to Sing. the next morning her husband went to her and Asked if She Loved Jesus Christ is I do is I do and Said Ask of the Lord and he will give you living faith I asked ~~I you find it~~ where She found it She said in my Inner parts In my Inner parts She said to the nurs I wish you was goin with me two or three. Stood round the bed but She Could not Speak but quite Sensible to the Last when they turned from her She gave So plesant a Smile as Could be and her Countinence Spake what was In her heart till She quietly Slept in the Lord

Reference: EMV/501/65
Date: 9 May 1758
Correspondent: M. Grinfield
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Location: [Bristol]
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"May 9 1758. M. Grinfield growing, praying"

I thank you most heartily my D^f Sir , for your truely kind & fatherly instructions, I see my great deficiency in all, & the absolute necessity of all Therefore trust they will lye with there due weight upon my Heart that on every occurrence they may be brought to my remembrance, how indeed would our Lord bless every the smallest incident that crosses our will, if we laid hold of it, as a precious Relick of that cross whereon all our sins & back slidings are hung & fasten'd to, O' my D^f Lord how clear hast Thou shew'd me this, & yet how dos' that mountain of Unbeliefs raise up the Spirit of rebellion within me against Thy Coming to Sit in the Spirit of Judgment & of burning to purge & sanctifie thy temple, Lord Jesus bow me, humble me by Thy Love, for nothing less powerfull than Thy almighty Love can break thro' these Bulwarks of Pride, sin & unbelief, grant gracious Redeemer I may be in deed, Heart, will & affections what Thy minister wishes for thy sake, & what Thou would'st have me to be, hear Thou his prayers for me & seal his instructions upon my Heart, continue them to me & make them weighty & powerful, & reward [?] Him for all His labours of Love to the Souls commited to his care, & evermore feed him with the bread of Life to the strengthening of both Soul & Body, bless also the loaves & fishes for the multitude to whom Thou sendest him, O my most Gracious Lord, I'm much rejoiced at the account you sent me of our D^f friends & that Dr Mrs Barlows distress in regard to Mr Hamilton is removed, I'm afraid your warrant will have little force till the wind is turn'd into a warmer Corner, but I will watch all oppportunitys to Execute the authority lodged with me, I [delivered?] part of what you said of Sarah P. to her, the other I keep back for my private use which may not be altogether needless, I'm obliged to you for it, D^f Mrs Wesley & yr son were in good Health about an hour since, adieu most sincerely & truely obliged, I hope you will omit no oppertunity of leting me profit from you, I have not heard from Oxford, I rather expect my information from you

Tuesday Evening

Reference: EMV/501/66

Date: 6 May 1758

Correspondent: M. Grinfield

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol, Kingsdown¹⁴⁸

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“6 May 1758. M. Grinfield thankful for advice”

I thank you most heartily my Dr Sir for your very kind Letter, which tho' Short was full of great truths, & brought its own evidence with it, as truth always do's, help me by your prayers to that willingness to suffer the will of our great master to take Place, for till that is wrought in us, the total Change of heart (which can only produce that simplicity you speak of) cannot be received by us & till that is, every thing we do, speak or say will & must have a tincture of pride, guile, Selfishness & every Evil that the old nature is Capable of, tho' perhaps more Divilish by our own refinements I trust I shall be brought to your & our other D^f friends remembrance not only when you meet, but also in your secret breathing before the throne of Grace I must desire you will say every thing proper to Lady H,¹⁴⁹ for thinking of me,

¹⁴⁸ Kingsdown is now a part of the city of Bristol, but in the 18th century was an open area on the outskirts of the city with limited housing development

¹⁴⁹ Selina Hastings (1707–91), Countess of Huntingdon, born in Staunton Harold, Leicestershire, the second of three daughters of Washington Shirley, Earl Ferrers. In 1728 she married Theophilus Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon, and moved to the Hastings family seat at Donnington Park in Leicestershire. Spiritually inclined from her childhood, she was converted in 1739 under the influence of her sister-in-law Lady Margaret Hastings.

The Countess became a member of the Fetter Lane Society, and, after her husband's death in 1746, her commitment to the work of the revival deepened. A close friend of the Wesleys and George Whitefield, she adopted the theology of the Calvinistic Methodists in about 1748.

The Countess was public and forthright in her evangelical faith, using her connections within government and society to defend Methodist interests. She made extensive use of her right of appointing her own chaplains to assist evangelical clergymen and also purchased advowsons to provide deserving ministers with parishes. From 1761 she sponsored and financed the building of several chapels and in 1768 founded a college at Trevecka in Wales for the training of preachers.

In the early 1780s, the Countess effectively broke with the link with the Church of England by licensing her chapels under the Toleration Act and insisting that her chaplains become dissenting clergy. After her death on 17 June 1791, the Connexion was maintained by a trust appointed in her will. (Principal sources: *DNB*; Lewis.)

You have set me a most difficult task, & I fear more than I can succeed in, without your help, that is, to get my Dear Mrs Wesley up this Hill, Her fears of Cold, wind &c &c for her son multiply every time I speak of its, I have a promise to day for to eat her mutton here, but I see a Cloude that I think will prevent her bringing my little friend with her, whenever you have time give me a line, for it dos more than oblige me & I shall hope for the Gospel news you promised me, Dr Mrs Whittington walk'd up on purpose to inquire after you, why do not you mention your health, I am very glad you have faith for L. Dartmouth¹⁵⁰ both for her own as well as her Lords¹⁵¹ sake as an unbelieving wife must be a heavy cross, I do not see poor Mrs Hamilton farther off, than when at Clifton, I hope you have cause to rejoice in Lady Roberts¹⁵² you cannot be forgot here let me once more beg your Prayer for the new heart, or rather in order to the receiving of it, that, I may submit to the firey baptism for till that be accomplishd we must be straitened, this is what the heart shrinks from, Lord Jesus grant mine may no longer resist Thee, after the many gracious Calls, let me be also chosen to dye & live with Thee, may the fulness of the Gospel bless your labours.

Your truely obliged / and affectionate sister I'm afraid to call myself

¹⁵⁰ Frances Catherine (1732/3–1805), wife of William Legge, 2nd Earl of Dartmouth (DNB)

¹⁵¹ William Legge, 2nd Earl of Dartmouth (1731-1801): Born in Marylebone, Essex, son of George Legge, Viscount Lewisham (1704?-32), Legge was educated at Westminster School and Oxford and in 1750 inherited his grandfather's title as Earl of Dartmouth. Legge's mother remarried after his father's death to Francis North, Lord North. Legge thus acquired a stepbrother to whom he remained close throughout his life: Frederick North, the future prime minister.

Legge entered government in 1765 and occupied several important political positions including President of the Board of Trade and Secretary of State for the Colonies, in which capacity he played a major role in the American War of Independence. While sympathetic to colonial grievances, he retained a firm belief in parliamentary supremacy. Legge possessed little administrative ability but was admired for his honest and amiable nature.

Legge and his wife Francis Catherine Nicholl were devout Christians and by 1757 were committed to evangelical beliefs. A close friend of the Countess of Huntingdon, Legge was on good terms with the leading evangelicals of the day regardless of doctrinal position. He used his position to appoint deserving evangelical clergymen to benefice, including the former slaver John Newton. His strong attachment to the Methodists earned him the nickname 'The Psalm singer'. (Principal source: DNB)

¹⁵² Probably Lady Robert Manners, the former Miss Mary Degges (1737–1829), who both before and after her marriage was a close friend of Charles and Sarah Wesley, with whom she corresponded regularly. In 1756 she was married by Charles Wesley to Colonel, later General, Lord Robert Manners, a son of the 2nd Duke of Rutland. (Principal sources: *Burke's Peerage, Baronetage, and Knightage*; MARC: Charles Wesley papers.)

Saturday

Kingsdown

Reference: EMV/501/67

Date: 30 April 1758

Correspondent: M. Grinfield

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol, Kingsdown¹⁵³

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“April 30 1758. M. Grinfield putting herself under my care”

My Dr Mrs Wesley's writing to day, gives me an opportunity I cannot omit of thanking Dr M^r Wesley for the many Previlidges permitted me to partake of, which our Lord so blessd that I trust thro' your Prayers will have the Effect, I'm assur'd you wish'd, of humbling me into a little Child teachable & obedient to the gracious Call for a total Surrender of my Self into the Redeemers Arms of Love & Mercy, & it appears to me by our Lords late kind despensation, that his will is, I Should be more immedately under your direction who are much better acquainted with the rebellion of my Heart & the particular Constitutional Perpensitys of it, than from an Ignorent Partiality I'm able to inform you, if this be so, the Lord will give you light into my State, & I pray from the ground of my Heart that he will also give you freedom & power to use great plainness of Speech towards me, & that my Spirit may be so subjected to his Spirit within you as to receive all

His teachings in meekness & true poverty, that I may profit from Every dispensation of his Love, how-ever Sharp, therefore be you faithful & pray that the Constraining Love of a Crucified Saviour may make me obedient, Simple humble & teachable you was present with your Children on Wednesday who recd the promise made to two or three meet in his name, tho' I was much fatigued in body by Seting in the Quakers meeting after my Early rising from alittle after nine till one. I did not find any temptation to prefer their mood to our own & indeed Saw many Errours in a stronger Light than I had Ever done, yet Could not help adoring that Love which breaks through all mistakes in Judgment to bless his poor Creatures who Seek in Sincerity of heart, as I trust the Lord has laid me on your Heart to build up into a holy temple for himself to live & walk in, I need not desire to be remembered in all your prayer, may every blessing that attend. a faithful minister of the Lord Jesus be poured out upon you & in his time (not mine) may you be restored in health of body, & your Soul fild with the fullness of God, my Dr Mrs Wesley & I have Seen each other most days Since you left us, I'm charged with Mrs Whingtons duty & Love, as also her Sisters, I have a faint hope you may be a means to turn my Dr Mrs B. Course this way, but let me leave that & all things Else to him who know best & overrules all to his own Glory & our happiness as often as you have liberty I shall be thankful to hear from you, & believe me [yours?] truely obliged & affect. humble Serv. Ag[...]

¹⁵³ Kingsdown is now a part of the city of Bristol, but in the 18th century was an open area on the outskirts of the city with limited housing development

Saturday april 30th

I was very much rejoiced to hear you was Carried safe to Hungerford, but did you not make too much hast to go so far in one Day Y^r [paster...?] thinks you did.

Reference: EMV/501/68

Date: 15 February 1783

Correspondent: Mary Guy

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Feb.15 1783. M. Guy’s blessed mother”

Bristol 15th Feb: 1783

Rev:^d Sir

I think it my duty to acquaint you of my dear mothers Death which happen,d saterday the 8th Instant & also a few of her expressions during her illness. In the first part of it she says to me my dear I have had no particular token of my death, only that I have of late had more Close converse with my God; for I am almost always Conversing with him as a man does with his friend. a few Days before she died I aske,d her if she was afraid to die, No says she but my Lord is not come to his temple yet; I said he has never left you nor he will not now; she said no, He has been a faithfull God then after a Convulsive fit (which Followed her at times for a week:) she said my Jesus come & Make thy Bride ready, come dearest Lord come & take thy Bride, after a while she said my Jesus is all Lovely, all desire, all Peace, seeing me in tears she said dont cry for me my dear But thank God; resting a little as well as she cou,d speak she Said Looking at me Happy;
Happy; some hours after she Says to us all farewell farewell & resigned her breath Without sigh or groan

Dear sir pray for me that the prayers of a ri^{gh}teous father & Mother may be answerd which they offer,d on my behalf Miss Stafford sent me word that she rec.^d a letter from you Wherein you was so kind to send your Love to my mother but she Was safe Landed on Canaan,s happy shore.

Please to give my duty to Madam & best respects to all the family

From your unworthy servant

Mary Guy

Reference: EMV/501/69

Date: 15 February 1783

Correspondent: Mary Guy

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "The Revd Mr Charles Wesley, Chesterfield Street, Mary[le]bone, London"

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"Mary Guy"

Note: Postmarked "18 IA" and "BRISTOL"

Revnd & Dear Sir

Bristol Jan^{ry} 14th 1786

I hope you will excuse this trouble, as I have been Exceeding ill ever since the 15th Oct^{br} last with a bad Leg & a low inward Complaint & not able to help myself Blessed be god my leg is near well but have still that inward Complaint which I pray that the lord may Remove & restore me once more for his mercy sake & for the sake of my husband who is very sickly & Child which is yet but 5 years old. I some times believe The lord will bring me about again & other times am In doubt which I believe is a temptation of the devil For the lord has brought me thro great difficultys & almost From the grave, how shall I be thankful enough, I cannot. Oh that I may never forget his mercies for they are great Blessed Jesus give me a thankful heart a heart that will Not rest till washed in thy blood. I know this affliction is a Mercifull chastisement from god to bring me more to myself And not forget him which is my earnest prayer & that The lord may stir me up to seek his face & never rest till I have found his pardoning grace. I have no friend left In bristol to converse with nor comfort me with regard to My soul, some gone to heaven & the rest in London oh that I were With you I often look toward Charles street¹⁵⁴ & think on you And dear Mrs Wesley & tho I cannot see you waking yet when I am sleeping my spirit^{is} frequently wandring to you and Conversing with you. dear sir pray for my recovery that The lord may spare me a little longer & make me in earnest To salvation, & bring me thro all my worldly troubles which are Not small, yet that they may not hinder me from the great Concern of my soul which is of more value than ten thousand Worlds. oh that I may follow my Dear parents steps so far as They followed christ. my husband joins in duty with me To you & Mrs Wesley & kind love to your family begging you

Will not forget us in your prayers.

from Yr unworthy

Servt Mary Guy

Dear sir please to let me hear from you as soon as Convient & how I shall send to you to be most agreeable.

¹⁵⁴ The former Wesley home in Charles Street, Bristol

Pleas to direct for me at Mr Garratt,s Anchor Smith Wapping [London] as the people with whom I have part of the house are of a different way of thinking to me & believe shall remove soon Sir I am just now inform,d that you have been very Ill but hope that you are recoverd the Lord spare You yet longer if it be is blessed will is the Sincere prayers of mine

Reference: EMV/501/70

Date: 16 June 1755

Correspondent: Mr Hartley

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Charles Wesley in Charles Street, Bristol"

Location: Chingford, Essex

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"June 16 1755 Mr Hartley's excellent Ir of advice"

[...] ¹⁵⁵ me loving & faithfull & full of respect towards you, & also patient under your reproof, correction & instruction, as it may be needful, and so this correspondence will not be without its use perhaps on both sides, but be the means of a pleasant & refreshing fellowship, whilst we comfort each other with the comforts that be of God, I giving you due honour in your place, and you condescending in love to my low estate, & not disdainng to recieve a word of instruction, should it at any time ^{be} given to me for you, that from so weak an instrument: thus may all be done with^t controversy, & so to better edification. Your time, Dear S^r, is precious & full of work, & therefore I shall only expect to hear from you as you have leisure and liberty for it, be it more or less, & all apologys for writing or not writing will be needless. If you find at any time a stirring of love in your heart towards me, offer it up in pray'r at the throne, as it may be a means of strengthening union & of obtaining a blessing, for the communion of Saints subsists in love, & wonderfull are its communications betwixt God & man. I commend you, Dear S^r, in a breath of affection to the fountain of Grace & love, that He may fill you out of his fullness & transmute you into his own nature, w^{ch} is Love.

Chingford near } I am, Dear S^r, y^r very affection^{te} friend
Woodford Essex } but most unworthy brother
June 16. 1755 }

PS. It will be proper to burn this, and the more so as I subscribe my name – we may for y^e g^ter safety only secur charact^r for the future – as you please.

Reference: EMV/501/71

Date: 12 July 1755

Correspondent: Mr Hartley

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: [Chingford, Essex]

¹⁵⁵ Indication of an incomplete text

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "July 12 1755. Mr Hartley's Loving Instructions"
2. "July 9th 1755"

Rev.d and Dear S^r

I bear a part in your joy for the safe delivery of your good yoke fellow – May the dew of heaven water both root & branch to the bringing forth much precious fruit to the praise of Him that is the true planter, & who also giveth the increase.

I thankfully acknowledge your kind acceptance of my letter, and your very friendly answer; and as you seem to have the right key of love, you will easily unlock my heart, & find an open door to take freely out of my little stock, & to pour in of your fuller treasure. You will excuse me, Dear S^r, from pointing out at this time the particulars you desire an explanation of, it would perhaps be giving to this infant correspondence too much the air of a Bill & answer in Chancery; besides I know too well my own defects to begin with charges upon my betters – these things will appear better in another form, & take their place more gracefully as they shall arise

arise from the subject, or freely occur in the course of this exchange: however it is now on my mind to observe concerning one defect in a fundamental point in almost all teachers, those of the M^tdts [Methodists] not excepted, viz the not seeing or at least not preaching Jes. X^t as the 'Light and Word of God preaching the Gospel of Eternal Life in the hearts of all men, and as being that very principle of truth, light & love w^{ch} He there preaches; but instead thereof directing men altogether or nearly so to the written word as their first & chief Guide, w^{ch} is only the Divine Testimony concerning Him the true spiritual Guide, & w^{ch} can only be known rightly by his Spirit. This going to the written word only with our natural understanding for the knowledge of X^t once ministring & dying for us, & now in heaven interceding for us, places the Saviour at too great a distance fœr from us, & sets up our Ideas & doctrinal knowledge of him in the temple instead of himself – this is preaching X^t only for us & not also in us – It is confining the Divinity anointing to the particular humanity of our Lord, instead of shewing how we thro' X^t (the anointed above measure) are (in a measure) anointed with with the same divine nature, whereby the Lord Christ becomes really & properly our Father & Brother, by being the fountain of a new nature to us as well as partaker of our human nature, whence arises our true union with God thro' X^t. In this union all our perfection stands – we are complete in X^t thus formed in [us] being Christed with the Divinity (according to our measure) as He was in fullness: and therefore to place any part of perfection in what man of himself can believe, know, will or do, is misplacing it entirely since all this we must dye unto that his will may be done in us whose is the power and the glory; but as some remainder of corruption cleaves to the fleshly nature even in the most godly in this life, whereby they suffer various hindrances, distractions & perturbations from evil spirits, men & accidents, therefore the sword of death is appointed to cut off this earthly part in w^{ch} remains the curse, that we being totally deliverd from the evil may be perfected in the good, which cannot be in this miserable state, tho' some few have been carryd far

far on their way towards it, not by planning & executing their own particular schemes of perfection, not by multiplying observances & practices &ce and so going about to force nature to help Grace; not by running, & willing and striving of themselves, but

by dying to all these, and also to their reasonings, imaginations & inventions (however speciously gilded with pretexts of bringing glory to God) that so they might simply follow their Leader, content to go or stand still, to know or not to know, to do this or that or let it alone, according to his good pleasure and teachings. When you say, Dear S^r, that you have no character to maintain – would be no body – nothing – How much better do you describe in a few words the persons I have been speaking of in many!

I am now going into Northamptonsh^r to return in four weeks from the Date hereof. Whether at home or on a journey I think of you and love you: If it be the same on your side, no distance of place will divide my D^r friend. Pray for the most unworthy of men, yrs affect^{ely}

July 19. 1755

Reference: EMV/501/72

Date: 29 September 1751

Correspondent: John Hutchinson

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Cha: Wesley att the Foundry, Moor-Fields, London"

Location: Leeds

Additional: Postmarked "LEEDS"

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "J. Hutchinson, still loving Oct. 31 1752"
2. Shorthand passage

Dr S.^r & most beloved Friend

Octo.^r 31.st1752

Your last, gave me great Pleasure & I can never sufficiently make you a Return for your real Friendship & unbounded Love towards me, O! that! the God whom you serve may once more call back a wandering Sheep then shall I be enabled to pay you back y.^r Sympathy, & be truly capable of discerning the real Worth of my D,^r Mr C: W's Friendship.

a Friend is of inestimable Value, a Friend is not to be purchased with Gold, & such I believe I have in my C:W- I know there can be no true Friendship in such as adhere not, to the Principles & Practice of Christianity, the Worldly sort are not capable of being Friends, I see the World in its proper Light, & yet am I 'still bewitched with its wretched Soil I try to satisfy myself with various Fooleries, all are – ineffectual, for there is an emptiness in my [unreadable erasure] wch nothing less than divine Love can satiate.

You desire I will not expect too much from y.^r Friendship? indeed I do not, I will not ascribe to the Instrument what must be effected by Almighty God; but you will not be angry with me because I love you & hold you in great Esteem, had I not a very high Opinion of you, I shod be more ungratefull than I am, as to my Love I think it is of the right Sort & such, I hope as was betwixt David & Jonathan. I dreamt last night of being w.th my d.^r C: W & I don't know what is the matter with me all this Day, I feel

my Heart so exceedingly enlarged towards you, insomuch that I think I cod almost pull out my own Eyes to do you Service, I return you my best Thanks for y.^r kind Invitation, My Mother gives her free Consent but woud. be agreeable to M.^{rs} W – I hope it will be effected

please God so long to spare me, before I come I will acquaint you with all my Infirmities, lest you shod repent after taking me into yr. House, I deliver'd y.^r Letter to W:S¹⁵⁶ I hope you reced mine [...] Mr · L: Personett w.th £2:2: inclosed please to give my Love to Trembath when you see him, he is expected here very soon, my best respects attend M.^{rs} W. & my little Godson & remain D^r S^r yr truly affectionate Fr.^d & Obed^t Serv.

J. H.

Reference: EMV/501/73

Date: 23 November 1752

Correspondent: John Hutchinson

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Cha: Wesley at the New Room, Horse-Fair, Bristol"

Location: Leeds

Additional: Postmarked "LEEDS"

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

3. "Nov 23 1752 Friendly J. Hn promising visit"
4. Shorthand – "November 23, 1752 John Hutchinson"

Leeds Nov .^r 23.^d 1752

D.^r Sir

I reced your 3 affectionate Letters, your last [...] post is so expressive of Love, Friendship & Tenderness to me (most Unworthy), that it hath almost made me broken hearted to find you are so deeply & tenderly engaged for my eternal Welfare & myself remain so much unconcern'd & what heightens my Grief the more that I cannot effect what I so earnestly desire & what woud am sensible give you also much Pleasure; it is impossible for me to attempt taking so long Journey, this Time Year, the Roads are bad & the Weather wet & unhealthy. I fear I should not be able ever to reach my d.^r Mr C:W at Bristol whose Retreat woud be more agreeable than the most magnificent Palace, but hope e'er long Providence will order it for my A[truism?]m, where I shall be sequestred from the Fooleries [of?] the World, indeed my feeble Fabric attended [...] bad State of Health will not permitt me & I know [you?] will not

¹⁵⁶ Possibly William Shent (1715–87). A wig-maker of Leeds, Shent was one of the earliest Methodist converts in the town and was instrumental in the building of the 'Old Boggart House' chapel in 1751. He travelled as an itinerant preacher for part of the year from 1745 to 1753. After his business had failed, Shent started to drink heavily and was expelled from the society he had founded. John Wesley engineered his reinstatement and employed him in the Book Room in London for the rest of his life. Principal sources: Harmon; Lenton.

desire me to do any Thing prejudicial to my Health, for I yet remain in a tottering condition & at times enjoy bad Health. If please God spare till Spring I intend to accomplish my Promise, but then I must do it secretly, as I complain often of bad Health my Unkle will be very willing to spare me to Bath in order to recover my Health & my Mother hath already given her Consent, otherwise I can't possibly take so long a Journey, my Unkle I know wou'd never Consent I shou'd travel so far on any other Errand & if come without his Consent it wo'd entirely unhinge all our Family & wo'd be an unpardonable Offence. I please myself w.th the Thoughts of seeing my Godson, I think I shall admire him too much, am very fond of little Children & him much more abundantly being the Son of my d.^r Friend

my best respects attend M.^{rs} W – Remain d Sir “Yr Ever”

Affectionate Friend &

Obed.^t Serv.

J_ H_

Reference: EMV/501/74

Date: 30 January 1755

Correspondent: William [Bill] Hutchinson¹⁵⁷

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: “To The Revd Mr Charles Wesley at the Foundry, Moor Fields, London”

Location: Altona, Denmark (now part of Germany)

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Jan 30 1755 Bill Hutchinson kept at ~~Altona!~~”

Rev.^d Sir

Altona¹⁵⁸ Jen.^{ry} 30 1755

You'r most Obludging favour I resev'd And should have answard it befor now but have been ell [ill] & Oblledged to keep my Bed about a week, but am now thanke God prettey well recovard the Dockter that attended me is a Englesh man his name is Meddelton a realeshion of your Worthey Friend att Bristol, And now Dr. Sir as you desire to know how its as faired with my better part I'll give you a short account as well as I can but to recount to you all the Mirses of God to me, his more then I am abell to express, perticklearly in my late ellness, in wich I was inabeld not onley to bear pashentley what was lade on me but also to prase his Holey Name for the same, my disire his still to meet you with the rest of my X friends in Heaven He as not left

¹⁵⁷ The death notice of William Hutchinson aged 75, merchant of Altona, is recorded in *Literary and Biographical Magazine, and British Review*, Volume 6, 1791, p. 477.

¹⁵⁸ Established as a city in 1664 and situated on the right bank of the Elbe, Altona was a major Danish port until it became part of the Kingdom of Prussia in 1867. It is now one of the boroughs of Hamburg.

Himself without Witnesses in this place there is maney hear that can bear testefy of a redemers love to them, such I have chosen for my Companyons & I dought not but thay will be a blesseng to me

When I can understand the landgwig [language] a lettel better I am now larning the Landgwig with a master, that I may the souner understand the Gospell Minesters in this place the English Minster hear is a Strickt Morlest but I do not find he gos aney farder thear is severall of the Lutherans Minsters that preeach Christ very Clear & have maney seals to thar Menstry; such of them are branded with the name of Quakers & of wich number is my Mother in law & her Sister with home [whom] I am very happy, I cannot but look upon this as the gift of God to me as whe are all of wone mind; I do not forget you nor your dr partnar to home I begg my beest Respects may be exceptable, it will be a pleasure to me always to hear frome you both, I have not nor I trust shall never forget you in my poor imperfect prayers I hope you remember me in the same maner; yet a lettel wile & we shall meet to part no mor God grant me strength to ould out to the end, I often fear (I shall never ould out I shall never com thear) att other times it is otherways with me & I can Beleve He will finesh Is woorke in me; I thanke for your cind remembrance of me as also for the Hymns you sent me of my Dear Brothers Death wich I shall ceepe as a token of your great friendship & love for Him; my Cind love to your Brother I hope by this time he as recoverd his strength againe M^r Hutchinson selutes you & your Wife my love to all enquireng frends & stell [...] [...] D,^r Sir your affect^t frend & Serv^t.

p.s. Sume time ago I red in the Englesh Nuse of a Mitherds [Methodist] Preacher at Norredg [Norwich] that Murderd himself & afterwards it was Conteredected that it was not a Mitherds Preacher, but I am stell afraid that it was poor Weatley¹⁵⁹ I should be glad to know if it his not him; peace be with you all. Amen.

Jan 30. 1755
Bill Hutchinson
kept; at Altona

Reference: EMV/501/75
Date: 29 September 1751
Correspondent: John Hutchinson
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Location: Baildon, West Yorkshire

¹⁵⁹ James Wheatley (fl.1745-54 entered the itinerancy in about 1745 and appears to have served in several different parts of the country with conspicuous success as a charismatic preacher. In 1751 he was accused of sexual misconduct with several young women from the Bristol Circuit. He finally admitted his 'little imprudences', claiming without evidence that other preachers were guilty of more serious offences. He was officially suspended but was later reinstated. In 1754 he was again expelled for a similar offence. (Principal source: *The Works of John Wesley* (1982), Volume 26, 464 edited by Frank Baker).

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

5. "Sept 29 1751. J. Hutchinson – What James Hutton¹⁶⁰ was!"
6. "[shorthand] 29 1751. J. H. uno avulso non deficit alter!"¹⁶¹

My most dear & best beloved Friend

Baildon Sep r 29th: 1751

I need yours, with much Fatigue I got safe on Monday Night abt 7 Clock to this Place where I yet carry the Burden of a sorrowfull Mind, on my Journey I endured the most exquisite Grief & still remain inconsolable for the Loss, of so dear, so valuable, & much loved Friend, when I call to remembrance my Ingratitude in not answering your Letters when at Newcastle, my sorrow is aggravated still more, the sense whereof forces me to acknowledge no more worthy of that Friendship wch is dearer to me than Life, were your Tender Regard & friendly admonitions from this moment to cease [...]¹⁶² wod be justly my Desert, My Uneasiness at present requires me to ask you ten thousand pardons, and once more look over the Folly & Indiscretion of a thoughtless heedless, ungratefull youth & beg you will assure me in your next the Promise of a Continuation of your Favour I hope you have enkindled an affection in my Heart which will never be extinguished, it is an affection that excites a strong Desire to insure my Place above those rolling spheres, where we shall no more be separated, O Dear Sir I cannot describe how I love you, my Heart is ready to break that Providence hath allotted me to be so far separate from you, I could live & die with you, if you don't visit Yorksh soon I can never be at rest, if you confine yourself in the South for so many Years as of late you have done & forget you have a sincere unaltered Friend here, I shall be miserable, long absence causeth that Heat of Friendship to Decrease, I am jealous over you but much more over myself, I know by Experience my good Desires vanish like the Morning Dew, the good Instructions you bestow'd I hope will not be invain, my Prayer is that I may be your Crown of rejoicing, you shall yet have Joy over me and more, that you have sought a wandering Sheep & brought him to the Fold, the next Time we meet I hope you will see me in another Likeness, with some small stamps of the divine Image upon me, write to me often & love me more, let no new convert be my Rival, continue your loving Kindness unto me & admit no one to have a greater share in your affection than your poor unworthy ungratefull Young Man; I have been broken hearted ever since your Departure what yielded me most Ease was the Thought of hearing from you wih I impatiently waited

¹⁶⁰ James Hutton (1715–95). Born in London, the son of John Hutton a Nonjuror Anglican clergyman, Hutton was educated at Westminster School and was acquainted at an early age with John and Charles Wesley and their brother Samuel. He was converted by John Wesley in 1735 shortly before establishing a book-selling and printing business in Westminster. Hutton published many of the Wesleys' early works, and his premises became an early meeting place associated with what became the Fetter Lane Society. Hutton joined the Moravian Church in 1739 following a visit to Germany and parted with the Wesleys on bad terms, although they reconciled in the 1770s. Hutton remained prominent in Moravian affairs and in 1741 helped to found the Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel. He was married to the daughter of a German minister. Principal sources: Harmon; Lewis.

¹⁶¹ "When one is torn away, an alternative shall not be found wanting" (Virgil)

¹⁶² Unreadable text

for, Upon first sight of your Letter my Heart leaped for Joy, I have read it over Times without Number, but cannot find your accustomed manner of writing, (wih was) Dear Johny, Dear Youth, &c &c, I remember in your three Letters to Mr Shent,¹⁶³ you began with Dear William, Don't be angry at my simplicity, it is a weakness I cannot help, (what shall I say) in my own Strength I can promise nothing, but according to the present Situation of my Mind, I Desire I may cease to breathe when I forsake you, you are dearer to me than myself & you shall never want any thing I can do for you, only continue to travel & I will work for your support.

I continue in Health much the same as when at Manches[ter]. I got much better Home than cod be expected for a person in my situation. direct your next to me at Leeds I shall return there on Wednesday or Thursday next, you desire to know if I remember who parted with me at Smithy Door. Yes, it is he! whom I most love, whom I shall never forget untill Time shall be no more, my Friend more beloved than all Indian Wealth

I shall endeavour to put your Proposal in Execution as soon as I return to Leeds, I will get my Mother to prevail if possible for me to pay you a Vissit at Bristol I do not doubt performing the Fatigue of the journey, if so pleasing a journey would be granted me, then should I regale myself with the agreeable conversation of my my dear, dear Friend, I fear you will be wearied in reading my long Scribble, believe me it is the real Language of my Heart & now conclude with my kind Love to Mrs Wesley returning her ten thousand Thanks for all her tender but undeserved civilities to me & shall if possible accept her agreeable invitation, my love when you write to that most inimitable composition of Body & Mind I mean Mrs Perring¹⁶⁴ I observe your appointment at 12 Clock I have little Hopes for myself, delight in your command & in doing you the little Service I am capable of at present. I remain with all the tender Ties of Love & Friendship

My dear, dear Sr your ever affectionate real Friend [...] !

Jn Hutchinson

PS write to me at Leeds I shall expect to receive a Letter from you the Thoughts of wih give me Pleasure

[shorthand passage, presumably written by Charles Wesley]

Reference: EMV/501/76
Date: 20 September 1752

¹⁶³ William Shent (1715–87). A wig-maker of Leeds, Shent was one of the earliest Methodist converts in the town and was instrumental in the building of the 'Old Boggart House' chapel in 1751. He travelled as an itinerant preacher for part of the year from 1745 to 1753. After his business had failed, Shent started to drink heavily and was expelled from the society he had founded. John Wesley engineered his reinstatement and employed him in the Book Room in London for the rest of his life. Principal sources: Harmon; Lenton.

¹⁶⁴ Sarah Perrin

Correspondent: John Hutchinson

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Adress: "To The Revd Mr Cha: Wesley at the New Room, Horse Fair, In Bristol"

Location: Leeds

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Sept 20 1752. J. Hutchinson offering to board with us, & m answer!"

2. [J. Hutchinson Sept]¹⁶⁵ 20 1752

Note: Postmarked Leeds and 22 September

Dr Sir
1752

Leeds Sept. 20th

It is with no small Pleasure that yr 2 last Letters brought me the news of Mrs Wesley's safe Delivery of a Son¹⁶⁶ & continues in a likely way to recover, am glad to hear she is out of Danger. I hope w'n this reach[es] you she will be quite well, fit to nurse & take care of my God-son.

I have now to return you & Mrs Wesley my most gratefull acknowledgements for the Honour you have done me, as also my compliments to the gentleman (Mr James) my Representative, Mr Perronet I mean Mr Chars P¹⁶⁷ is expected here on his journey to Bristol. I shall send 2 Guineas by him for Mrs Wesley to dispose of as she thinks proper. I had not opportunity or wud have sent it before the Christening. in your next let me know how my God-son goes on, for I think I shall be very fond of him & do assure you once more, nothing wud be more agreable to me, than an opportunity of paying you a visit at Bristol, I wish my Desires in that may be accomplished. I believe it wud be for my eternal welfare, I continue yet very irreligious, think I shall never be better untill I make my abode with you, I have some thoughts, as I entirely Dislike to live at Leeds to come to live at Bristol as soon as I can be disengaged from Business wch will not be before the Expiration of 2 years, if please God so long to spare me, will you let me board with you or wod Mrs Wesley condescend to let me have House room I shod not desire much attendance. I think I shall be glad to wait of my dr. Mr. W: & render him all the little Services I am capable this I often tell our People & it is the sentiments I have had for 12 months past At your request I have seen Mr Thornton, but I had not opportunity to have much conversation with him, I am exceeding sorry to be deprived the Happiness of seeing you this summer, it will be a year since I parted with you at Manches[ter]? 23rd Sept O:S[Old style] & if I must not see you untill spring don't disappoint me then my best respects to Mrs Wesley & my dr Godson
Yr very affectionate friend &

¹⁶⁵ Written in shorthand

¹⁶⁶ Jacky, born in Aug. 1752 and who died in infancy

¹⁶⁷ Charles Perronet (1723-76) was born in Sundridge, Kent, a son of the Revd. Vincent Perronet, close associate of the Wesley brothers. He joined the Methodists in 1746 and a year later accompanied Charles Wesley on a visit to Ireland. Perronet entered the itinerancy in 1751 but withdrew from the Connexion after a few years because of his outspoken advocacy of formal separation from the Church of England. Peronnet later lived in Canterbury with his brother Edward. Principal sources: *Dictionary of National Biography* under Vincent Perronet and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography* edited by Donald Lewis (1995)

serv. J:H

[At the bottom of the letter occurs a substantial passage in shorthand in the hand of Charles Wesley, which must be Charles's reply to Hutchinson's letter]

Reference: EMV/501/77

Date: Undated [post 1778]¹⁶⁸

Correspondent: John Henderson

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr C. Wesley at the Revd. Mr [John] Wesley's new Chapel, London"

Location: Bristol (postmarked)

All our most affectionate good Wishes to You & Yours being necessarily understood, I go on.

My Reverend & very dear father!

Your last Letter shocked me. I thought I could part with any one rather than You. I was affraid to write – lest it might so be that You were gone beyond the Reach of an Answer. And if you should be just going I would not disturb You with inferior feelings. But having just received a Letter from Mr Palmer which says You are a little better, I took some Comfort. And directly adventure to send these few Lines. I hope they are not too much for either your present Infirmary or your friendship. I should be some what relieved by an Accompt of your State – at least from some one about You.

fare well, at present: not without Hope of your Recovery. If You depart, may it be happily & honorably. And beyond, if all things be not there forgotten, remember

John Henderson

¹⁶⁸ Based on the opening of City Road Chapel in London in 1778

Reference: EMV/501/78
Date: 18 April 1787
Correspondent: John Henderson
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Address: "To The Revd Mr C. Wesley at the new Chapel in the City Road, London"
Location: Bristol (postmarked)
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
'J. Henderson. April 18 1787'

Reverend truly by Title & Merit

But what to me is not so interesting (for I wish more for you than my self) but far more dear – my condescending friend.

The accompt of m[y] Betterness was premature I am worse. But I had rather be so. I am not affrayed except for Pain. I had rather as Quakers have praid have an easy Passage. But if I have Pain I hope for Patience. I am afraid I shall not get home yet. If I stay I may do wrong again. I am taught not by fear but conscious Knowledge that all is well. ~ I thank you & your Children (for your Spouse & you are one) & Sally.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ Sarah Wesley junior (1759-1828). Born at Charles Street, Bristol, the only surviving daughter of Charles and Sally Wesley. Educated mainly at home, Sarah showed intellectual precocity and displayed particular talent for writing prose, poetry and for drawing. Shy and devoted to her books, Sarah's letters reveal that in her circle of family and friends she was possessed of a ready wit, generous nature and keen sense of humour.

Considered very good looking when young, Sarah contracted smallpox, which disfigured her looks. She never married and lived principally with her parents until her mother's death in 1822. Sarah also made frequent visits to Bristol and lived in Manchester for several months at the end of 1796 as the companion of Mrs De Quincey, mother of the writer Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859).

Sarah attended worship at City Road Chapel in London and adhered to her parents' Church-Methodist ideals. She engaged in correspondence with a wide circle, which included minor literary figures, such as the historian and novelist Elizabeth Benger (1775-1827). It was the opinion of her friends that Sarah could have made a living as a writer, had she been so inclined – only a small number of her poems were published during her lifetime.

Sarah showed a keen interest in upholding the reputation of her father and uncle and appears to have been the principal custodian of personal papers and family lore to which she provided access to early Methodist scholars. As such, Sarah Wesley exerted a significant but often invisible influence on the writing of Methodist history. Sarah was close to her brothers Charles and Samuel, although the latter's unstable personality created a division in later years.

You may judge I am not well yet by the writing. But mostly I suffer without Complaint & comply without murmuring. Thank GOD. Fare well. J Henderson

There are a few Things not commonly suggested which may deserve to be considered concerning an old & good Church ~ Which I desire to offer to B.ro Samuel¹⁷⁰ not to insult or instruct but submit to Judgement. There is one Argument of Tradition & Succession. But cannot Rotteness run as well as sound fluid? Even tho the Body be

She died on 19 September 1828 during a visit to Bristol. (Principal source: *DNB* and Wesley family papers (MARC))

¹⁷⁰ Samuel Wesley (1766-1837). Born at Charles Street, Bristol, the youngest son of Charles and Sally Wesley, Samuel like his older brother Charles junior, was a musical prodigy, who was able to play his first tune by the age of three. He received keyboard lessons from the age of six and performed in public for the first time soon after. The prominent organist and composer William Boyce (1711-79) referred to Samuel as the English Mozart.

Educated largely at home, Samuel received a good grounding in classics and English literature as well as instruction in musical performance and composition.

In 1771, the Wesley family moved to Chesterfield Street, Marylebone, London, where Charles and Samuel continued their musical education. Between 1779 and 1787 the brothers performed at a series of private subscription concerts at their home in front of a society audience, in which Charles and Samuel both performed and composed music.

Samuel's personality was rebellious and somewhat volatile – he may have suffered from a form of bipolar or manic-depressive illness. In 1784 he converted to Roman Catholicism and while his conversion appears to have been brief, he retained a life-long interest in Roman Catholic music and liturgy. In 1793, Samuel married Charlotte Martin in the face of significant family opposition. The marriage proved disastrous and the couple separated in 1810 amidst mutual accusations of domestic violence. Samuel had already formed a liaison with his former housekeeper Sarah Suter and the couple remained together in a common law relationship for the rest of their lives. Samuel Wesley was a brilliant organist and the most original British composer of his generation. His compositions, in almost every genre were characterized by a deep knowledge of a wide range of musical genre. From 1808 to 1816 he was much in demand as a performer and from 1813 was the regular organist at the Covent Garden oratorio concerts. He also toured regularly outside London. Intellectually brilliant, Wesley lectured on music at the Royal Institution and was a regular reviewer for the *European Magazine*.

Wesley's health collapsed in August 1816, possibly triggered by his child's death. He was committed for a time to a lunatic asylum and was not able to resume his career until 1819. Financial difficulties added to his problems and while Wesley continued to perform and lecture, his career never fully recovered.

Following a further attack of depression in 1830, Wesley's last years were spent in retirement and in conditions of financial hardship. He died at his home in Pentonville, London on 11 October 1837 after a short illness. (Principal source: *DNB*)

the same. And if the whole Xtian Church be one cannot one Part tho later formed be better than the other? Is not all Nature renewed successively? And is not that Process necessary in exfoliations of putrescent Bones? – As for damnation for being out of the true Church Plato Says well [Greek text].

I have not now by me any Book to read. ~ But I will answer one Objection. It is said the Reformation was done by bad men & means. It is true. But there are Vessels of Honor & Dishonor. And when filth [has?] been made the last are the properest for removing [tear in paper] it – I conclude asking Can GOD contradict Him-Self? Did He not give ou[...].nses? Are they not as truly a Revelation as any other? Can that be true which cont[radiets] them? If I have written wrong, consider I am weak.

Proof of the

The Faith once delivered to the Saints tho not (sensual) was objected to the Senses perceived by them, believed from them & ever since delivered thro them to them

R:d S.r

There are all People here remembring you with Love.

My father wishes that when you come hither you may reside here. And probably we may have a convenient where upon you may pleasureably ride here [tear in page] with all – a small & easy one

Text below is written upside down]

I thank you especially for your faithful Prayers & excellent Hymn
And as you mentioned Sam I am obliged to him you for the News But by no means, do I forget Charles¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ Charles Wesley junior (1757-1834). Born in Bristol, possibly at 19 Charles Street, the oldest surviving son of Charles and Sally Wesley. According to his father's account Charles was aged two and three-quarters when he began to display musical precocity, quickly mastering the harpsichord and organ. Like his younger brother Samuel and sister Sarah junior, Charles was educated largely at home.

It became clear that Charles and Samuel wished to become professional musicians and in furtherance of this aim the family moved in London in 1771, where Charles received lessons from Joseph Kelway and William Boyce. From 1779 to 1786 the Wesley brothers performed in subscription concerts at the family home.

Wesley's career did not live up to this early promise. His output as a composer was almost negligible and is largely forgotten. He made his adult living by giving recitals and more regular employment as organist at Anglican chapels in the London area.

Charles, who appears to have been an eccentric but amiable character, never married. He lived with his parents and afterwards with his sister Sally. He died on 23 May 1834 and was buried at Marylebone parish church. (Principal source: DNB)

Reference: EMV/501/79

Date: [May 1787]¹⁷²

Correspondent: John Henderson

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

'J. Henderson May - 1787

Brevis esse laboro.¹⁷³ And therefore shall omit all Expressions of Esteem & Love. For if, as I believe, our Affection is mutual all Expressions now would be Compliments.

I thank You for your Hymn. Did I not know that you have a natural facility at Poetry your Lines would not be so welcome. for I am sorry when I trouble any one's Attention. – Hymns are the chief of my Reading. for they may felt without Study. My favorites have been (this Season) “O when shall we sweetly remove”¹⁷⁴ & a Hymn in the large Moravian Book beginning “Jesu how truly hidden call'd” which is attributed to G: Stonehouse¹⁷⁵ formerly of Islington, vulgarly called the little Heretic. – If I recollect rightly, not having the Book by me, this Sentence of Chrysostom “Τὸν ΘΕΟΝ ὁμοίως ἀνυμνεῖν χρῆ καὶ κολάζοντα καὶ ἀνιέντα κολαξί/σεως Ἀμφοτέρα γὰρ κηδεμονίας ἀμφοτέρα Ἀγαθοτήτος &c” might be the original of that english Verse “Good when He gibes, supremely good &c”

My father is well. I dine & sup with the Family. more over I go among our Patients & walk about the Village to see other sick. I propose to go to Bristol in a day or 2. – As to curious Arts there lives not a man that knows I ever practised them, with Success.

fare well. John Henderson

Reference: EMV/501/80

Date: 10 May 1787

¹⁷² Dated by Charles Wesley's annotation

¹⁷³ “I labour to be brief” (Horace)

¹⁷⁴ Hymn by Charles Wesley

¹⁷⁵ George Stonehouse (1714-93). Born in Hungerford Park, Bedfordshire, Stonehouse was educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, and entered the Anglican ministry in 1736. He met John Wesley after his return from Georgia and was converted shortly afterwards. In 1738 he became Vicar of St Mary's in the London parish of Islington where for a time Charles Wesley acted as his curate.

After coming under the influence of the Moravians, Stonehouse resigned from his parish in 1740 and spent twelve years with Count Zinzendorf in Germany. He also travelled widely in pursuit of his studies of Syraic New Testament manuscripts.

After his return to England, Stonehouse lived in semi-retirement at Dornford in Oxfordshire.

Source: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860* edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995)

Correspondent: John Henderson
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
'J. Henderson recovering slowly. May 10 1787'

Revd Sir,

How dear I need not, can not say. My Esteem, Gratitude & Love is very strong to You & yours. I am happy in your Affection & think I feel there is a mutual Touch of Hearts.

It needed not that my Letter should have deceived you. It was visible in the Strokes that I could Scarce write. I was obliged to stop & take Aim at almost every Word. Nor can I write now as usual. But it costs me less Labor than before.

Many Medical Prognostics concur to promise (or threaten) a Recovery which I more fear than wish. I must have a Will: else I can not resign: which I do heartily.

There is no fever. My Head is well. My Strength & Spirits mend. To day (the 5.th) I have suddenly recov[er]ed so far as to put on my Clothes & walk our Gar[d]ens twice. Which I have not done before & could not do yesterday. – But to day my father is taken ill.

It is my Opinion that I must come forth again. But outward Appearances (whatever I may know) are uncertain. I have 2 or 3 bad Intervals every day. And “subject to skyey Influences” I change daily with the weather.

There only remain Weakness & Cramps; always upon me, but the latter shifting Place. They are only dangerous when they cross the Throte or Stomach. In the Limbs (where I feel them almost constantly) they are simply painful.

But of what Use is precious Pain unless suffered in silence & felt as Good?

With my Heart's Wish fare well
vacillante adhuc manu John Henderson

I have received a Letter from Mr Palmer. He says no thing of his Health, Doings or Hopes. I can not write more now.

Reference: EMV/501/81
Date: 1787
Correspondent: John Henderson
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
'J. Henderson 1787 = signa fata aspera rumpas'

Truly Reverend & dear Sir,

Mr Palmer, the Bearer, will tell You all about his Self. And He is a Man of Merit. May I presume to recommend Him to your Patronage? your Brother's? Your Daughter's? I pray that You may do Him all the Good which beseemeth You.

I had written the above before I received, last Night, your excellent Letter. My father is not perfectly well. He has for Years been ill every Winter. He divides his Sufferings between Rheumatism & Asthma. But a Doctor can not be cured.

Perhaps it was my fault, that I am not ordained. It was never my Will to act strenuously.

M.^r Galloway¹⁷⁶ is gone. I esteem Him much. And I shall visit his Daughter. I wish that I may see You both as often as possible when you come hither. – Be pleased to speak to your Brother & M.^r Palmer. Churchey¹⁷⁷ is gone. I hope you are going to publish.

Cacoethes Scribendi. Churchey is making a Present to the K—of Fresnoy on Painting. – Prince & Newton. J Henderson

¹⁷⁶ Joseph Galloway (c.1731-1803). Born in Maryland, British North America, the son of Peter Bines Galloway, a substantial landowner. After his father's death, Galloway moved to Philadelphia where he swiftly rose to prominence as a lawyer and politician, becoming speaker of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania in 1766. In 1774 Galloway was elected to the first congress where he submitted a plan for the union of Great Britain and her North American colonies.

In December 1776 on the outbreak of War of Independence, Galloway remained loyal to the Crown and was appointed magistrate of police for Philadelphia. In 1778 after the city was evacuated, he left for England and gave evidence before the House of Commons. He also published an attack on Lord Howe's handling of the war.

Galloway settled in Watford and devoted the rest of his life to study of Biblical prophecies.

Galloway was known to the Wesley brothers. His published views on the war influenced John Wesley's work *Reflections on the Rise and Progress of the American Rebellion* (1780). (Principal source: DNB)

¹⁷⁷¹⁷⁷ Walter Churchey (1747-1805). Born in Brecon, Wales, Churchey attended school with the founder of Methodist foreign missions Thomas Coke. Trained as a lawyer, Churchey moved to Hay-on-Wye and was converted to Methodism in about 1770, possibly by his former school friend. He frequently corresponded with John Wesley and claims to have suggested the idea of founding the *Arminian Magazine*. Churchey also produced some religious verse of rather poor quality.

In later life, Churchey adopted pronounced millenarian views. (Principal sources: Harmon and Lewis)

Reference: EMV/501/82
Date: [February 1788]¹⁷⁸
Correspondent: John Henderson
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Address: "To The Revd Mr C: Wesley"
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
'[J]. Henderson Feb 1788'

Without apologising for what can not be excused I simply beg your Pardon. But I must say, my good & dear Father, that my fault has not more grieved you than afflicted my self with Shame, Loss & Regret. Such was my Happiness in your Friendship, such are my Hopes in your Reconciliation, that I wish for no thing so much as a Token. If your Heart can return I think I can promise to cleave to it.

Do not consider my unworthiness when you next think of your Journals. Let me improve by them. I will take Care of their Treatment & Return. – But – highly as I value them – I can scarcely ask[?] their Perusal.

We are all well here & unite our affectionately grateful Respects to You & each of yours.

I pray you, do forgive me.

John Henderson

You should have received a Letter before now; but I have been little at Home since You left us. – But this can be no Excuse. I own I had Leisure for a Letter, but Laziness too.

Reference: EMV/501/83
Date: 21 October 1767
Correspondent: Jane Hawstead¹⁷⁹
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Location: Kingston, Jamaica
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
'happy J. Hawstead. Oct. 21 1766'

Kingstone Jamaica October

ye 21st 1767

Revern^d & very Dr Sr

¹⁷⁸ Dated by Charles Wesley's annotation

¹⁷⁹ Jane Hawstead (b.1713), spinster aged 17 of St Giles in the Field, Middlesex [now part of London] was indentured as a servant for the term of 6 years in Jamaica, 14 October 1730

(http://www.virtualjamestown.org/indentures/search_indentures.cgi?search_type=individual&id=1305&db=london2_ind)

Ive a good Hope this will find my Dr Father in Xt. well & as Happy as afelt union & Communion with His God can make Him that His Dr Partner Injoys the Same Inestimable blessings & that His Dr Little ones affords Him the Comfortable Hope of their being marked with Grace also, which I am Convinced is the Wealth & Treasure you wish your Childern to be possessed of. I trust the Work of God greatly prosper in your Land in your Church & in your own soul, which will afford great Comfort to Hear.

I Have much to Praise God for; for His Gracious Deliverances from eminent Dangers the first part of our Passage & for remarkable fair Winds & pleasant Weather the other part of it, which brought us Safe to this port in thirty eight Days from Plymoth, but o my Dr Sr I find I want a thankfull Heart, I desire & earnestly pray for a more thankfull Heart, for Indeed, Ive much Spiritual Blessings to praise God for as well as Temporal ones for I Have various times Injoyed Large manifestations of the Love of God even till my Cup runs over & at some seasons my Faith so strong & Hope so abundant that know not If should be able to bare greater degrees of Spiritual

[page break]

Delight without its over powering my mortal frame Lord fill my Soul with gratefull Love for all thy Inestimable blessings. O My Dr. Sr. grant me a Constent Intrest in your Prayers that God may ever keep me near Himself Looking unto Jesus Hanging upon & depending on Him from – moment to moment for all things needful for Life & Godliness Indeed my Dr Sr. I stand in much need of your prayers for this is a dreadfull place, a very Jerico no Gosple preached Here neither any Christian Friend to Converse or advise with, yet Glory be to God tho I am from the outward means yet the God of means is Here, this my Soul knoweth right well for He offtimes visits me with His great Salvation this is a great Incouragement to press forward, & I have another as great which as it will add to your Comfort, & may be a Jewel in your Crown (as In all probability begoting under your ministry) I must acquaint you with, is it not Suprising news, that a Soul Should go Tryumphant to God in such a place as this where there is not the Least outward Helps but all the Drawbacks that may be, yett so it is, all Glory & praise be to Redeeming Love for it. Mr Gilbert Ford¹⁸⁰ our Atorney General, who Has been a resident of this Iland many years off & on, but came Here from Bristol & was, as am Informed brought up & educated by the Derection of Lady Huntington His Death bed He made His pulpet & on it preached to all that came to see Him, & the Novelty of the thing Drew Numbers to His House. He

¹⁸⁰ Gilbert Ford (d.1767) was of a Bristol family and was acquainted with the Countess of Huntingdon (*Life and Times of Selina Countess of Huntingdon* by Seymour, 202). A slave owner, he served as Jamaica's Attorney General and in 1764 was given a seat on the island's Royal Council (Camden Miscellany XXXV, 31). Ford's will, which has been transcribed online (<http://aparcelofribbons.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/52-Ford-Will-of-Gilbert-Ford-1767.pdf>), gives no indication of religious inclinations beyond those of a conventional Anglican

prayed warned reprov'd & exorted them, till they was all astonished at the strange things was brought to there ears. He was very plain with ye Clergy man belonging to the Parrish where He Lay sick & reprov'd Him very closely which I Hope Has Had a good effect as the Gentleman Preached a very exttroinary Sermond the next morning (being Sunday) at the Church & another in the affternoon at the House where the People Had Staid some from the Day before, & the greater part all that Day so that they was obliged to kill a Calf to provide for them, the cry was they never saw nor Heard the the Like before, such exspressions of the Goodness of God, such resignation to the Will of God, & such exelant prayers they never Heard before & thus He continued to praise & Glorify God till a short time before His Death when His sences Failed, but they are waiteing for the Letters, so must Conclude Intreating & Intrest in your Prayers & of your very Dr Brothers to Whome I was to write but the Hurry I am In will not permitt me at this time, pray Sr present my Half Dutty to Him & plead my excuse for this time, my most affect respects waites upon your very Dr partner. Hope she will allso remember me when at the throne, & now If my poor Feeble prayers might prevail In behalf of my Dr Minesters, they will then Have Showers of Choise Blessings poured upon them & a Double portion of the Spirit of God given unto them, & Do thou O my God Bless them with the Blessing Jabez prayed for. Bless them Indeed & Inlarge there boast Let thy hand be with them & Do thou Keep them from Evil that it may not greive them

O my God grant this my Humble request for them & for theres & O Do thou bless me even me allso O my God Amen in Charity Dr Sr favour me with a few Lines to Help build me up in the faith of the Gospel of Christ. I am

very Dr Sr
your most affect
Sernt & Daughter in xt
Jane Hawstead

Happy J. Hawstead
Oct. 21, 1768
Ford's blessed end

Reference: EMV/501/84

Date: April 1743

Correspondent: Rachel Hawthorne

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. 'S[ister] Hawthorn's B[rother]'s Death April 1743'
2. 'Hawthorn's Death in Xt April 1743'

Re^d Sir

with sorrow I write to acquaint you that my brother departed this Life ye twelfth of this instant he was taken one good friday with a shivering and a pain in his side his pain was sharp and continued he bore it with great patience and said if God ware to cast him into hell it were no more than what he deserved one wednesday brother Bedley came to see him and prayd with him he expressed great satisfaction and admired the wonderful Love of God to him one thursday brother maxwell and brother Badley came tother he told them he had had some doubts but the Lord had taken them away his pain encreased greatly yet he did not murmer but would often say o what did Christ endure for me this is nothing to what my saviour suffered for me oh the length and breath and depth and height of the Love of God which is in christ Jesus our Lord oh give me more of this love one Saterdag sister Badley came to see him he asked her how you did he said he should be glad to have [seen?] you he said he is my dear father and lifting up his hands he prayed that God would still carry one the worke that God would strengthen you more and more and said o how am I bound to bless the day that he was Born oh blessed be God in sending forth such faithful mins[t]ers he prayed that God would still make you the Spirittual father of thousands he told Mrs Badley and Mrs Jones that he was glad to see them and that the least of Gods children was welcome to him when ye physian said he could do nomore for him he said ye will of the Lord be done for saide he I know that ye Lion of y^e tribe of Judea¹⁸¹ is one my side he desired to receive the blessed Sacrament which he did ye day before he died with great joy he told me old thing were done away and all things were become new he continued in praying & reioyceing all ye night and never once colesed his eyes in ye morning Satan began to asault him he cried out I fear I fear to be out of Christ oh treabel treable I asked him what made him fear he said because my Lord is so long in coming why why tarreth my Lord come Lord Jesus come quickly and so departed crying our Lord Jesus make me pertaker of thy divine nature his last conflicts has caused great uneasiness in me that he that bore all his pain with that patiance resignation, should be so assaulted I greatly fear my self loosing my sister so lately and now my brother which is my all I can hardly support under it Sir if you would be pleased to favour me with a line or to would be of great comfort to your afflicted and dutiful servant

Rachel Hawthorne

Reference: EMV/501/85

Date: 1762

Correspondent: M. Haynes

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

'M. Haynes witches 1762'

1762

¹⁸¹ Revelation 5:5

Upon M.^r Haynes's offer to M.^r Giles for receiving one of his Daughters for a little time at Wick,¹⁸² he brought over his Eldest (Polly near 14 years old) on Monday 22 Feb: But M.^r Giles intimating it had been whisper'd by ye Witch in the year of the younger / called Doppy between 8 & 9 y.^{rs} of Age / that if they were parted for two nights the Eldest would be in danger of her life, and that Polly cry'd and said the Witch had whisper'd her also that Doppy had not told lies: So then 'twas consented for Doppy likewise to come over; and next day, Tuesday, she was brought. It was said the Witch had given them notice they should be quiet for a fortnight, and so they continued. At ye ending of the fortnight, Monday night, / M.^r Haynes being absent on a journey to London / The Maid Servant, who was with them in their room and warming y.^r bed, observ'd them to whisper much; and Polly said, Oh Doppy! to morrow the fortnight is out: The other answer'd, Ah Sister! so tis. They went to bed and slept well all night. Tuesday morning the maid rose and left them, as she tho't fast asleep; and about half an hour after, being in a parlor below near the foot of ye stairs, she heard them trampling in the passage by their Chamber door; At ye same time M.^r Haynes Jun:^r heard one or both of them come out of the Room, And one M.^{rs} Berrow Lying in an Upper Chamber close to the head of ye stairs, heard them treading near to her door. Immediately, within a minute's space, the Eldest came down to ye Maid as much dress'd as she us'd to come to her Breakfast, with her stays full laced &c and asked if she had taken away her Sister Doppy, for she had miss'd her when she waked. They both ran to seek for her: And not finding her in her own Chamber they went to an upper room next to that where M.^{rs} Berrow Lay, and found her under a bed, naked to her Shift: The maid

[page break]

asking how she came there, she said the Old Woman, meaning the Witch, carried her thither; And being further asked, why she did not wake her Sister, She answer'd, she stop'd her mouth with ye sheet: Presently after M.^{rs} Haynes asking why she did not cry out, she said, the Witch stop'd her mouth with her dirty hand, and that her hand was very sweaty and clammy; But soon after, speaking of it, said she did not wake 'till she was carried to ye stairs; and being asked in what manner she was carried, she described it, as tho' ye Old Woman lift her under both arms: Being then told 'twas impossible she could stop her mouth with her hands, carrying her in that manner; She reply'd, No! 'twas not with her hands; my mouth was against her stomach: Likewise saying the Witch had ragged stockings; it was asked, how could she see them? She said she stooped down and peeped at them; But being objected how could that be as she was carried in ye manner described? She afterw.^{ds} said, she saw y^m as the witch lay on her under the bed: Thus she varied much in giving Acc.^t of this Matter, and was found to be warm as tho' she had but just come out of her bed. Presently after they had in their room fits of striving, which soon pass'd over, and Doppy being dress'd they both came down stairs: Their agitations were repeated in the Parlor, some times

¹⁸² Gloucestershire

together at other times by turns, crying out the Witch did pull them by the Leggs and by their necks, and they often slid from their chairs upon their knees, and so fell to the Ground. Dobby took her breakfast well; her Sister flung the Tea about, sometimes by Joggs of her Elbow, at other times by jolting her head down; and thus it continued till near eleven o'clock; But from first to last, there was no appearance of any preter-

[page break]

natural distortion, strain or marvellous bodily motion or Gesture, but all within their own power to act neither were any marks impress'd of Bites Scratchings or Pinches on any part of their body: And M.^{rs} Haynes thereupon persuaded in her mind, the whole was deception, but not letting ye children then know she tho't so; Order'd that none should hold them, Letting the people if they were left to themselves, She might possibly see the Witch come to them, And this expedient put an end to the affair for that day. They eat their dinner very hearty, and were merry the afternoon, and all night slept sound. Mrs Berrow and the Maid both lay with them that night. Next morning early, the Maid being up, M.^{rs} Haynes went into ye room and inquir'd how they were; M.^{rs} Berrow answered Miss Dobby had been down to the foot of ye bed three or four times, And that the Eldest said the Witch had struck her twice on the sides of her head; whereupon M.^{rs} Haynes went towards Polly and talk'd with some severity to her, telling her she should not be suffer'd to be acting more of her Tricks here, and gave her to understand it was well known she had convey'd her Sister up stairs the day before. From that instant Polly rose and came down stairs, And for all the time they staid at Wick afterwards, which was three weeks and some days, they continued well, being most tenderly used, and lived in a high degree of cheerfulness; the family avoiding all discourse in their presence concerning Witchcraft or any matters relating thereto.

Reference: EMV/501/86

Date: April 1742

Correspondent: Hannah Hancock

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Adress: "For The Revd Mr Charl[e]s Wesly"

Location: [Bristol]

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Han Hancock. April 1742. Justified in Sacram[en]t"
2. "H. Hancock April 1742"

Dear Sr I have [illegible] indeavour to let you know the state of my Soul wen Mr Wittfield [George Whitefield] came I heard him and Received his saying: has concerning repentance and Faith in Christ thinking it must be acomplished in my Sole before I go hence hand the sufferings of Christ did milt me down Extreeme much which caused me to make Promisis of ammdment but I found it was in my own Strength wen I was under the word I could make many Resolutions but when I was

away I found that they did not stand which convinced me it was in my own strength
when pleased God to send your Dear Brother here I heard him with much Delight & the
first Sermon has come with power to me was in the 6 Chp of Romans & the 23 Verse
for the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is Eternal Life through Jesus Christ
our Lord & when he Explained upon the wages of sin the word came with power & I
saw the state I was in how far I was from God I then could not find any Rest for my
soul but was continually Crying out what must I do to be saved or which David a
wounded spirit who can bare. I went on morning & found no Comfort Some times in
hope and then in Dispare be[h]ould[?] I go forward but he his not there & backward
but I can not perceive him on the left hand where he doth but I can not beould him he
hideeth himselfe on the right hand that I cannot see him but he knoweth the way that I
take when he hath tried me I shall come forth as Gold then I found the drawings of the
father sweetly Drew me which caused me to believe altho it was long before the
Comforter came I Belived he would Com I went nere a yeare morning before I found
my Savior and the Enemy did sorely beset me telling me my Damnation was Sealed
& continually tempting that ye Lord had Sworn in his wroath that I should never enter
into his Rest but I found Christ Stronger than the Enemy the 6 of aprill 1740 being
Easter Sunday I went to the sacrament under the weight and burdon of sin. & I
Desired of the Lord not to let me Depart till he had give me his blessing there I found
him reseed on my Soul with healing on his wings the promise was applied I have
blotted out thy Sins out of my Remembrance and thine Iniquities will I Remember
no more wo how Sweet was Jesus Christ to me when I could See him with the eye of
faith then I found I Died Dayly to the world & was in the Light of his Countenance &
went on my way Rejoicing wo[?] how did I long for others to taste of the Same
continually Saying wo taste & see that the Lord is gracious I went on and had Sweet
Communion with God for two month then the Enemy Came

[page break]

Came in as a flood upon me telling [me] I was in a Delusion & the Lord had Done
nothing for me then I Cried mightily if it was so that the Lord would satisfie me & if
not that it might be so the Lord heard & answered my Prayer and gave full
Satisfaction & the Second time the promise was applied to me thine Iniquities is
Covered & thy Sins is pardoned turn unto me for I have Redemed the then I found
much Sweetness with God & grate power over sin I Could then say with Solomon I
sat under his Shadow with grate Delight and his Fruit was Sweet to my taste I Could
then say his left hand was under my head and his Right hand doth Embrace me & his
Banner over me was love but wo how soone did I forget my Savior and how litely did
I Esteem the rock of my salvation I then gave way to Reasonings & Reasoned my selfe
into the believe of Election I then thought that God had made a Remnant to be saved
and Remnant to be lost and when the preachers of that Doctrin came I went to heare
them and blived all they Said all they Said concerning of the Elected Love as called it
& not falling from grace but wo full Experience soon told me I was falled when I Came
to here you I grate pregedis in me against you that I Could not Received your Sayings
Concerning universal Redemtion no Sinless Perfection then I hapned in Company
with som of their Belief & they hasked me my Experance and I told them has far
has I had Experance concerning Justification & they told me I had never need doubt
I was Elected & I Belived them then I found my Selfe grow Sak & careless in prayer
& all Duties & by the providence of God was in Compny & we was telling our
Experance concerning Prayer the parsons I was with was baptises I would thy would

have Joined with me but I found Otherway the Question I Required was ware they thought there was any thing in a form wether people could not pray as well in their Beds as on their knees one answered no and told me it was very Cold prayer in a warm bed wich word I found true but litle thought to here such and answer from them I then took to that armour of prayer again and those parsons told me a prayerless Soul was a Christly the word Sunk Deep into my hart & pleased the Lord to Lay me on a bed of Sickness in the fir[st] part of Sickness I was in Sore temtation and feared Death But the Lord soon removed that fear & Filled me with is Love the promis applied to me was I will Betroath the to me for ever I will Betroath the unto me in Rightouness in Judgment in Loveingkindness and in mercy the promisis of god was food to my Soul it pleased the Lord to Send your dear [Brother] to me he has hasked me wether I Believed Christ died for som or for all my answer was for all the next promis applied to me was thou art Comly throuig[?] my Comliness put upon but after this Love & Kindness from god how soon did I forget him that Could belive Election it I went careless weighting for his Ristable Grace and I lift Bands but I found my Soul was Like noa Dove as the Dove could find no Rest for the Sole of his foot till it Returned so was my Soul I morned afte Jesus Christ for a fresh manefestation of his love I Heard your Brother upon the 25 Day of Febuary¹⁸³ upon the 9 Chap of Ezra the 5 & 6 Virse he shewed the Remorc of Conciene after a soul ad revoulted from Crist my Soul wtensed what was then Spok I was then under Remorce I coul then look on Christ whome I had Perced and morned it was often the Languige of my soul I forced the first to Disapear I turned a side a lord if thou hads still abin hear thy Servant had not Died on ye 28 Day of Febuary I hard your Brother on the 3 Cap of Revelations the 2 and 3 Virse he put those in Rememberanc of what thy had Received from god the Enemy did sorely beset me telling me I had Received Nothin but the witness of god was with me Bareing wittness I had and the Cry of hart was Lord of perish I will perish at at thy Feet O how ready Jesus Christe Received returning Sinners he mett me while I was a grate way of he Run and fell upon my neck and kissed me with the Kiss of peace on the firt of March the Lord Reconciled me to himself Telling me I Have healead thy Backsliding freely which was gave me much Comfort the Lord have Deaply Convinsed me of the Necesaty of inward holiness and I Believe without holiness no man can see the Lord Sur I Begg your Continual Prayer as my first Desir was to know my intrus in Christ it is my earnest Desire to know Christ Living in me the hope of glory

From yor Humble and affection servant till Death Hannah Hancock

Reference: EMV/501/87

Date: May 1742

Correspondent: Elizabeth Halfpenny

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Elis Halfpeny's May 1742"
2. "Elis Halfpeny's Exp[erien]ce May 1742"

¹⁸³ John Wesley was in Bristol on 25 February 1742 (JWJ)

Reverend Sir

According to your desire, I have given you as full account of the State of my Soul at Present, and also of some of my Former Life; as I thought would be Proper to mention; & as it now occurs to my Mind.

It Pleas'd God, that when Mr. Whitfield [George Whitefield] first came to Preach in Bristol, I went to hear him at Nicholas Church;¹⁸⁴ and Seem'd to approve of his Doctrine, and was a Constant hearer of his; and [I never missed any opportunity?] Mr. Whitfield's Doctrine had some Effect upon me, so that I was in Part convinced of Sin, and shed Tears very often; but received no Glympse of the Light of God's Countenance, and went on still in Darkness; and had no thoughts of a Saviour. Now I clearly See, that I was then groveling in the Dark; and knew not whither I went. When Mr. Whitefield was going to Georgia, I was unwilling to be a hearer of your Brother Mr. John, who was then to come here to Bristol; and went to Mr. Whitefield on that account, and Testified to him my unwillingness to hear Mr. John, whom Mr. Whitfield Recommended as a Faithful Shepherd, in such a manner, that Induced me to consent to be his hearer. And Accordingly I went to the Bowling Green, where he had not long been Preaching before I was Tempted to think he was a Roman Catholick. I found now that I was a hearty Bigot, as it was well known. When I was under your Brother's Doctrine, those words had great Effect upon me, Ask which I had in my Childhood meditated upon; Ask, and ye Shall receive, Seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be open'd unto you. My Business calling me among those who they call the Fashionable People of the World, who Endeavored through their Pretensions to have Love and Tenderness for my Soul to Entice me from hearing the Word, by Telling me Such Things as the World doth. But all their Devices had no Effect upon me. (Blessed be God). At one time I went to the Bowling Green to hear Mr. John, where I heard him Speak of Entertaining Strangers which I found Affected me much; But rather Esteem'd him as a Saviour than a Minister, and So continued in that Dreadful State for about a year, my Soul never being at rest but when I was with him, on hearing him talked of; But this Idolatious Love Proceeded no farther than Trusting in the Arm of Flesh; But yet I was not willing any one should know it lest I should be told I was in An Error. I had promis'd to go into y^e Country, & at the time of my going , y^r. Brother was just come down from London, and I went down to the New Room in order to See him, because I could not go away before I had Seen him, I went down, but he was not there; But Mr. Richards and Mr. Ellison was there at Breakfast, who Sung a Hymn whose First Line is, O Thou who when I did complain, at which time I was in Some measure Supported under my Heavy Burthen. While I was in the Country, I had the Liberty of coming to the Room at Kingswood, where I saw Mr. Nonvers, to whom I was Bless'd in Spirit to Speak concerning the Idolatious Love I had for y^r Brother which he had often warn'd us against. But fearing he would Put a wrong Construction on what I should speak to him I refrain'd for that time. But afterwards I Spoke to him, upon which he told me, it was no strange Thing to him to hear of those things, or in other words to that Effect, and so I found considerable relief at that time. Sometime after, I went to Rose Green, where Mr. John Expounded on the Fiery Trial, in which Trial I was then in, and continued therein Sometime. When Mr. John came Down from London, and Expounded in the New Room, I then found my

¹⁸⁴ St Nicholas Church, Bristol

Affection grow cold towards him at which I was grieved and Troubled very much,
Not knowing at that time that

it was a Conviction from the Lord. The first time of [expounding] At Weaver's Hall¹⁸⁵ Mr. John was Expounding on the Death of Lazarus, when I found Such work in my heart as I never felt before, and saw the Necessity of a thorough Change of Life, a Blessing so great as I knew not how to Praise God for. I went home, and for Sometime would Read ne're a Book, but the Bible. I began to feel the Drawing of the Father, which continued a Considerable time. I was very glad to hear People talk of the Love of God, though I myself was not a Partaker of it, but I could always rejoice to hear talk of the Loving kindness of the Lord and desired that the Lord would teach me what I knew not. New Year's Day, you Expounded on the Barren Fig Tree, at the New Room; which made a Considerable Impression on my heart, which continued about a Fortnight, and had no rest, because of my desire to have more knowledge of the Scripture. When you Said, that we might be put on a Level with Whores and Drunkards and Outward Sinners, I could not receive the saying and Stagger'd there at very much. Mr. John would often Say to me, O that you could become as a Little Child, & (Blessed be God) I believe his Prayers are heard. I was at Temple Baths at one time, where the Lord was Pleas'd to Enlighten my understanding to see the meaning of Part of the Scripture, I felt as it were, a Mountain removed from my heart, and clouds from my understanding, O what I shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits, and his unspeakable mercies; Sing ye heavens, and Rejoice O Earth, for the Lord hath done it, let the Floods Clap their hands, and the Trees of the Wood Rejoice before the Lord. About Two years ago, I went to Rose Green, where (under your Ministry (Blessed be God) I received Forgiveness of sins, Since which, I found that I Thirsted for Christ more and more, and more of his Love; I found that whatever Temptation would beset me, would work together for my Good, if I would Cast all my care on the Lord, and not Trust on my own strength. At a certain time in my Band, I received an extraordinary measure of the Love of God, which made me think that I Loved the Lord alone I had no love for the World nor the Things thereof; I counted All Things but Dung and Dross for the Excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord; Ever since, the Word of God sinks in my heart, with greater Power and Demonstration, and I Enjoy a Closer Union with God. The time that your Brother read the Letter in the Bands, which Mr. Ceneck¹⁸⁶ writ, it was of great use to me; This

¹⁸⁵ The junction of Cart Lane and Temple Street, Bristol

¹⁸⁶ John Cennick (1718-55): Born in Reading, Berkshire, into a Quaker family, Cennick was converted in 1737 and two years was invited to assist the Wesley brothers at Kingswood. In June 1739, Cennick preached as a layman without any complaint from John Wesley and can therefore be regarded as the first official Methodist lay preacher.

Cennick sided with Whitefield in the debate concerning predestination and in 1741 parted company with the Wesleys. Later that year he opened a Calvinist Tabernacle at Kingswood and traveled with the Welsh evangelist Howell Harris.

Cennick was an evangelist of outstanding ability, who preached widely across the south of England. In 1745 he joined the Moravians and offered them his associations of converts. Cennick visited Germany in December of the same year and was sent by Count Zinzendorf to Ireland where his ministry was to last five years – perhaps as

underhand dealing of Mr. Ceneck's could never be right, which made me have no Conversation with him, and at that time, the Lord strengthened me to be upon my watch against Mr. Whitefields coming here, and so I never heard him, neither have I had a Desire to speak to him ever since. But the Lord hath gather'd me as a hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and I doubt not but he will, if I Prove Faithfull to the grace I have received. Sometime ago, I could not believe, [th] there was any such state as Perfection before Death, but under your Doctrine, on a Saturday, I was convinced to the contrary. Being at Kingswood on Sacrament Day, in an Instant, was brought to my View, by the Eye of Faith, the Form of a Tall Parson in his Surplice; his hair was White, and seem'd to move on the ground with his back towards me, but he was Soon Vanish'd. The First time of my coming to hear the word, after being confined from it a considerable time, the Word came with such Power and Demonstration that I was so fill'd with the Love of God, [th] it caused me to overflow with Tears, Several times, which left a Soreness at my heart, which I never felt before. O that I may be always upon my Watch, looking unto the Lord, that I may have no head knowledge, or wisdom of my own, but that Wisdom which flows from God.

O May I ever give the Glory to God, for the Blessing that he bestow'd upon me, in Drawing me to hear your Doctrine, and enabling me to continue in the way that he hath appointed. Now, there is nothing troubling me, but a continual Fear of you and your Brother's Death, but it comes to mind often that the Lord will Strengthen me, if he should be Pleas'd to call you hence. I Now can rejoice in Tribulation and Persecutions, and as I have been a Partaker in the Benefit of your Prayers, Lord grant that I may always be teachable with respect to your Advice and Direction to me, being Sensible it will be for my Good, your unworthy Servant & Daughter in the Lord

Elizabeth Halfpenny

I have omitted one thing which I have undermentioned-

At the time you Expounded at Rose Green, I thought it was a very unsuitable Chapter which you was upon, which was the Sixteenth of Ezekiel, and was much offended at it, but before you had done the Lord, was Pleas'd to Set to his Seal, and I Received Forgiveness of Sins, the Word came with So great Power, that I Seem'd to be lifted off the ground; and never since have I fallen in Doubt of my Justification, and now if I find any Darts or Temptations Assaulting me they are not Burthensome to me.

many as 220 religious societies were formed there through his work. He was ordained into Moravian orders in 1749.

Cennick died in London following a period of poor health which was exacerbated by financial difficulties and disagreement with the Moravians.

In addition to publishing his sermons, Cennick also wrote many hymns and published one of the first hymn-books of the revival, *Sacred Hymns for the Children of God* (1741). (Principal source *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*, edited by Donald Lewis (1995) and *Dictionary of National Biography*)

Reference: EMV/501/88

Date: 5 December 1765

Correspondent: William Hopkins

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“The Life & Death of the Righteous – S[ister] Hopkins Dec. 5 1765”

Bristol December the 5th 1765

Dear & Rever^d Sir -- agreeable to your Request, I have at Last, Prevailed on my self to give you a Short Account of my dear Wifes Life & happy Death – O that it may be mine also;----- Indeed I am at a lost for words to sett it forth, In its proper Light, & give her; her just due, but this I can Truly say, She was an Israelite Indeed In home was no Guile, her Life and Conversation was beyond the common Rank of belivers, all tho She always putt her self down for an unbeliever, but such a Loveing & tender friend is very Rare to be mett with; for this Three & Twenty years as whe have been together, She have been a sincere----- Follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, & the Constant Desire of her Soul has been to Obey him home She Long to Love with all her heart, which sometimes she had a taste off; The Lord did give her to Drink of the Brook by the way & cause her to Lift up her head, but the Difficulties & trials of Life did way down her Precious Soul from day to day, She would often say to me O my Dear, I Love you to a Faulte, O that I Could Love the Lord Jesus more & you Less then I should be happy Indeed, I have always been a Shamed of my Self to see her simplicity & sinseraty & my unfaithfulness all that I can say is Vastly short of what she Deserved; which all that knew her Life & Conversation Cannott but testify, tho none Knew as Well as my self, She have had often Great Manifestations of the Love of God to her Precious Soul, but soon fall a doutting again, Indeed I have had Greater Confidence for she, than I had for my self; ----- For this Last two Years of her life she have been Greatly afflicted with Violent Pain & Sickness which she has bourn with uncommon Patient, for this Last year she have been mostly confined to her Room In Which time she would often be In Great fear --- Least the Lord Should take her away, before he had finish'd his work In her soul, which I did always tell her I was shewer he would not, for that his Promise could not fail, for every one that Truly & Sincerely seek the Lord shall shewerly find him, Which I very well know she had done, for this five & twenty years, all Which time she have been In your society, & humbly Waiting at the feet of Christ for his Salvation and at Last she Receive fully what she so long waitted for, -----For this Two Last Months of her Life she was mostly Confin'd to her bed dureing which time she was

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often greatly Refresh'd & the Lord according to his Promise did give her to taste of his Love, and would often Say Like our Lords Desiples of old; my heart Doth burn within me – but fear & unbelieff would Return again, -- She would Express her Self often In those Words, Nothing Short of Christ comeing and Reigning King In my Soul will Satisfy me, then she would cry – O that the Lord would not take me till he as Inabled me to Leave a good Confesion behind me, aboute a fortnight before her Death one Came to see her & She said to them, She was one that had been a Long

time Seeking, but had not the Assurance of the Love of God to her Soul – who Exhorted her to Look unto Jesus, who was both able & willing to give it her – now, the Next day She Spent wrestling in mighty prayer, after that the Lord broke in upon her Soul, & made her to trust In him, and then She was asure'd that he would not take her hence, till she had Seen his great Salvation & so She continued for near a Week, When Death began to Draw nigh, She Said I am Going, but now She believed that God for Christ Sake had forgiven her all her Sins, after this M.^{rs} Gee coming to see her being an Intimate acquaintance haveing mett to gather In Class many years & new her State, Perhaps better then any one besides, asked her Iff She had any fear, She Said a Little, She said fear not the Lord his near, after that She had a Great Conflict, which Lasted about one hour, Dureing which time She kept Praying, but on a Suddent She Cry'd out he his Come M.^{rs} Gee being preasant ask her is the Lord Jesus come. She said Yes, She ask her iff all fear was taken away She Said Yes, & She felt that Spirit that Rais'd our Lord Jesus from the Dead had Quicken her Soul, She said Virtue is gone out of him & I am heal'd & She broke out in these words, Glory be to God on high, Bless the Lord O my Soul, and all that his within me bless & Praise is holy name, I my self being Presant having a Constant Recoarse to her Sick bed, whose Life I would gladly have bought with my own, hearing her thus Rejoceing in God it Rejoce my heart also I then kneeling down with a few friends which was Preasant Gave thanks to the Lord for what he had Done for her Soul, I then took her by the hand & ask her iff She was willing to go to her Savior,

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She said yes, but you wont Lett me go meaning as I Suppose my not being willing to give her up for she had often before Desired me not to Pray for her Life, O who can tell the Smart of parting with such a friend, M.^{rs} Gee then said to her & now you Long to be Desolv'd & to be with Christ She Said is will be Done, -- She would be often Looking up with a Smileing countenance, very Earnest as iff She had seen the very Heavens open & one ask her what she saw She said the Lord Jesus & his holy angels Coming to Receive me by which her tongue was fill'd with Praise, o who can tell what She then saw, no mortall; but whe to Shall know iff whe be found Ready; -- She Said a Day or two before her Death, I shall be In Glory by Sunday, and on Sunday morning ab.^t half after one oclock She Sweetly fell a Sleep In Jesus -----
Dear Sir, all that as been Said is not one tenth Part of what might Truly be Said of my Dear Friend which is Now In Glory, Indeed the task was too great for me, had you not Requested it; & for some together with your Dear Brother She and I had always the greatest Veneration for, whom whe always desir'd to Live & Die with your Last Visitt was Dowblely Welcome bothe to She and me, your admonition I Shall Never forgett you told me as Soon as I Could Intirely give her up, the Lord would do what was best and so he Did his will be Done, tho hard to flesh & Blood & he Did from that day Inable me to Give her up into his hands and he has took her to himself o the wisdom & goodness of God, is ways are a Past finding out, I too soon shall follow her O that I may be found Ready, Pray Sir Excuse what you see amiss In this Scrole. Consider my Loss & Pray for me, my Constant Prayers his for you & your dear Brother untill we meett in Glory which is all at presant from your Ever Loveing & Dutyfull, tho unfaithful Son & Servant In the Gosple of our adorable Savior Jesus Christ -----

William Hopkins

Reference: EMV/501/89

Date: 3 December 1741

Correspondent: Joseph Humphreys

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Cha: Wesley at the Foundery near Upper Moor fields
London"

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Humphreys Dec 3 1741 lively, loving"
2. "Humphreys acknowledging"

Bristol, Dec. 3, 1741

Dear Sir,

I believe nothing moves me to write to you, but a spirit of love. When I think of that inexpressible union with God, and that glorious discovery of Immanuel, which my soul had under your ministry, gratitude obliges me to love and respect you. I had tasted of the grace of our Lord before, but never so clearly saw his face, till then. Surely I then walk'd in the light, and the candle of the Lord shone upon my soul. Christ in all his fulness was then reveal'd unto me. And my Saviour was indeed precious. He gave me also his good Spirit, and my habitation was in the land of uprightness. I then found the pearl of great price: having a full assurance that Jesus, and all in him was mine. This my time was a time of love. And God enter'd into a covenant with me: and seal'd me with that promise. "In hopes of eternal life which God that cannot lie promised before the world began". Then I saw that I was in the arms of God's everlasting love. He had lov'd me from eternity, and would love me to eternity. I evidently saw that all my salvation was secur'd in Christ Jesus, that he was my living head, and that my all was treasur'd up in him. All this was the Lord's doing: but your ministry was the instrument. Glory be to God for ever and ever, Amen. If I should ever hear any one call you a devil, I would say, "Your words then were not the words of one who had a devil: could a devil open the eyes of the blind?"

My dear Bro: Since then, I have had returns of darkness in my soul, neither have I in many particulars been faithful to my God. Nevertheless he is so gracious as to be my God still; he remembers his holy covenant. The shepherd of Israel, who neither slumbers nor sleeps, watches over my soul continually for good. I am fallen into the hands of a good Saviour. At present thro' grace, I have wonderful manifestations of his love and favour. He has multiplied to pardon. In me dwells no good thing. But I have a fountain ever open to me. The blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin. The night before last, whether dreaming, or between sleep and waking, I know not, but I had a full sense of a promise of God upon my soul, that he would cause his comforts to flow into me, as a continual river of water. I am sure my soul thirsteth for God; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. And does not your heart thus far agree with mine? If so, then let us wait till God shall reveal all other things unto us, and [...make?] us intirely of one mind. At present let us go on, simply declaring to others what the Lord hath done for our souls. Let us not stretch ourselves beyond our line. Let us long for a union in the Lord. Let every one that is without be astonish'd at our patience with, and mildness towards one another. Above all let us take heed of rash

expressions. Let all our words flow out of that fulness of love which dwells in our hearts. Let us do nothing towards each other which may occasion repentance upon a death-bed. Let us admire the love of God in Christ towards poor lost sinners; and preach this unweariedly; and love one another unfeignedly. So doing, we shall do well. My sincere love to the flock under your charge. I ask God and them pardon, for not loving them so tenderly, nor praying for them so fervently, as I ought. Accept this as a token of my love and respect to you. I wish all possible blessings to rest upon you in time, and for all eternity. If you find freedom to write, I should be glad if you would favour me with a letter. The Lord be with your spirit and bring us both safe to heaven for Christ's sake . So prays

Your unworthy brother
and the chief of sinners
Joseph Humphreys

P.S. I beseech you not to forget to send me the paper of my experience.

Reference: EMV/501/90

Date: 31 March 1776

Correspondent: J. James

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: 'To The Rev'd Mr Charles Wesley, Foundry, London'

Location: Barton near Bristol

Note: Postmarked 'BRISTOL' and '2 AP[ril]'

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"March 31. 1776 J. James last!"

Mar 31. 1776 Barton

Hon.d & Rev.d Sir

I do assure you, it greatly adds to my, distress to find my Children, never wrote an Ans.r to y.r very kind and Affectionate letter, leaving thou very much out of ord.r, I beg^d, & they promis'd, to write for me, But this day, I find (on enquiry) they Omitted yours, & others – for which I must beg y.r pardon – they will not repeat the fault again—y.r good hope for me, I can't lay claim to, at least very faintly at intervals, but do beg y.r Serious & constant prayers, that I may, Spend an Eternity with my D.r Jesus, I want no better chance – for it will not admit of a doubt; even Such as me, at that Awfull hour, must have our anxious thoughts, and I dropt a word, to which She, twice replied, "I Shall Pass over very Safe – I hope; But looking inward it is gone – I have been happy here many Years, for, on this very day, Thirty Years, I was [...].^d to our departed friend – we join in Love & duty to you & yours. I am D^f S.^r yr much oblig^d

fr.^d & HS. J James

Reference: EMV/501/91

Date: 7 February 1760

Correspondent: John Johnson¹⁸⁷

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Cha Wesley at ye Foundery London"

Location: Dublin, Ireland

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Febr 7 1760. J. Johnson sick"

2. Shorthand annotation

Rev.d S.^r

J.J. have not forgot his Friend C.W I wrote twice to him and had no answer. I shoud write again but haveing so much sickness it hinderd me. at Limerick I had a violent Fever, my Life was disspar'd of. I had two phesitians attended me one was a papist, The other a Quaker. they attended me very well and Seemd much concernd that so young a man shoud Die, when one of them told me with much cation I had the Feaver, & Desired I wou'd not be supprizd, I told him I was not afraid to Die. He Look'd as in a Maze, his answer was young people are Desireous of Life; I told him I saw nothing here worth Liveing for, but if God wou'd Give me my Life I wou'd Except of it. I told them I Look'd to God for a cure through their Medicens. they thought I had soon Lost my Reason but Glory be to my Lord I never Lost it. tho some part of ye Time I was somewhat Stupified, If any one spoke to me of God I then soon forgot all pain, my Stupidety left me: In short it was a Blessed time to my soul: but when all hope of Life was Gone The papist Docter knowing I was one of their Community in time past, thought I beleive to bring me back to mother Church again. Began after this m.^r Johnson was you Educated in ye Protestant Religion. I answer'd no I was not, but I will tell you ye whole how I came to be a Protestant, I told him I always Read my Bible, but knew nothing wt True Religion was. He answerd yt was pittty, he then thought I did not know wt his Religion was. But I told Him I did not mean yt: I told him I thought Religion Consisted only in Exturnals, but when I Heard the People call'd Methodist, I found it was a change wrought In the Hart by the power of the Holy Ghost. I told him I sought it and found it and then Ignorant as I was God Sent me to Preach and these signs Follow'd, Sinners was turn'd to God. he then answerd Every man to his Trade. that was the Priest to His Bible. My answer was if I saw a man in a Feaver and had a Medicine that wou'd cure him must I not Give it him becaus I was not a Phisitian I told Him I wou'd. and on the same principles was Resolv'd to Preach

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¹⁸⁷ John Johnson (1725-1803) was born in Somerset of Roman Catholic parentage. He joined the Church of England at an early age and moved to London after completing an apprenticeship as a shoemaker.

Johnson was converted by the preaching of George Whitefield and after joining the Methodist itinerancy in 1758, was sent to Ireland. He travelled throughout the country for the next ten years, before settling in Lisburn where he set up in business while still acting as a local preacher. Johnson was highly regarded by John Wesley and was for a time employed as General Superintendent of the Irish work.

Source: Robert H. Gallagher, *Pioneer Preachers of Irish Methodism* (1965), 40-42.

I told him I had Preach'd and Determind so to do as Long as I had breath. (God Grant I may keep my word) he found me Steadfast in my Princeples. my pain was Gone and all weakness. He then Desired me to Cease Speaking and keep my Confidence for fear of my Head. he then Left me and never after spoke to me on that Head, he Refused a fee as did ye Quaker when I was able to preach again I found it A Happy time I gaind more by that Feavour than by anything that ever befell me. I soon had a Flux as soon as I was able to Ride I went to Cork where I hope never to Go again unless there is a great alteration, there is many Serious people there, but many Evil speakers among y^e party Spirits I beleive do hinder the work of the Lord amongst them, when I first came I had a prospect of much Good being done. but I was Lay'd by. I had a Inflammation on ye Diafragma. Six weeks I did not Preach. as soon as I was able to Ride I set out for Dublin. In Cork I found many Drunkard, I Read out 7¹⁸⁸ – three adulterors O my hart was Greived to find these had often bin Detected yet bore with: I had some small Fruit of my Labour but ye Least appear'd in this place as I have yet found. at Limerick there is the best Society according to their number, Dublin has this winter bin very badly served by Ja.^s Deeves,¹⁸⁹ they almost Lost their Congregations, no morning preaching Scarcly. O Dear S.^{ir} I fear he Has no Grace; he is soon Expected in town: the place appointed for him is without a preacher. I was In hopes his marrage wou'd have help'd him, but it has not yet: but I hope it will. Sufferings may, which he has no other prospect. I hope we shall recover our selves again at Dublin our Congregations are Very Large, at present, the people will bear plain speaking and Good Disapline this wou'd be a Glorious Society If they were well attended. I hope S.^{ir} to have a Line from you while I Remain your unworthy Son in ye Gosple. Jn.^o Johnson

My kind Love to M.^{rs} Wesley Dublin Feb. 7. 1760

Reference: EMV/501/92

Correspondent: John Johnson¹⁹⁰

Date: 2 June 1763

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Cha Wesley at [unreadable erasure] the Foundery, M[oor]fields [unreadable erasure] London"

¹⁸⁸ Expelled from the Wesleyan society

¹⁸⁹ James Deaves (fl. 1753-65) was born probably in Dublin. He entered the Wesleyan itinerancy in about 1753 and served in his native Ireland until he withdrew from the work in 1765 ((John Lenton's list of Wesley's preachers, GCAH website)

¹⁹⁰ John Johnson (1725-1803) was born in Somerset of Roman Catholic parentage. He joined the Church of England at an early age and moved to London after completing an apprenticeship as a shoemaker.

Johnson was converted by the preaching of George Whitefield and after joining the Methodist itinerancy in 1758, was sent to Ireland. He travelled throughout the country for the next ten years, before settling in Lisburn where he set up in business while still acting as a local preacher. Johnson was highly regarded by John Wesley and was for a time employed as General Superintendent of the Irish work.

Source: Robert H. Gallagher, *Pioneer Preachers of Irish Methodism* (1965), 40-42.

Location: Dublin, Ireland

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"June 2 1763. J. Johnson"

Rev.d S.ir

Dublin June 2 1763

I am obliged to you, for your good wishes to me, and my help mate; her conduct shews, she was from y.e Lord.

I have often found some concern for your so long silence; and often thought the reason, your sickness; at other times, I thought I had offended you.

I am much concerned for the flock in London, I expected nothing less, when at the Conferance¹⁹¹ I feared Bell, ¹⁹² and his Company wou'd be Ranters; I can see no differance between, destroying the Law, through Love; or Faith.

I am of this opinion; if my heart is full of Love! I shall Love the Commandments, and my Life will shew it; by a conformity to every precept.

I am also concerned for the flock at Norwich; I hear they are devided. wt will the end of these things be? I often thought, that desire in the hearts of some of the Preachers to give the Sacrament, wou'd be the means of destroying the work:¹⁹³ but I fear we shall be in Confution before yt can come to pass.

I often think they are happy that are taken away. But ye loss of B. Gilbert,¹⁹⁴ and Mr. Grimshaw,¹⁹⁵ is great. I was very near it for some months this winter; and thought it

¹⁹¹ The Wesleyan conference that convened in Leeds on 10 August 1762

¹⁹² George Bell (d.1807): Born at Borningham in County Durham, Bell served for a time in the Life Guards regiment of the British army. He was converted in 1758 while living in London and quickly gained a reputation at the Foundery for holiness and powerful extempore prayers. Wesley believed that Bell possessed the power to heal but grew uncertain about his other rather extravagant claims. He left Methodism in 1763 after his prophecy that the world would end on February 28, caused considerable hysteria in London (Principal source: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974)

¹⁹³ Reference to the Norwich sacramental dispute of 1760

¹⁹⁴ The itinerant Nicholas Gilbert who died in April 1763

¹⁹⁵ William Grimshaw (1708-63): Born in Brindle, Lancashire, the son of a poor farmer, Grimshaw was educated at Blackburn Grammar School and Heskin Free School before going up to Cambridge Christ's Church in 1726. After graduation, he was ordained and served curacies at Littleborough and Todmorden until 1742, when he was admitted to the perpetual curacy of Haworth in Yorkshire.

wou'd be a favour from Heaven to me; for I dread the Day, when your Bro, & you, shall be taken from us. The Devil has long envied our happiness, & success: therefore is striveing to destroy the work.

sometimes I think the Lord will stand by us, & help us: at other times I think we shall be suffer'd to devide; and be destroyed. We have peace, and Love in this Place. I hear they have a new scheme in the Cheshire Round: anger is Consistant with the Second Blessing; but the third will destroy it.

I hope you will favour me with a line or two, so often as you can, If I live and shou'd come to England again, I think I will see you if alive, if I Ride a Hundred miles. If not ye will of the Lord be done. My wife joins me in Duty to you, & love to Mr.s Wesley. pray for me who am your unworthy son in the Gospel

Jn.o Johnson

Reference: EMV/501/93

Date: 3 November 1767

Correspondent: John Johnson¹⁹⁶

Grimshaw began to exercise an evangelical ministry on Methodist lines although he did not have contact with the Wesleys until much later. He was particularly influenced by the Scottish preacher William Darney who visited Haworth in 1744.

Grimshaw met Charles Wesley in October 1746 and in the following May, John Wesley preached in Haworth Church. Grimshaw began to evangelize outside his parish bounds and in July 1747 he accompanied John Bennet on a tour of Methodist societies in Lancashire and Cheshire. In 1750 he was named by John Wesley as the next in authority after the Wesley brothers.

Grimshaw was a staunch High Churchman and a close ally of Charles Wesley in the struggle to keep Methodism within the Church. (Principal source: Frank Baker, *William Grimshaw* (1963); Lewis)

¹⁹⁶ John Johnson (1725-1803) was born in Somerset of Roman Catholic parentage. He joined the Church of England at an early age and moved to London after completing an apprenticeship as a shoemaker.

Johnson was converted by the preaching of George Whitefield and after joining the Methodist itinerancy in 1758, was sent to Ireland. He travelled throughout the country for the next ten years, before settling in Lisburn where he set up in business while still acting as a local preacher. Johnson was highly regarded by John Wesley and was for a time employed as General Superintendent of the Irish work.

Source: Robert H. Gallagher, *Pioneer Preachers of Irish Methodism* (1965), 40-42.

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Cha Wesley at The New Room in the Horse-Fair, Bristol single sheet only"

Location: Dublin, Ireland

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"Nov 3. 1767 J. Johnson Acct of himself"

Rev.d S.ir

Dublin Nov. 3. 1767

I am Still alive; & aLive to GOD, in a measure, I have abundant Reason to Praise the Lord, for His Goodness to me a Sinner! who has been Graciously pleased to support that Life, He gave me, upwards of Twenty years ago. Though often in that Time, have been Guilty of many follis; yet Blessed be the name of the Lord Jesus! He never Suffered me wholly to depart from Him; nor Long to Remain under Guilt; But if my foolish Heart wandered from Him; He always shewed me my folly, & Returned again wth His wonted Favour: so that I do not Remember, I have ever Lived one Day, in that Time, without Enjoying a Sense of Divine Mercy; (in a Measure;) or Sorrowing after it, The First Seven years, were the most Trying part I have yet Seen; my Temptations were many, and Exceeding violent; I often thought, my Strength woud fail under them; my Body Suffered much in those Trying Days; I know not, that I ever Heard of a Temption! I did not feel Severely; but one, that was; to doubt the being of GOD; This I felt before I obtained mercy! but not since. In those Trying Times, I often Blessed GOD for your Labours in London; often your Words have been so Blessed to my Soul! though I had almost concluded before I Heard; all was over! yet have Returned wth a Joyful Heart, Beleiving Jesus woud make me more the Conqueror. The 12 years I have been Engaged in Calling Sinners to Repentance; have been much more Comfortable to me, when Speaking to others, it Has been my Comfort, not to Preach an unknown X.t! Very Seldom have I ever Preached, without a Sense of His mercy to my own Soul, more or less! Twice, or Three times, I Remember this was my case; But O! wt did I then suffer! I cannot Express it in words. once I was determined to Preach no more; but finding one Soul under that

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that Discourse brought to GOD, my Judgment was Changed; so I ventured again; & Bless GOD, have been Enabled to Continue to this Day! But; when I Look back, & consider my Ignorance, & weakness, I am astonished that ever the Lord shoud use such a Creature!

I am oblided to you, for y.r kind Invitation to vissit England, But am in such a Bad state of Health, am not able to take the Place of an Itenerant; I am Now, only Supernumery; & often think this will be my Lot, the few Days I have to Live here, so that unless I shoud Recover my Health, think it will not be in my Power to see my Native Country again, when there about Six years ago, I got a Quartan Ague, which so wrecked my Constitution, that I am always in Pain, unless a Little Time in Sleep: which is but Little, nor has been for those years; I do not Remember once to be Refreshed by Sleep, but always more Fatauged in the morning, then at night when I go to my Bed. when y.r Bro was Here, in the Summer, I walk'd about Dublin w.th

Him every Day,¹⁹⁷ so much, that it brought a Disorder on me, that I have not since been able to Ride; & fear I never shall again. I was Confined to my Room for a Long Time; the Inflammation is gone, but a Hardness Remains, which seems to be fixed.

The Society Here is in a Tolerable way I have seen them more Lively; Some are brought to GOD! & some Remain Dead & Stupid; others are very Steady, & Lively, in the ways of GOD. The most of those that Caught the Strange Fire kindled by Bell¹⁹⁸ in London, are gone away into the world; others that were Teachable, are Solidly Happy. & still Profess to feel nothing but Love in their Hearts, and their conduct at Present does not Contradict their Profession. we have at present Mr. Helton,¹⁹⁹ & Olivers.²⁰⁰

I sometimes am much distrest, at the thought of you, & y.r Brothers Removal, too the Kingdom; I sometimes see a great number of Desenting Congregations; & the Methodist shut up in a Corner, at other Times, I think GOD will Support His own Cause, and keep them in the Good old way, but I can Scarcly Beleive this; I

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I think Ordination by the Episcople Bishops, woud tend to the same; unless they woud suffer us to go on in the Same way we do at present; but this cannot be Expected. The desire of my Soul is, that the Methodist Preachers might go on in the same way we are in; seeing the Lord has so wonderfully Blessed us; now we ly open to every Party; either of the other ways: we shoud be Contracted; these are my thoughts at Present; but the Lord I know, is wise in all His ways & can bring mighty things to Pass.

I have often wished for Doc Byrams²⁰¹ Book of Short Hand; but now it's come to Late for me; as I am not Capable, in my present weakness, to apply myself to

¹⁹⁷ John Wesley was in Dublin 4-27 July 1767 (JWJ)

¹⁹⁸ George Bell (d.1807): Born at Borningham in County Durham, Bell served for a time in the Life Guards regiment of the British army. He was converted in 1758 while living in London and quickly gained a reputation at the Foundery for holiness and powerful extempore prayers. Wesley believed that Bell possessed the power to heal but grew uncertain about his other rather extravagant claims. He left Methodism in 1763 after his prophecy that the world would end on February 28, caused considerable hysteria in London (Principal source: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974)

¹⁹⁹ The Wesleyan itinerant John Helton (1732-1817)

²⁰⁰ Thomas Olivers (1725-99) was converted in Bristol by the preaching of George Whitefield after a dissolute early life and subsequently joined the Methodists. He entered the itinerancy in 1753 and after working in many parts of the country, settled in London as the corrector of John Wesley's printing press. (Principal sources: *Arminian Magazine* 1779, 77ff, and *Methodist Magazine* 1799, 511.

²⁰¹ John Byrom (1692–1763). Scion of a line of merchants and property developers, Byrom was born in Manchester, and was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. Part of a circle of High Church, Nonjuring Jacobites, he most likely gained an acquaintance with Charles and John Wesley through the Oxford Methodist John Clayton.

anything of the Kind, the Time I have to spare, must be otherwise employ'd, at least ought to be; I hope it will be employ'd in endeavouring to Live to GOD; that I may finish my Course well! O that it may be my Happy Lot. sometimes I hope it will, at other times I have some fears.

Please to Remember me in the Kindest manner to my Friend m.^r Lunell,²⁰² I hear His Situation is in some good measure agreeable to Him; the Lord help Him to Improve it, to His Present, & Eternal Happiness, Amen.

Please to give my Love to M.^{rs} Wesley; I Remember her well & often think of you, & Her, By the Happiness I have wth my own Partner, I often say, I know two Happy marrages at least; yours is one, & my own is another, for this I desire to Praise the Lord also. I was Sick when yours came to Hand, so it suffered the same fate wth mine to you; but unexpectedly it came to Hand about a week ago. my wife Joins me in Duty to you, & Love to m.rs Wesley.

I am Dear S.ir y.r unworthy Son in ye Gospel

John Johnson

Reference: EMV/501/94

Date: 1742

Correspondent: Martha Jones

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“1742 Martha Joan conjuring me not to leave them”

Rever Sir

The Wesleys used Byrom's shorthand system extensively in their personal papers. Byrom taught it mainly in London, Cambridge, and Manchester for a five guinea fee; it gained a wider audience after his death, in *The Universal English Short-hand* (1767), which contains Charles's name in an introductory recommendation list.

Byrom had a medical training and was a Fellow of the Royal Society, and his diaries and correspondence testify to the wide variety of his interests and contacts. He was also a prolific poet, and wrote the Christmas Day hymn 'Christians Awake' (better known in a later redacted form). While he was sympathetic to some aspects of the early Methodist movement, Byrom's interests in mysticism were one source of tension between him and the Wesley brothers. He remained on friendlier terms with Charles than with John. (Sources: Elijah Hoole, *Byrom and the Wesleys* (London: William Nichols, 1864 [repr. from *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, 86 (1863)]); Timothy Underhill, 'John Byrom (1692–1763)', in Jay Parini (ed.), *British Writers: Supplement XVI* (Detroit: Charles Scribner's Sons/Gale Cengage, 2010), 71–87).

²⁰² William Lunell (*fl.* 1749). A wealthy banker of Huguenot origin, Lunell was one of the first Methodist converts in Dublin. Both John and Charles Wesley stayed with him during their visits to the city. (Principal source: Charles Henry Crookshank, *History of Methodism in Ireland* (Belfast and London: R. S. Allen, Son, 1885).)

Let it not seem impertinent that I trouble you with these lines for I am greatly troubled greived at your greif and Sorrowful for the cause but o dear sir do not cast us of though we be a backsliding people I know god hath brought you unto us now for good and he hath given a token for there are many whom you have made to Sorrow after a godly Sort which I trust will work repentance unto Salvation our dear lord will not leave nor forsake us but hath begun to heal our backslidings and doth love us freely and will ye still continue to chide and to speak Such pearceing words as if you would give us up and have no more to do with us mean ye quite to breake our hearts indeed we deserve to be rejected by the lord and his ministers but all glory be to him who hath not dealt with us after our sins neither rewarded us according to our iniquities²⁰³ now I know you copy after your great master therefore bear with us a little longer till we Shall by the grace of our lord Jesus bring forth better fruit and cause you to rejoyce over us more then now ye greive. I have a good hope that we shall yet be your crown of rejoyceing²⁰⁴ in the day of the lord Jesus dear sir do not condemn all for a few for the greater part of us desire to be obedient to you in all things knowing that ye are set over us in and by the lord and our love is not waxed cold but you are dear unto us as our own Lives for your works Sake but the people fear you do not love us dear sir you never loved us for our own Sake but for the lords for the lords sake then love us still though wee be unworthy and do not think of leaving us till our lord calls you and then though ye be dear unto us we shall freely resign our blessed lord hath always aforetime sent you to us in the blessing of the gospel of peace now he hath brought you to Search our wounds and under him to bind them up for this end hath your master made you a son of thunder and of consolation²⁰⁵ Stay then to be as he hath made you a kind comforter to the mourning Soul for god doth by your mouth Succour the tempted oh how great is the love of Jesus unto us who doth by these means and ways releive destressed Souls who can express his love Surely none we can only wonder and silently adore how did our dear lord show forth his power among us on Sunday night how graciously did he declare he had a favour unto his people how did our lord in his spirit descend pass by and i beleive in every Soul there proclaim the lord the lord god merciful and gracious long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth keeping mercy for thousands forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin o may we all follow the leading of that blessed Spirit and never more cause him to depart till he hath brought forth Judgment unto victory amen dear Sir out of the abundance of greif and love i had in my heart i made bold to write if I have done amiss herein I hope you will beleive it done through ignorance only and pardon your weakest Sister in christ

Martha Jones

Reference: EMV/501/95

Date: 24 December 1759

Correspondent: James Jones

Addressee: Charles Wesley

²⁰³ Pss 103:10

²⁰⁴ 1 Thessalonians 2:19

²⁰⁵ Acts 4:36

Address: "To The Revd Mr Charles Wesley In the Horse²⁰⁶ Foundery near Upper Moor fields London Bristol"

Location: Handsworth and Wednesbury

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"James Jones. Death of believer Dec. 24 1760 [sic]"

Note: Postmarked "29 DE[cember]"

Handsworth Decem.r 24
1759

Revd. Sir

I thought it might not be Improper to acquaint you that we have Built a Preaching Roome at Wednesbury and will be made fitt to preach in in a Little Time But The Builders come So fast upon us for money. That we are Not able to pay them, Therefore, Took this opportunity to beg ye: Bristol Peoples Charity & Doubt not but they will Cash in their mite, as I never Troubled Them before I am Not able to do all myself or I would not Trouble any body, I have procured £100, but we shall want 100 more to pay only for the Shell, Dear Sir I Shall Leave it to your Consideration as beleiving youle See it is altogether for the Cause of the Exalted Redeemer, we Shall all be Exceeding Glad to See you in these parts, O when will you come and Help us, may the Lord Incline you; and make your way plaine before you, we want Some of the old fire To be cast in amongst us, many Hearts whould Dance to See you, as David for joy before the arke

We have just Taken to the ground our poor Sis.r Sally Sparrow who has Triumph.t over Death Hell & the Grave Shee was awakened aboute 3 years Since by our Preaching which before Shee Veamently contridicted, But Since that Time I never Saw a more Earnest Soule in all my life, Shee Never mist any opportunity Morning evening or Noone day I have seen her Morning & Evening Come 5 miles Middle Leg deep in Snow Raine & Haile to hear the Preaching and that for her Constant practis, never missing Band or Class upon any Consideration. ~~until Shee So much impaired Her Health that Shee could go no Longer.~~ & in a Little Time took to her Bed, and having Little or nothing to subsist upon, I tooke Care Shee should want for nothing But I need not to have been in much care a Boute Her as Seeing the Righteous are never forsaken nor their Seed found Beggin their Bread, for in a short Time two or 3 of the Head of The Town Came to See her often and gave her weekley more than Shee Expended, yet all this wile Shee knew not God, & often Cried oute I am Lost I am Dam.d I am undon for Ever, I Labourd, much to Comfort Her telling her the Promises of God Stood as firme as the Pillers of Heaven and all that Seek are Sure to find

But all that I could Say took no Effect upon her Still crying oute I am upon the Brink of the grave unpardoned & unreconsiled to God, I told her Tho Ever so near yet God was nearer and That Her Eyes Should Soone see His Great Salvation! I told her to beleive and Cast her Soule upon the Lord Jesus.

But Shee Cried I cannot I cannot beleive My Heart is as hard as a Rock Surely I am the greatist Sinner in the world, I told her Christ came to Seek and Save Such, & he

²⁰⁶ Jones had started writing "Horsefair", which was the location of the New Room in Bristol

whas only then proving and Trying the ground of her Heart to do her good in her latter End; But Still it availed nothing, and indeed how Should it until he who Speaks in Righteousness alone mighty to save
afew Days after the last time I whas with her her Sister lifted her up in the Bed to give her a little [Justo] upon which Shee Cried oute O Dear Peggy How I Love you O I love all mankind & I Love God and God loves me, for now I Know That God for Xt. sake hath forgiven all my Sins; Shee imeadtly Began to pray for me and all the Preachers and the Society with such Ennergy and power that Shook the ~~very place~~, and Stroke fire Into every Heart, Shee Exhorted all that came to see her to be Earnist with God & not to Lighten in the way to Heavin

afew days after I whent to see her , But O what a Change had God wrought since the last time I saw her, at my first Entering the Roome Shee was ready Leep oute of the Bed Crying O Dear Mr. Jones How I love you I cannt tell you what GOD has don for my Soule Neither could I believed it if all the angels in Heaven had Declared it Except God had both Spake & Sealed it upon my Heart O what manner of love is this that the Father hath Bestow,d upon me the Chief of Sinners and with Heavin in her face Cryed oute O the Differance Betwen lying upon a Bed of Gilt & a Bed of Pardon, I am now willing to live or Die the will of the Lord be don, I told her not to think it Strange if the Ennimy againe Should Strive to Disturbe her Peace Before Shee Died,. Shee Said he does Thrust Sore at me But I find no more Condemnation Glorey be to GOD

I Desired her to pray for me Shee answerd I cannot help praying for you, But O let me intreat you to go on in The work of the Lord for you have been a very great Instrument in the hands of GOD to many Souls, & O Still be Showing poor Sinners the Danger they are in, perswade them to flee from the wrath to Come

In This manner Shee Continued praying advising and Exhorting all that came near her, until Shee Quiatly; Returned unto the GOD of Her Fathers

O were are the Dareing Harden,d witts of the age that Can call this, Delusion & Hyppocrisy & the like Surely Whatever Deciet men in Health & Strength can Show yet, Souls Hovering over the Brink of Eaternity just Going nakedly to Stand before GOD; can then play no part of an Hyppocrite.

Pray my kind love to Dear Mrs. Wesley I hope you do not forget unworthey me before the Throne of Grace who am yr. Unworthey Son & Ser.t.

James Jones

Reference: EMV/501/96

Date: 5 June 1762

Correspondent: Unknown

Document: "Dying words of the Reverend Mr Jones"

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Unknown

Annotated: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. 'Dying Mr Jones'

2. 'June 5 1762 Mr Jones dying'

The dying words of the Rev.^d M.^r Jones 5th June, 1762

Looking at his hands he said, "He will soon take away these filthy Garments & give me changed of Raiment. Blessed be the Lord for that degree of Faith he hath given me: Tho' it hath operated in so weak a manner, yet I have many Blessed & Comfortable marks in my Soul of his Love to me!
An Eternal Life of Glory, for a Life of misery!
For me to live is Christ, to die is gain!²⁰⁷
Lord give me an easy Dismission into a happy Eternity! I shall have a Sabbath of # Trinity befour I thought of it to worship a Triune GOD"!
He frequently cried out, "Lord feed thy Sheep. Lord feed thy Sheep.
What an unfelt, what an unthought of Corruption is here both in Soul & Body!
Secure a Soul thou hast died to Save"! Then after a pause he cried, "He will! He will! I have part here, but I shall have all soon! The Silver Cords of Life are broken, & man goeth to his long Home; & the Mourners go about the Streets. Lord guide me home in safety, & lead me thro' the Shadow of Death.
This mortal shall soon put on Immortality!

He died on Trinity Sunday at two in the morning.

Tho' worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see GOD: whom I shall see for myself, & mine Eyes shall behold & not another.
Come Lord Jesus come quickly & give me my Dismission. Before this Time tomorrow, it may be, I shall be where all Sorrow shall be done away!
I shall be purely refined in this Furnace even as Gold."
Looking at Mrs Jones he said, "Dont be surprized at any Alterations you may see in me; for Death makes strange Alterations.
When the Lord is pleased to give me my Dismission, rejoice over my Corps: and praise GOD for what we have suffer'd together here, & what we shall enjoy together hereafter:
Who would not change misery for Happiness? Hasten, hasten, dear Lord!
! I have had a Glorious view of the Love of Christ to my soul this morning! I am of the Church of the first born, who shall stand on Mount Sion: One Chosen from among my Brethren. A Sinner saved! A Sinner saved!
Now let thy servant depart in Peace for mine Eyes have seen thy salvation!²⁰⁸
Now Lord I can lay me down in Peace & safely take my rest.²⁰⁹
A Covenant of Mercy: Free Grace in the Lord Jesus! My heart & my flesh faileth, but GOD is the Strength of my Heart & my Portion forever!
It is not dying out of the World, but dying in the World: To part with all one's Toys & Trifles; & that not wth Sickness or Pain".
Upon looking on those who stood by he said, "Be ye also ready.
I am highly favour'd of the Lord, who have born so little of the Burden & heat of the Day:²¹⁰ But I believe I am taken away from great Evils that shall come in the Church of Christ.²¹¹

²⁰⁷ Philippians 1:21

²⁰⁸ Luke 2: 29-30

²⁰⁹ Pss 4: 8

They that love Sin, are preparing for misery. They that love Holiness for Heaven.
I am the Resurrection & the Life, saith the Lord:
He that believeth on me, tho' he were dead yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth &
believeth on me, shall never Die.²¹²

Reference: EMV/501/97

Date: May 1770

Document: The death of Sister Jones

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“S[ister] Jones’s death May 1770”

Sister Jones from a Child, had been instructed in the things of God, & had a desire & esteem for them; but about 19 years since began to be more deeply concern'd about her Soul, which continued for about 12 years after, when She found (in her Class) a sense of Pardon, by an application of these words “My Soul doth magnify the Lord, & my Spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour.” This she retain'd to ye last; & her Behaviour was greatly becoming the Gospel: in Seriousness & labour for the good of Others: no presumptuous sin, or great offence could be laid to her charge. About 2 years since she began to decline in health, & has been dying daily ever since. She might very properly be call'd a daughter of affliction; but was enable'd to endure, as seeing him who is invisible, Her Behaviour towards the last was truly Patient: no complaining or murmuring was heard: all Temporal Concerns, & even Husband & Children, were given up into His hands, who ordereth all things well. all her thoughts, desires & affections seem'd to be in Heaven. Jesus was ye Burthen of her Song, & to hear of him the Joy of her heart. Thus She waited for her Lord from Heaven; and Jesus, who saith “Surely I come quickly” came & took the weary exile home.

P.S. She desired that a Sermon might be preached from Rev. 7th.14

“These are they wch came out of great Tribulation &c”

²¹⁰ Mathew 20: 12

²¹¹ Isaiah 57: 1

²¹² John 11:25-26

Reference: EMV/501/98

Date: 1 April 1766

Correspondent: J[ohn] Richardson

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Rev.d Mr Ch. Wesley at Bristol"

Location: [London]

Annotated: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "April 1 1766. Richardson's of Keen's death"

Chappel Ap: 1. 1766.

Rev.^d & dear Sir.

I have begun to execute y.^r last Comission, & hope to finish it very soon. Poor M.^r Keene you might have left out of the list, he is gone to his reward. When you met us last at R Moss's,²¹³ You said "Well, who among us shall fall next," w.^t say you Bro: [osg?]²¹⁴.^{dr} "God's tho'ts are not as our tho'ts.' He made a glorious Entrance. He sent for me the Sund: before he went. "when I get a little Slumber, I awake in such dread & horror as is inexp:^{ble}, dread, not of Spirit, my heart lays still, but of Body_ O what a loose Stone have I been in the build.^s, I wonder I was not jostled out." I prayed w.th him & the heavens were opened. He he had sore conflicts after, he was affraid of being alone, but when the last Battle was won he s.^d, "Now you may either stay or leave me, I am entered within the Gate of the City". Calling for his Son, he looked earnestly on him & s.^d, "O my Son w.^t a distance thou art from me, I am within the Gates of the City!" O Sir, how is it y.^t I stand after such a man in Israel is fallen! but he is risen forever. Our loss is his Gain.

Our dear Friends rejoice w.th me on account of your Increase of Strength, but we cannot

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believe it is all to be spent at Brist_²¹⁵ You cannot afford us a visit you say _ granted _ but why will you neither let your Band, nor the whole Society give the labourer (if not his hire) at least his journeying Expences.' this is a hard question, I defy all Bristol to answer it – You talk of "2 or 3000 members & no prop^hets Chamber_" but the reason is ag.^t you, many woud open their Chamb: but the prop^het, will not enter in. For reasons that I can better tell when we meet than write my House does not suit. Sat verbum sap: _ Not that all is not well, I believe I shall always have reason to bless GoD for his last Gift. The more you know of my Situation the better you will like it.

²¹³ Richard Moss (b. 1718). Born in Hurlstone, Cheshire, Moss was converted by John Wesley in 1740 and entered the itinerancy in 1745 after accompanying Wesley on a preaching tour to Newcastle. After teaching for a time at Kingswood School at the end of the 1740s, Moss left the itinerancy in about 1762. He was ordained into the Anglican ministry in 1767 with the assistance of the Countess of Huntingdon and worked as a missionary in the West Indies. (Principal sources: CCed; Lenton (GCAH) and *Methodist Magazine*, 22 (1798), 3–8, 53–9.)

²¹⁴ Osgood?

²¹⁵ Bristol

We love one another more & more every day_ M.^r Keen I hear has left something for the poor in Society – Bet: Du Cheene gives her Duty & thanks for y.^r last, It was of much Comfort to her. She is very dilig.^t in selling Cases_ M.^{rs} Mac Don:²¹⁶ Clay Aspern: Smithson, Cheesment, Bale &c &c give their duty _ & I have given y.^r Answer to their Enquiries till I am sick of it, if you will not come nor send a letter I must hold my tongue. If you will once consent to come, I woud suit my Journey

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to be back if possible before you had been 3 Weeks in london. I hear since I began my long letter, that you have writ to M.^r Mad:²¹⁷ & told him “you will soon give soon him ocular demonstⁿ, y.^t you are alive & the papers Lyars!” Is this true? I hope so _ The Witnesses are in general moderate i.e. not so full of Self-praise_ We want more preach.^s on the Attonem.^t So much Do Do, will never do. Come away Sir, & let us once mo hear of Jesus X & him crucif^d_ that Name is every thing_ Poor M.^{rs} Dav: gives her duty. M.^{rs} Toolit's troubles w.th her Boy increase, she is to be pitied_ J.Cole.ⁿ & Butcher²¹⁸ salute you. & thank you for yours, but want you next.

²¹⁶ Mrs McDonald (d.1778) was a servant at the Foundery in London for forty years. The preacher Peter Jaco in her funeral sermon, described McDonald as ‘weak in her mental powers which often exposed her to innocent infirmities’, but upright in character and conduct. (Principal source: Obituary by Peter Jaco in *The Arminian Magazine* 1788, 409-410).

²¹⁷ Martin Madan (1725-1790). Born in London, the son of Colonel Martin Madan and his wife Judith, daughter of Judge Spencer Cowper. Madan was a cousin of the poet and hymn writer William Cowper (1731-1800) and the older brother of Spencer Madan, bishop of Peterborough (1729-1813).

Madan was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church Oxford and was called to the bar from the Inner Temple in 1748. After hearing John Wesley preach, Madan experienced an evangelical conversion and was ordained into the Anglican ministry with the help of the Countess of Huntingdon. In 1750 he was appointed to All Hallows Lombard Street, London, and to the chaplaincy of the Lock Hospital, where his preaching ministry proved so popular that a new chapel was built in 1762. Madan also travelled as an evangelist in support of the Countess of Huntingdon. His doctrinal leanings were Calvinist, but he maintained friendly relations with the Wesley brothers.

Madan was a gifted musician and organised well-attended annual oratorios at the Lock Hospital. In 1760 he published a collection of psalms and hymns, which went through thirteen editions by 1794.

Madan was involved in deep controversy in 1780 with the publication of his book *Thelyphthora*, which advocated the social benefits of polygamy. The uproar that followed publication forced Madan’s resignation from the Lock Hospital chaplaincy and retirement from public ministry. (Principal source: *DNB*.)

²¹⁸ Samuel Butcher (fl.1760-70). A leather seller of Crucifix Lane, Bermondsey, London, Butcher was a staunch Methodist and a friend of the Wesley brothers. He contributed generously to the construction of a Methodist Chapel in the Southwark district of London during the early 1760s. (Principal source: Rogal)

My Partner joins me in love to you & all your house_ In hopes of seeing you before I set out, I remain, Dear Sir, Y.^r ever obl.^d

& aff.^{te} Serv.^t in X.

J. Richardson

Thank you for y.^r kind thought of Invitation to Bristol. A House w.^d long since have been found you here if you w.^d come & lay up y.^r Ashes in Bun-hill Fields_

Reference: EMV/501/99

Date: 1755

Document: "An account of a few expressions from Bro[ther] Lambertson's²¹⁹ daughter"

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"Bro Lambertson's Girl 1755"

An account of a few Expressions from Bro: Lambertson's Daughter

Tis about 3 months since she was convinced of Sin and of the deplorable condition she was in by nature.

afterwards it pleased the Mercifull GOD to draw her by the Cords of his Love

3 of her acquaintance came in her way to which she directed her discourse I desire you to Seek happiness for your Souls; it is not barely going to Church or meeting will be Sufficient. But it must be leaving the World in Affection and Turning to GOD with our whole heart.

You say there is no such thing as knowing one Sins Forgiven

I say there is

The Phisicians which attended her Earnestly intreated her, not to Sigh nor mourn, they told her it Renderd their Medicins ineffectual.

She immediately Reply'd I can never Rest until I know my Sins are forgiven.

Then they told her That she could never know; and likewise their coming would be in vain.

A few days after this she says to her Father the Devil has nothing to do with me now; I almost Love JESUS

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²¹⁹ Possibly John Lambertson (*fl.* 1750), who was a clothier of the Bank, Leeds. Lambertson was one of the original trustees of the Boggart House, the first Methodist chapel in the town. (Principal source: MARC: Methodist papers.)

Still she continu'd Wrestling and Strugling into Life

Sleep was Fled from her Two or Thre days before her death; She was whole Nights in prayer to GOD; witness those that wak'd with her.

About 20 Hours before her happy change the Cold Sweats Seis'd her, she had a Great Conflict with the accuser of the Brethren, she cry'd out O! 'tis a sad thing to have a weary body! & a weary soul! O! it is hard to bear_____

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Her Father told her the Bowels of JESUS Yearnd over her she immediatly answerd I believe they do;

About half an hour before she departed she broke out with an audible voice, (not like a dying soul) O! Sweet JESUS! O! JESUS it's Sweet! it's Sweet! it's Comfortable it's delightfull! and in a little time Resign'd her Soul into the Arms of JESUS without either Sigh or Moan____

Her cry was more times than can be Remembred I believe he will come,

It was asked her if she Rather chuse'd to Recover, she Replyd not to Live as I have done, but if it should please GOD to Lengthen out my days, I hope I shall live to his Glory.

Her Cry often was I am afraid of deceiving my self, Her Mother standing over her Seeing her in an agony, ask'd what was matter, she broke out into Tears, & Said I want a Saviour

[page break]

Though I am not a pertaker of it. I believe I Shall know it before I die,

You may Believe me I am a dying person

I knew this to be the truth some Years since; but the Gay World prevaild over me.

The poor Methodists are a despis'd people, they are in the True Way I Sincerely Believe,

Her Bro: & Sister being present to which she directed her discourse, I desire you'll get into the company of the few Serious young persons & not have this Blessing to Seek upon a death Bed.

About Six Weeks before her death she was Seised with a Violent pain in her Side the Whole Side was afflicted on which she spoke

I thank GOD that I have pain and I thank him that I have not to much pain. I believe they are as so many Spurs to press me forward.

Her Tender Hearted Mother was often seeking after a remedy to her Body but the Patient breaks out (she did not bear that name in vain) why Should we Fly so much to the Docters when we have so good a GOD to go. too.

Reference: EMV/501/100

Date: 7 November 1785

Correspondent: Mary Lee²²⁰

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Cha: Wesley at the Foundery near Upper Moor fields London"

Location: Manchester

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"Sister Lea"

Rev and much Loved Sir – Manchester Nov 7.1785

I heard when you left Bristol so did not write there. I was bad when I got here for some Time. But am thankful for my presant Health – I often wish you would come and stay a while with us I would make you as comfortable as in my power – I know my own unworthyness To have so great a guest. But your condision in taking notice of one who is sensible of her own Demerit Shews that you have Drunk largely of the Spirit of your Humble master – it will give you pleasur to hear I am Striving to Enter in at the straight gate God has been pleased to shew me more of the evils of my own Heart. I feel anger at times and it makes me mourn in secret. I feel I have not power of My self to conquer therefore I cry to Him that Has all power to save and I trust I shall find Deliverance and He shall have all the praise – we have a good House here and large. So has room for you and Miss Wesley²²¹ if you cannot come Miss

²²⁰ Wife of the Wesleyan itinerant Thomas Lee

²²¹ Sarah Wesley junior (1759-1828). Born at Charles Street, Bristol, the only surviving daughter of Charles and Sally Wesley. Educated mainly at home, Sarah showed intellectual precocity and displayed particular talent for writing prose, poetry and for drawing. Shy and devoted to her books, Sarah's letters reveal that in her circle of family and friends she was possessed of a ready wit, generous nature and keen sense of humour.

Considered very good looking when young, Sarah contracted smallpox, which disfigured her looks. She never married and lived principally with her parents until her mother's death in 1822. Sarah also made frequent visits to Bristol and lived in Manchester for several months at the end of 1796 as the companion of Mrs De Quincey, mother of the writer Thomas De Quincey (1785-1859).

Sarah attended worship at City Road Chapel in London and adhered to her parents' Church-Methodist ideals. She engaged in correspondence with a wide circle, which included minor literary figures, such as the historian and novelist Elizabeth Benger

Wesley might come with Mr Wesley in his chaise and stay a month or 2 and I should think my self Honored with the visit – the people here are not so sociable as in Bristol – and I never saw so much Screaming as the vulger have at prayer-meetings you would think they are in a passion at God, or that He was like the God of Baal Deaf the preachers have spoke to them so I hope they will take caution – the more rational part are not pleased with such confusion – we are 3 preachers and 3 wives. But we have all Houses to ourselves which I am pleased with. But the circuit keeps Them much from home – Mr Lee²²² had his health Better in London than here. It is not good road, as there. Mr Lee presents His Duty in Love to you But none Loves you more than your Humble

Servant Mary Lee

Please to remember me to Dear MrsWesley²²³ and your Loving Sons & Miss Wesley - should be glad to see any of you. I thought M^{rs}²²⁴ Wesley juniour would have been at Manchester Musick I went to see them Break up Hopeing to see Them and ask.^d But they was not there – please Sir to let me have a letter from you and I shall esteem it a favour – will Miss Wesley write to me, and tell me she will see me here. I will receive her with heart and hands -

(1775-1827). It was the opinion of her friends that Sarah could have made a living as a writer, had she been so inclined – only a small number of her poems were published during her lifetime.

Sarah showed a keen interest in upholding the reputation of her father and uncle and appears to have been the principal custodian of personal papers and family lore to which she provided access to early Methodist scholars. As such, Sarah Wesley exerted a significant but often invisible influence on the writing of Methodist history. Sarah was close to her brothers Charles and Samuel, although the latter's unstable personality created a widening division in later years.

She died on 19 September 1828 during a visit to Bristol. (Principal source: *DNB* and Wesley family papers (MARC))

²²² Thomas Lee

²²³ Sarah [Sally] Wesley (1726–1822). Born at Garth in Brecknockshire, daughter of the wealthy landowner and evangelical sympathizer Marmaduke Gwynne and his wife, the former Sarah Evans.

Sarah had a privileged upbringing and was educated privately. At the age of 21 she was introduced to Charles Wesley, and, despite an age difference of nineteen years, their mutual attraction was deep. The two were married in April 1749 and settled in Bristol later that year.

The marriage was extremely happy and produced eight children, only three of whom survived to adulthood. Unusually for an eighteenth-century husband, Charles appears to have happily deferred to his young partner in most aspects of their lives together. In 1771 the family moved from Bristol to Chesterfield Street in Marylebone, London.

After Charles's death in 1788, Sarah remained in London and enjoyed good health until a short time before she died at the age of 96. (Principal source: *DNB* under Charles Wesley.)

²²⁴ Possibly Messers – ie. Charles junior and Samuel Wesley

Reference: EMV/501/101

Date: Undated

Correspondent: Jane Landy

Addressee: [Charles Wesley]

D^r Sir

I wou^d have wrote to you Long Since to let you know how the Lord was Carrying on his work in my Soul but as M:^r Landey & Riquet wrote so often I did not Care to trouble you but now I am under a necessity to Spake for my Self as I am told there has been many things wrote to you Concerning Some thing which I mentiond to one or two of our brethren M:^{rs} merce^r in particuler who I belive has been the accation of your getting Some Letters out of [unreadable word] & michief and Else; where She Came here Just after our return from Dublin as wee thought out of friendship to see us But I find Since it was quite the revers it was only to know if you were married to our Daughter as she said there were many who did not Expect to see her till she Came with you next Spring & seem'd to be very well Pleasd at it I thinking She was and that all true Brethren might be of one mind, made her A Confident of what past between us in Dublin I hear since they have wrote you in many things in A wrong light which has given me greater trouble then I can well Express for fear it

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Shoud disturb your peace D^f S^f if you designd to have it kept as A sacrit you Shoud have told me so as I belive you very well Knew my Simple innocent temper I hear they have wrote you word that I gloried in it far be that from me I trust I shall never Glori in any thing Save in the Cross of Christ, indeed what I Said I thought Could not give offence on either Side but – I find there is noe going throw this vale of misery without many fold tryals & temptations but I See in the end it Shall all work together for good glory be to God there has none of us Let go our integrity therefore I have A good hope wee Shall hold out unto the End - I hope if it be the will of the Lord wee Shou'd live to meet Ag^a in it may be in Love and peace, I am D^f Brother your Sincear Sister in Christ Jane Landey

P:S I wood be glad to have A line or two from you

Reference: EMV/501/102

Date: 24 January 1760

Correspondent: Samuel Lloyd²²⁵

²²⁵ Samuel Lloyd (c. 1705–75) was born into a family of ‘silk throwers’ in the London area who worked for Thomas Lombe (1685–1739). Lombe’s brother John had surreptitiously copied a mechanized process developed in Italy for preparing raw silk for weaving. Thomas replicated the process in Derby in 1717 and then in Spitalfields, London. While he entered the family trade, on Lombe’s advice, in 1723, Lloyd soon tired of it and in 1726 began setting himself up as a silk merchant instead. At this point Lombe approached Lloyd about the possibility of going to South Carolina and setting up silk farms. As preparation, Lombe suggested that Lloyd go to France and Italy to observe how the trade operated there, serving as a buyer of silk for Lombe while he was there. The venture in Carolina was repeatedly delayed and Lloyd ended up serving as one of Lombe’s silk buyers in Italy from 1727–34. At that point Lloyd formed a partnership with Thomas Unwin, an English merchant in Livorno, Italy, and became a silk merchant. Lloyd left this partnership and returned to England about 1740, setting up his own business as a silk merchant in London, with his main office and residence on Devonshire Square. Lloyd quickly became active among the Huguenot community in Spitalfields. These French immigrants had become a center of silk weaving in London. Lloyd participated in the founding of a Huguenot church on Brick Lane in 1743, and is listed as a deacon of the church on Threadneedle Street in 1744. He also was elected a trustee for the colony of Georgia in 1747, at a time when it was hoped that Georgia might host major plantations cultivating the silk worm. Lloyd was drawn into the Methodist revival in late 1748. He became particularly close to CW, but assisted both Wesley brothers in business matters over the next two decades. In a letter of 27 December 1759 CW mentioned that he was staying at Samuel’s Lloyd’s address in Little Brook Street, London. In August 1766 Lloyd listed his Devonshire Square property for sale and retired from business. He lived briefly at Paternoster Row in Spitalfields, then settled at Friday Hill near Woodford in Essex. He died on July 12, 1775. See *London Chronicle* (July 13–15, 1775), p. 54; *Gentleman’s Magazine* 57 (1787), 834; and a legal document detailing his relationship with Thomas Lombe in the National Archives, C 11/2084/28.

Addressee: Charles Wesley
Locations London
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
“Mr Lloyd Jan, 24 1760. Poor Montague gone!”

Lond.o 24th January 1760

My very dear friend

Do not wonder at my Silence. ___ I too Sensibly felt for you & your dear partner when you called to take your leave of us, to suffer you to Share in my affliction which then almost overwhelmed me, ___ having just then recevd the first advice of poor Jacky Lowe (Benny's Bro.^f) being lost, with the Captain and his Eng.^h Sailors near Venice getting ashoar in their Boat, whilst 5 Italians were Safely washed there on a Raft; I had no hand in advising his going ___ & it would appear Childish, or presumptuous to relate my gloomy forebodings ___ on the back of this came L.^{ts} from Jamaica of the Death of our mutual dear friend E.M. ___ thus it pleases providence to exercise me ___ may his mercy Supply me with resigned patience to all his dispensations ___ Amen: I see not yet, that my temporall Concerns Suffer in either of these Cases, yet my grief for the loss of Both is more than prudent; M^r. Henry Livingstone of Jamaica; - had my power of Attorney provisionally, by Virtue whereof he has taken the needfull Steps to Secure my Property there, ___ and delegated Ralph Mountague²²⁶ the younger Bro.^f to act under him: ___ The Decesd made a Will long ago, leaving the Said Ralph & his Bro.^f John, united Ex.^{rs} ___ he lay about 6 days of the [...] fever, & died at Montego=bay ___ the 5.th Octo.^r last ___ M.^r & M.^{rs} Robinson's departure approacheth, how are the occasions multiplied, for you to bear us on your mind before the throne? to whose paternal affection Commending our Selves, we greatly rejoice in ye Comfort for the restoration

[page break]

of your Isaac ___ may it be for good ___ & may the great GOD Sanctifie all the Incidents _ and Accidents that befall us ___ we all unite in Love to ye Both ___ and Miss Darby being here for Some days on a Visit to Mrs Robinson brings me the inclosed L.^r to convey. James

My Dr. S.^r

Yr: ^s most affectionately,

S: Lloyd

Reference: EMV/501/103

Date: 1762

²²⁶ Ralph Mountague is recorded in 1777 as being the Deputy Secretary and Notary Public for the port of Montego Bay, Jamaica (*Parliamentary Register*, volume IX, 1778, appendix 41

Document: "Memorandum concerning the most noble Margaret Lady Marchioness of Lothian"²²⁷

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"Death of L. Lothian 1762"

Memorandum concerning the most noble Margaret Lady Marchioness of Lothian

It would be hard to say, whether this peculiar Favourite of Heaven shar'd more largely at the Hands of the Author of every good & perfect Gift in these Endowments which he bestows as the God of Nature, or these of infinitely greater Value, that he so freely gives as the Author of all Grace & Consolation in Christ Jesus – But no Character of this Lady of distinguish'd Eminence is intended. An Apelles – could not do Justice to every Face. It's only to be remember'd concerning this Saint of the first Magnitude, that there is the best ground to believe the first Seeds of Grace were planted in her Nature betimes: & that by the Blessing of God upon the Example & Instructions of pious Parents she was an early Convert – Certain it is, that in a Period of Life, spent by the Bulk of a guilty, accountable Grace in Vanity & Thoughtlessness, her tender mind was deeply impress'd with a Concern about matters of eternal & infinite Consequence & moment. At the 13th Year of her Age she was a devout Communicant – Every part of her after Conduct in that high sphere where infinite Wisdom call'd her forth to move, witnessed not only the Sincerity of her Christian Profession, but was highly ornamental to it. All that had the Honour of being near her Person must know with what Pleasure & lively Zeal she perform'd the Duties of the Christian Life; & with what Resignation

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and Christian Fortitude she was by Grace enabled to sustain any trying Dispensations in her Lot. And any who were blessed with the Advantage of Intimacy with that Favourite of Heaven, had an Opportunity of hearing from her own mouth the Praises of God's Grace, & of his Faithfulness to his Words, that to her sweet Experience all had been made to work together for her Good. How ravishing was it to any indulg'd the rare Privilege of hearing this hid Saint, this modest, humble, self-deny'd Christian speak freely of spiritual Things, & of the happy Temper of her devout Soul? With warmth, Energy & Devotion almost peculiar to herself, she has been heard say Years since – "blessed be God, even the God & Father of my Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ, I have been long since made to see the Vanity & Naughtiness of all that this World can afford, & to bestow my Heart on things within the Vail, blessed be God my Treasure is there, & my heart is there. What I have here is his, & given in Trust; O for Grace to be a faithful Steward"! – There are not wanting in her hand writing standing Evidences of her spiritual Attainments, & that God in Christ was the chosen Portion of her Soul. God was indeed greatly glorified in the whole of her Life by her bearing much Fruit; & the christian Temper ever prevailing in her Soul, made it conspicuously

²²⁷ Margaret Kerr (d.1759) was the daughter of Sir Thomas Nicholson of Aberdeenshire, Scotland. In 1711 she was married to William Kerr, 3rd Marquess of Lothian. Margaret Kerr died at the family estate of Newbattle Abbey on 30 September 1759 (*Burke's Peerage*)

appear whose Workmanship & whose Disciple she was. yet it may do peculiar honour to the Grace of him who has said – “Blessed are the poor in Spirit”;²²⁸ - it may be confirming to the meek & Humble that would fondly hope in his Mercy; that it be remember’d of this favourite Daughter of Zion, That her Fears were great she should not be honour’d to finish her Warfare with that

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Credit to the christian Profession she could wish. True it is that her Lady for some of the last years of her precious Life labour’d under a bodily Indisposition, of that kind which has a Tendency to make the human mind consider every Object that is gloomy as doubly so. Yet seldom or never could this her Infirmary be so improv’d upon by the assiduous Enemy of the Salvation & Peace of precious Souls, as to make her entertain any doubt that her’s should be bound up in the Bundle of Life, and given her as a prey in the Day of the Lord – With Confidence & Joy could she almost on every Occasion say – “I know in whom I have believe’d “& that he will keep what I have committed to him unto that Day.” But it’s as true that bitter Complaints were drawn from her pious Soul – “That she was afraid that she sinn’d in not bearing her present bodily Trouble as she ought to do – that her dead Heart was not warm’d as it ought to be with a sense of Redeeming Love – nor such Gratitude to be found in her for the great Things God of his Grace had done for her Soul as ought ever to be found there” – That the Pangs of natural Death were represented to her mind as very frightful – that she was sadly afraid lest she should turn her Back in the Day of Battle – that she might then be left to speak impatiently or unadvisedly, & not be honour’d to glorify God in dying as she could wish” – Plain indeed it was to all about her that while the outward man decay’d, the inward was renewed & invigorated, & that Day by Day, Love to Jesus who came to seek & to save lost Sinners seem’d to occupy her whole Heart. If any Instance of remarkable Gratitude was spoke of even in full Company, she would say, “Oh! what Gratitude do we owe to him who hath saved us from the second Death, by shedding his precious Blood a Ransom for many, & that while we

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were yet Enemies” – Notwithstanding these Fears lay with uneasy Weight upon her Ladyship’s devout mind till within a short time of her happy & triumphant Exit. This appear’d from the Petitions she was heard to put up thro’ some restless Nights she had in the Body: particularly the Friday Night before her Death. In the Intervalls of her pious Conferences with those about her, such Ejaculations as these were sent up from her Heart, & heard utter’d by her Tongue, “Oh that I may be enabled to bear all that I have to suffer with christian Patience, & that God may keep me from offending with my Tongue that unruly member. Oh that I may be honour’d to glorify my God in my Death, & to speak to the Praise of free Grace in my last moments” – then said – “I’ll go to bed & fear no Evil –

That all the Fears of this pious, exercis’d, eminent Saint were disappointed, her fervent Petitions heard & answer’d, & perhaps her largest Hopes & Wishes exceeded, appear’d in the whole of her Frame & Conversation the last Day of her Distance from

²²⁸ Matthew 5: 3

her Father's House – How shining the last Act of a Life spent in Love to God from her first Entry upon ye stage? a Life replenish'd with uninterrupted christian Offices to all his Offspring especially to such as her charitable Sentiments led her to believe were of the Household of Faith. All who had the Happiness to witness her Triumph must be convinc'd, that God truly gives Power to the Faint – that he is truly good to Israel- even to each that is of a pure Heart – that the Consolations of the Spirit are neither few nor small – & that he does strengthen & comfort the Souls of his Saints when Heart & Flesh fail –

On Saturday morning, after a Night mostly spent in Prayer, she was heard put up this Petition early & earnestly. “O that God may open my mouth to speak his Praise in the Hour of Death. After this

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she seem'd to sleep quietly about half an hour. when awake, her Ladyship looking up for some time with a pleas'd & serene Countenance, broke silence by uttering these remarkable Words – “now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.”²²⁹ Oh! the Views I now have of the adorable Perfections of my God, in the Face of Jesus Christ, my Lord God; my God, my Sanctifier and Redeemer

—

She then desir'd a minister that was present to pray with her: she was silent for some minutes after Prayer was ended; then raising herself up, said, “I know not what it is to die, but his Rod & his Staff will comfort me.”²³⁰ then uttering some Words so low as not to be heard, but accompanied with the outward Gestures of earnest Prayer, she again spoke out with Vigour & a Countenance full of Life & Joy – “He's gone, the Adversary is gone; he dare not set up his Head. Oh wonderful! wonderful! the amazing Goodness of God to my Soul! I am overcome with Love! 'tis too much, I cannot bear it I'm brimful! I can hold no more!- Amazing! Amazing! Praise him praise him all his Angels! Love & praise him all his Saints! O my Soul, praise the Lord! I'll bless & praise his Name while I have Being. amazing Goodness, amazing Goodness! Praise the Lord, O my Soul, who pardoneth all thy Iniquities, healeth all thy Backslidings, & crowneth thee with loving Kindness & “tender mercies. Amazing Mercy & Condescension to such a poor worthless Worm a I! – Adored, for ever adored be his Name for his Love & Mercy to the miserable, forlorn Race of apostate Adam! O! that I could adore redeeming Love I cannot do it as I ought I shall do it better by & by”

It was said to her Lady by her weeping Lord,²³¹ my dearest Life, that will be your delightful Employment to all Eternity. then taking him by the Hand, she said, “Yes, & I trust yours too.” She added, “May God bless &

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²²⁹ Luke 2: 29-30

²³⁰ Pss 23: 4

²³¹ William Kerr, Marquess of Lothian (1690-1767)

spare you, make your Life comfortable, & remarkably useful to the Church of God! We must part; But I hope shall meet again in eternal Bliss” – I cheerfully give up all Things for Christ – Then withdrawing her hand from his Lordship’s, she added – “last time I partook of the Sacrament in England, I was enabled to receive it on these Terms - let Christ be mine & I renounce & give up with Health & all Things: there is nothing but I part with for him, & I hope ever to say, his blessed Will be done – Praises to his Grace, he has enabled me to Faithfulness in this Covenant. I have been helped to bear Afflictions, & now I can easily part with all Things. I desire to go to be with Christ which is far better. He hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, order’d in all things & sure. This is all my Salvation & all my Desire. come Lord Jesus come quickly – Come, O thou Bridegroom of my Soul, & receive my immortal Spirit that I may be with thee thro’ the endless Ages of Eternity. when God comes then it will be finish’d, then it will be compleat: O come, tarry not, come & receive me to be forever with thy self” – After a little Pause, & having call’d for a Drink, she added, “bless, bless, O my God, my dear, dear Children with all spiritual Blessings in Christ Jesus. I have ever pray’d for them: he will bless them; yes, yes, I trust in his Mercy he will. All my nearest & dearest I commit to God. may all here present be taken into the Bosom of the everlasting Covenant. Praises to God’s Grace, that so many of my dear Concerns have tasted that the Lord is gracious” – She continued, “Pity them O God, that have not heard of this loving & almighty Saviour. pity, pity the blind miserable Part of Mankind that have heard of his Name but go on in Sin; that see no Comeliness in Christ, nor need of him. turn them by thy Spirit, O my God, & they shall be turned; make them to think of their

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Ways & turn their Feet to thy Testimonies. draw them & they shall run after thee. Praises to free Grace that such a poor, blind, polluted worm as I has been made to see the worth & need of his Blood & Righteousness. O let his Name endure for ever. let all account it as Ointment pour’d forth, & fly unto him for Salvation. And now, O my God, pity & support a poor worm, weak in Body & in mind; may I glorify thy Name in dying; may my mouth be open’d & I will show forth thy Praises: may the Grace that is in Christ be sufficient for me: may his strength be perfected in my weakness: may the Captain of my Salvation be with me & I will fear no Evil – Hold thou me up & I shall not be move’d; and the Praises shall be thine ‘thro’ the ages of an endless Eternity; Amen & Amen. Glory to him that cometh in the Name of the Lord to save; Amen & Amen. Praises, Praises to him that washeth me from my Sins in his Blood. Stablish, strengthen & settle me & my Soul shall bless thee; Amen & Amen. be not far from me when Trouble is near, O my God, for I will hope for thy Salvation. take not thy holy spirit from a poor worm, but may everlasting Arms be underneath me, & the Praises shall be ascribed to Father, Son & holy Ghost thro’ an endless Eternity; Amen & Amen; Amen & Amen” – She remain’d silent for a considerable time; then looking round with a pleas’d Countenance, She said, - “I now fear no Evil; no; Fear is gone, Sin is taken away; all Temptations are remov’d: Praises, Praises, eternal Praises to God And to the Lamb, who has washed from my Sins in his Blood O amazing Mercy! amazing! amazing! I cannot praise enough, but I shall do it better soon.” –

Her constant Employment thro’ the Afternoon & Evening, was, with a low Voice, to be saying; “Praises, Praises to him that loved me & hath washed me in his Blood. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, & make no stay” -

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Strength abated, the Asthma increas'd, & frequent short sleeps took place. when awaking out of one of these, & under great Distress, & wanting a Posture in which she might breathe more easily, she said, "my Body & Mind are weak; I am afraid of Impatience: I dread losing what I have attain'd." One present suggested to her that it was a sure Covenant she had been enabled to give her Consent to. That Death could not deface the Image of God received on her Soul by the Holy Ghost. that Christ would keep what she had committed to him; for none was able to pluck out of his Hand. that none could tell how a falling Tabernacle might cramp & overwhelm the precious Soul; maul its Operations for a time; perhaps it might be to such a Degree as to incapacitate it for rational or devout Exercises for a Season. but that he who knew her Frame, & remember'd that she was but Dust, would keep his hold of her when Heart & Flesh fail'd. immediately she said with great affection; "yes, yes, he will hold me up, & I shall be in Peace & safety still. O the Love of Christ to a poor Worm! Praises! Praises to his holy Name for ever & ever! Amen & Amen"

When awaking out of one of these Sleeps, she was heard say with a low voice. "That Enemy would yet tempt but he's a Liar, a Liar; I will trust." -

Whilst the severe Asthma made her Ladyship seek a Posture that might favour breathing, she said to one present by Name; "can you give me no Ease"? She was answer'd, your Lady well knows that it's the Hand of your dear Redeemer that lies upon. That it was by Death he himself enter'd into his Glory. that it was the uniform

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way by which his Disciples behov'd to follow him into those Mansions. That it not only behov'd the Body to be destroy'd because of Sin: but we had seen, & her Ladyship had felt, that Fitness for the Enjoyment of Heaven was not compatible with its present Imperfections. that she long'd to be with him, & surely wish'd to drink this Cup that he had given her to drink, & would not desire to fly from him. She then said with all the strength she possessed - "No, no, it is the Lord, I would not fly from him; I will wait for him; this Cup I will drink; yes, I'll drink it; yes, yes; my light afflictions which are but for a moment, shall work for me a far more exceeding & eternal weight of Glory. Shortly I shall be in the place where none say they are sick. Praises to God in the highest & to the Lamb for ever & ever"! -

She often pray'd; "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly; & make no stay." & referring to her bodily Distress, said, "take me out of this horrible Pit, out of this miry Clay, set my Feet upon a Rock & establish my Goings. Her Distress still growing, she said; "Lord preserve me from Impatience. I am weary of this World. O welcome Death". It was said by one present; your Ladyship will shortly be in a new & better World. She answer'd, "you have not seen it. no, I know Eye has not seen, nor Ear heard, nor has it enter'd into the Heart of man to conceive what is there laid up for them that love him".

Her mind so greatly ravish'd with the Love of a Redeemer dwelt much on that Expression; "Christ our Righteousness; our Righteousness; wonderful! wonderful! It

was suggested by one of her Friends present, that he would be her strength. “yes, yes, (said she)

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and my Portion for ever.” –

The last Expression her Ladyship utter'd was, “come, come, Lord Jesus, & take my Soul to be with thyself – come quickly & make no stay”. that instant she shut her Eyes & fell asleep in Jesus, like the devout women that were early up on the first Day of the Week, to express their Regard to their dear Lord, so on that Day by one in the morning, (being Sept^r 30 1759) she was taken up to see him in his Glory & Kingdom. By the Hand of the Spirit her Soul was indeed prepar'd for the Presence of the Lamb, as a Bride adorn'd for her Husband.²³² her Temper was entirely suited for those pure & peaceful Mansions. –

Her Seat must be near the Throne, & few of the happy Inhabitants can be suppos'd to sing the song of Zion on a higher Note, than one that enjoy'd so much of Heaven while on Earth -

Reference: EMV/501/104

Date: 28 June 1778

Correspondent: Unknown

Document: Death of Mrs Macdonald²³³

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: [London]

Annotated: In Charles Wesley's hand:

“S[ister] Mcdonald's death June 21 1778”

A Brief Acct of the Sickness & Death of Mrs McDonald who died Suny June 28 1778

On Friday morning she as usual attended the Preaching, which she scarsily mist five mornings in the year.

She was likewise present at the Intercession went to see some of her poor sick Friends in the afternoon, & was as well & chearfull all the Evening as she had been for several years. Abt 2 o'Clock on Saturday morning she was seized with convulsions in her Bowells, & tho' she continued all day & the following night in the most excruciating pain, always exprest an unshaken confidence in GOD; & perfect Resignation to his

²³² Revelation 21: 2

²³³ Mrs McDonald (d.1778) was a servant at the Foundery in London for forty years. The preacher Peter Jaco in her funeral sermon, described McDonald as 'weak in her mental powers which often exposed her to innocent infirmities', but upright in character and conduct. (Principal source: Obituary by Peter Jaco in *The Arminian Magazine* 1788, 409-410).

Will. When Mr Jaco²³⁴ asked her on Satur [shorthand annotation] night, Do you find Jesus preacious to you now? she cried out “Yes, He is precious Indeed! O my sweet Jesus! Thou art altogether Lovely!”²³⁵ In the fore part of the night M^r Allen²³⁶ asked her, Do you find all is right? Is the Intercourse open between GOD & your Soul? She answered “O yes, Love, Love, I find nothing but Love. Preacious Love! Preacious Jesus! He is come for me; there he is; do you not see him? O Love unbounded Love”. She often thro’ the night spoke of the New Heaven & the New Earth where in dwelleth Righteousness.²³⁷

About 3 o’clock on Sunday morning Mrs Jaco perceiving she changed very fast, asked her How do you find your Soul now? Have you any Doubt or Fear? She immediately replied “No, nothing but Love! Unbounded Love. I am going to my Blessed Jesus!

²³⁴ Peter Jaco (1729-81): Born in Newlyn, Cornwall, Jaco spent his early life working in a pilchard fishery. He was converted through a tin-miner's sermon and in 1751 was appointed by Wesley to visit several local societies. Jaco entered the itinerancy in 1754 and exercised a circuit ministry in England and Ireland, suffering much persecution and hardship. (Principal sources: Harmon and Lewis)

²³⁵ Song of Solomon 5:16

²³⁶ Possibly Edward Allen (d.1781), a wealthy London merchant and an intimate friend of John Wesley. He gave large sums in support of Methodist causes, especially the erection of London's City Road Chapel. Allen was one of the first to be buried in the City Road graveyard. (Principal source: George John Stevenson, *City Road Chapel, London, and its Associations, Historical, Biographical, and Memorial* (1872) 523

²³⁷ 2 Peter 3:13

She continued praying & praising 'till abt 4 oclock then without struggle or groan she fell asleep.

Reference: EMV/501/105

Date: 29 June 1762

Correspondent: Mary Maddern

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Locations: Bristol and London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“May 29 1762 M Madern undecided”

Rev^d Sir

Bristol 29 June 1762

At your request I am going to give you a fue Peticulars of GOD dealings with me a poor unworthy creature, allmost from my earliest Infancy he seemd to drag me to him self & I had strong desires at times & when about eight years ould I shurly had atast of the Love of GOD tho I knew not what it was, but felt such love to Jesus Christ that I long,d to die to be with him, but I soon lost it and at Times was very uneasy where I shuld go if I was to die, at twelve years ould that uneasiness gratly incresd through a very awfull dreme that I had. I atended upon the Means of Grace but cold find no comfort sometime after M^r Whitfield came to London I atended constantly on his Preaching in the Churches & offen found grate sweetness, but was not awakned to any sense of unbelife, in this way I whent on till you and Brother first Preaching in the Churches, I hard M^r Wesley several times but did not much like him at that Time there was a report spread that both you & him had drove many to dispare through your Pernichus Doctrin My Parents on this lade these commands on me not to hear you any more and I belive I promisd to obeay them; but My God who knew best by what way to work on me brought me to Cread Church²³⁸ to hear as I thought a preparation sermon Preach,d by the Minister of the Church, he read Prayers after he had don you came up in the Pullpet I was lockt in a seat or otherways shuld have gon out of the Church but I thought however I wold not lisen to any thing you said, but when GOD will work who shall hinder. I well remember your text was ye serpents ye generation of vipers how shall ye escape the Damnation of Hell. the Lord was pleasd to send every word home to my hart. & I whent away crying out what shall do to be saved, I than felt the burden of sin Indeed intolrable but GOD soon shod me a Saviour that was for several months in deep distress of soul before I could lay hold on him by Faith and offen Times like one without hope I atended constantly upon the Preaching but saw my self wors and wors & farder & farder as I thought from GOD and never more so then the night when GOD was pleasd to speak Peace to my trobl'd soul in your Prayer at M^r Axels at the Seven Diels (you Sir know how long that is since, oh what unfaithfull wreth I have I been to the Grace of GOD otherways how much more of his Presence mite I have injoyd) My hart then seemd fild with peace and joy in believing & I cold do nothing but tell of his goodness to poor sinners but alas I soon lost it by lisening to the Temptations of the Deivil who preach stillness to me before I

²³⁸ Possibly St Katherine Cree Anglican Church, Leadenhall Street, London

ever hard it Preachd by any human creature, I was sumtime before I saw my loss, [...] inbread sin wich had been Coverd for a season again revived I reasond with the enemie till I was like one in dispar thinking there was no mercy for me as I had fell from the Pardening Love of GOD, I believe I was six months or more in this way before I menshond it to any one, tho I atended upon the word Preach as offen as I cold as My Friends was utterly against my going I cold not have the oppertunetacy that many had, I hapend one day to meat with your Brother he advisd Me to meat a Band wich I did for sumtime before I found any relife from that deep distress of soul, but that God who is Gracious to all that call upon him, and as I was in Private Prayer returnd again unto my soul & not only gave me back my former pece and love but much more abundantly when thoes words was aplid to my Hart have I not lov,d & seald the for my own I cold then truly say I lived to GOD alone and was in all things perfectly resind to his will findind no evel of any kind in my Hart nor any Inclination to sin of any kind for near four year but my whol soul was dedicated to him and every desire of my Hart was to Gloryfie his holy name. I must [once] I thought my self in the full sence born again of GOD and never thought of seeing evell More, but his thoughts are not as our thoughts he gave me to tast of the Good land but there was a larger measure of suffering for me before I am made an Inhabitend of that [...] tho it tis what I both look and long for & belive I shall be maid a living witness of that grate truth as it tis free Grace. for I have nothing in me to merit it, but I dayly I experance so much of his tender care & Love towards me unworthy as I am, that I cannot doupt. Oh Sir pray for me my Trying hour is at hand oh may his strength be maid perfect in my weakness. and may the Lord shenghen you in Body & Soul and teach you wisdom secretly. is the

Prayer of your unfear'd Friend & Sarven
Mary Maddern

If you pleas with My Love to inform M^{rs} Wesley that that I have just been to see Miss & she is exceeding well and very cherfull all the Family is also well & desire their duty. M^{rs} Wigas & Miss Stafords desire there Love & are glad to hear you got safe to London.

I must beg you Sir to excuse the incorectness of this as I am obligd to writ sirronded with children

Reference: EMV/501/106

Date: 16 February 1744 [new style]

Correspondent: Charles Wesley

Addressee: Aaron Maw

Place: [Epworth]²³⁹

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Mine to Aaron Maw on his death-bed"
2. Shorthand passage transcribed by Dr Timothy Underhill:

"Then shall you say O death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory.²⁴⁰
The sting of death is sin,²⁴¹ but the lamb of God taketh away the sin of the world.
O that you thought upon him faithfully set forth before our eyes as crucified!²⁴² Faith

²³⁹ CWJ, 14 February 1744

²⁴⁰ 1 Cor. 15:56

²⁴¹ John 1:29

sees him stand as crucified with his vesture dipped in blood.²⁴³ That blood be upon you and wash you white as snow, and make you meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.²⁴⁴ Jesus Master have mercy upon him.²⁴⁵ Show thy s[pirit?], sprinkle his heart.²⁴⁶ Cut short thy work²⁴⁷ and bring a clean thing out of an unclean.²⁴⁸

Remember him now thou art come into thy kingdom.²⁴⁹ Save him as at the eleventh hour,²⁵⁰ and whensoever his soul departs from the body say thou unto him this day shall thou be with me in paradise.²⁵¹

So prays in his heart a true friend and lover of your soul Charles Wesley

February 16 (Epistle to Aaron Maw dying)

1743/4”

Dear Sir,

I was grieved to hear at my coming hither, yt you was dangerously Ill, and not likely to recover. My Heart's Desire and prayer to God for you is that you may be saved, and that I may meet you with your old Minister, My Father [Samuel Wesley 1662-1735], in Paradise. I write out of pure Love to your pretious Soul, wch is now on the very Brink of Eternity. O what must you do to be saved?²⁵² How can you make your peace with God, before whom you will shortly appear? He is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity.²⁵³ Such as be Evil shall not stand in his Sight.²⁵⁴ Know you not, that no unrighteous person, no Drunkard, no Adulterer shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven? The Soul that sinneth, It shall die.²⁵⁵ The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the people that forget God.²⁵⁶ _ If God is supreme to mark what is done amiss, who may abide it? You and I, (Dear Sir) have millions and millions of Sins upon our souls, for the least of which God may justly destroy both Soul and Body in Hell.²⁵⁷ But if our sins were more and greater than they are, still there is Hope of Mercy, if we fly to Jesus Christ, while He may be found.²⁵⁸ There is no other name given

²⁴² Gal 3:1

²⁴³ Rev. 19:23

²⁴⁴ Col. 1:12

²⁴⁵ Luke 17:13

²⁴⁶ Heb. 10:22

²⁴⁷ Rom. 9:28

²⁴⁸ Job 14:4

²⁴⁹ Luke 23:42

²⁵⁰ Matt. 20:6, 9.

²⁵¹ Luke 23:43

²⁵² Acts 16:30

²⁵³ Hab. 1:13

²⁵⁴ A possible allusion to Ps. 5:5

²⁵⁵ Ezek. 18:20

²⁵⁶ Ps. 9:17

²⁵⁷ Matt. 10:28

²⁵⁸ Isa. 55:6

under Heaven, whereby you can obtain Salvation:²⁵⁹ But Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners;²⁶⁰ and His Blood cleanses from all sin.²⁶¹ He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole World.²⁶² The Lord hath laid on Him the Iniquity of us all.²⁶³ Surely He hath born your Grievs, and carried your Sorrows,²⁶⁴ He was wounded for your Transgressions, and bruis'd for your Iniquities: The Chastisement of your Peace was upon Him, that by His stripes you might be healed.²⁶⁵ All your Evil Thoughts and Words, and Actions he carried in his own Body on the Tree,²⁶⁶ that is, The Guilt of all your Sins was Imputed to Him and He was punished in your stead. God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for you, that you might be made the Righteousness of God in Him.²⁶⁷ Christ hath delivered you from the Curse of the Law, being made a curse for you²⁶⁸ _ Now tho' your sins are as scarlet, Believe on Him, and they be white as snow.²⁶⁹

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Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you, even you shall be saved.²⁷⁰ By Grace you are saved thro' Faith, not works.²⁷¹ You can never balance your evil Deeds with your good ones. No; but come to God, as to the Creditor that had two Debtors, the One owed him 50, the other 500 pence. and when they had nothing to pay He frankly forgave them both.²⁷² When they had nothing to pay, Observe and not till then. If you think to make God satisfaction yourself for your own Sins, then Christ shall profit you nothing:²⁷³ you have nothing to trust to, but the merits of Jesus Christ. Supposing you owed but 50 pence, or had only one sin upon your Soul, How can you make atonement for it? If you die with that single Sin upon you, you die Eternally. And can your Tears wash it out? No, nothing, nothing can cleanse you from any sin, but that which cleansed from all, even the Blood of Jesus Christ the Righteous.²⁷⁴ This is the Fountain opened for sin, and for uncleanness.²⁷⁵ Arise then, & wash away thy sins calling upon ye name of ye Lord²⁷⁶

²⁵⁹ Acts 4:12

²⁶⁰ 1 Tim. 1:15

²⁶¹ 1 John 1:7

²⁶² 1 John 2:2

²⁶³ Isa. 53:6

²⁶⁴ Isa. 53:3

²⁶⁵ Isa. 53:5

²⁶⁶ Gal. 3:13

²⁶⁷ 2 Cor. 5:21

²⁶⁸ Gal. 3:13

²⁶⁹ Isa. 1:18

²⁷⁰ Acts 16:31

²⁷¹ Rom. 11:16

²⁷² Luke 7:41-42

²⁷³ Gal. 5:2

²⁷⁴ 1 John 1: 7, 2:1

²⁷⁵ Zec. 13:1

²⁷⁶ Acts 22:16

Our next meeting will be at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Fly to Him therefore, I beseech you while He may be found,²⁷⁷ The Friend of Sinners, and Their Advoca[te] with the Father.²⁷⁸ O do not flatter yourself with Hopes of Life: in all probability you are now upon your Death-bed. Within a few days, by the course of nature, your spirit must return. Cry then unto Jesus, mighty to save,²⁷⁹ that he may apply his Blood to your Guilty Soul, before you go hence, and are no more seen Except I wash thee (Himself says) Thou hast no part with me.”²⁸⁰ As yet you are not washed; you have not true Faith in His Blood. For Faith is the Gift of God,²⁸¹ He that believeth, Hath the Witness in Himself:²⁸² He that believeth hath Everlasting Life, and shall never come into condemnation.²⁸³ But, Ask, and this Faith shall be given you; seek, and you shall find it.²⁸⁴ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.²⁸⁵ This man still receiveth Sinners: still He hath power to forgive Sins upon Earth and is ready to speak to your Heart, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven Thee.²⁸⁶ Then, and not till then can you depart in Peace, when your Eyes have seen his Salvation,²⁸⁷
Then you shall say, O, Death, where is thy Sting,
O Grave, where is Thy Victory.²⁸⁸ –

Reference: EMV/501/107

Date: January 1742

Correspondent: Eliza Mann²⁸⁹

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: “To The Revd Mr Wesley in Bristol”

Location: [London]

Annotation: In the handwriting of Charles Wesley:

“Eliza Mann – full of Love. Jan. 1742 Jan”

Additional: Postmarked “26 IA” [January]

Dear Sir

I had a great desir to write to you that you might remember me when you goo in and out before the lord i earnestly desire your prayers and the prayers of those that are with you if we pray for one another I am sure we shall love one another and tho

²⁷⁷ Isa. 55:6

²⁷⁸ 1 John 2:1

²⁷⁹ Isa. 63:1

²⁸⁰ John 13:8

²⁸¹ Eph. 2:8

²⁸² John 1:29

²⁸³ John 5:24

²⁸⁴ Matt. 7:7

²⁸⁵ Heb. 13:8

²⁸⁶ Matt. 9:2

²⁸⁷ Luke 2:29-30

²⁸⁸ 1 Cor. 15:55

²⁸⁹ Eliza Mann was listed as a member of the Single Select Society at the Foundry, London, in February 1744 (Stevenson, 33)

absent in body we shall be present in spirit oh how sweet it is to hang upon christ continually to depend on him alone for strength and deliverance oh trust ye in the Lord for ever for in the Lord Jehova is everlasting strength strength to deliver from the power of satan and from our inbred enemies the lord has undertaken our caese he shall fight for us he shall destroy all our enemies and caese their memory to perish who is so great a god as our god oh praise ye the Lord for he is good and his mercy endureth for ever who can utter the mighty acts of the lord who can sho forth all his praise oh Lord do thou give me a heart to praise thy name and to tel of all thy wonderous works fill me with thy love and out of the abundance of my heart let my mouth speak i cannot express the love of christ to my soul he gives me sweet peace thro his blood and at the same time that my soul is humbled in the dust by a sence of my own vileness his love comforts my soul and banishes all fear from me I sometimes find my self beset with many evil thoughts but i know my god will come with a recompence and destroy all my enemies and make me pure of heart and i shall see god and live I groan to be deliverd from this bondage of corruption into the glorious Liberty of the children of god god has given me a tast of that Liberty and i doubt not but he will give me wholly to experience it all my soul seemt lost in god I do not remember that I felt one evil motion but all was love and praise and every breath was prayer I know if god could keep me so for hours he can for years I cannot doubt of this great salvation since it is so clearly spoken of in the old and new testamend the light shineth and if men did not love darkness rather than Light they must perceave it but blesed be that god who has shown us the Light and bid us walk in it and may we never provoke him to withdraw it may we walk in the Light as god is in the Light and feel the blood of Jesus Christ clensin us from all sin, I feell sometimes such an awefull sence of the majesty of god that my flesh trembleth and I dare not look up I Loth my self when god I see and into nothing fall content if thou exalted be and christ be all in all oh that I lived no longer but christ Lived in me this is my one desir and may I never rest till it is acomplisht god often calls me to prayer he bids me ask and I shall receive in confidence of this promise I ask tho I find the enemies would fain put me of and my own evil heart would find me many excuses but this makes me but the more earnest since I find all that is evil in me is against it and I find it is exceeding good for my soul to pray

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it is in prayer god has communicated most of his blesings to me it is in prayer mostly that am convin[c]ed of any evil it was in privite prayer I was first sprinkled with the blood of the covennant and after I had Long grond under the bondage of corruption and walked on in thick darkness when I felt my inward parts were very wickedness and every thought of my heart only evil continually and seemd every moment redy to sink into hell god again manifested his love to me in prayer nor have I less need of it now for I know I am not safe while I am on this side Jordon but may still return to the fleshpots of egypt but the grace of god is sufisient for me god will not let me rest or depend on what I have received when I think I have grace for the next hour it seems intirly withdrawn and by this I am learn[t?] to depend on christ alone and I never seem'd so helpless in my Life as I do now I feel I can do nothing without christ but thro him I Shall soon do all things I do not allways find a great deal of joy but mutch sweetness in my Soul and often a deep but Lovin mouning in my heart that melts me into tears and humbles my soul excedinly I find such strong hungerings and thirsting after perfect righteousness and Longins after god that my soul seems as tho it would

burst the bands of flesh and fly to him it so Loveth I Love him becaese he first Loved me and still his banner over me is Love oh who can tell the Love of Jesus oh [drag] me saviour and i will run after the thy Love is more pretious than thousands of gold and silver I Long to Love the with all my heart kindle this flame in me and Let it never be [quansht] seal me by thy spirit unto the the day of redemption and fill me with all the fullness of god amen may the god of peace be with you amen

I should be glad Sir if when you had opertunity you would favour me with a few Lines by this I shoud now that you Loved in the bowels of christ Jesus

your unworthy sister Eliza Mann

Reference: EMV/501/108

Date: April 1772

Correspondent: Elizabeth Marriott

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: [London]

Annotated: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "S[ister] Marriot's happy death April 1772"

Revd and Dear Sir

Agreeable to your desire I will attempt to give You a short account of the dealings of God with my dear Mother,²⁹⁰ but as the family took up much of my time during her sickness I had not the opportunity of seeing or hearing near so much as those that constantly waited on her. _____ When first her bodily strength decayed she appeared to be in great darkness of soul, and would often retire to weep. The enemy thrust sore at her and strove much to overcome her by impatience. All this time I could do nothing but pray for her. Considering it was my Parent I could not find freedom to speak; till one Saturday I broke thro' and ask'd her how she felt her mind. She said I have thought much since I have been confin'd, and had many views of eternity. I see much cause to be thankful; every body is very kind and I dont find my Family miss me. I used to think nothing would be done as it ought if I did not see to it; but I fear you will be overdone and then I dont know what we shall do, I am sorry to see you so exercised in body and mind, I know you feel for me. I said do not give yourself one moment's uneasiness about me, the Lord doth support me; I feel a little what it meaneth to walk unconcerned in care. She said I bless God for it, but still I often think wherefore my body is so afflicted; sometimes I think it is a token for good that the Lord will save me, and therefore my Sin has its punishment here; at other times I fear it is only an earnest of eternal misery. I know the Lord might justly banish me from his presence for ever, for my unfaithfulness to his grace. I encouraged her to believe it was a token of his willingness to receive her after all that she had done, and to heal her backslidings and love her freely. And so it proved, for not many days after while the Nurse was praying with her she broke out, The light is come, I feel Peace and Pardon, and Joy in the Holy Ghost. And I believe never lost it more tho' tried as

²⁹⁰ Webster Marriott, wife of the prominent London lay Wesleyan William Marriott (Stevenson, *City Road Chapel*, 572-574)

by fire both with severe pain and strong temptations; especially this, that the last agonies of death would be such as to make her quit her hold of Jesus. Another was an unwillingness to tell what God had done for her Soul; She said none would believe her because her conversation had not adorned the Gospel in times past. But after she was prevailed on to break thro', leaving that to the Lord what any might say or think; she was continually telling of his goodness

[page break]

She often said O what do I see now, seeming to refer to the Lord's past dealings with her, all is mercy, all I see is God, I see God in all. Sometimes when she thought of getting over the disorder she would say, Be my Days many or few they all are his due, and shall all be devoted to Him. I asked if she chose life she said no, only by Life or Death to glorify God. for I fear lest if I live I should not live wholly to Him. But I know he will do that which is best for me and all of You. She often saw invisible things, One day as she sat in her bed, she nodded her head and said Aye I am coming, I asked her what she meant, she said Nancy peep'd at her and beckoned her. Another time she asked me who that Man was that came into the room, I said there was none, She said yes there was and He says You wont let me go to Heaven. On my making no answer she over'd with it again, till I said yes I will let You go. She would not suffer any of us to hold her back, nor allow us to shed a tear in her presence, she said we ought to rejoice, she did, and felt no reluctance to part with any of us, And indeed it appeared so, I saw her take her leave of her children without the least emotion. I asked the reason, She said she left them in the hands of God, he would take care of them, and felt no anxiety, he had been so gracious to her in them already. Perceiving her Soul calm and serene one night, I said are you seeking all the Lord has purchased; do you feel the want of a full renewal in righteousness. She said I am waiting for it. I know I shall love Him with all my heart. She then expressed much happiness in God. I said Give Him all the Glory. She said Aye give him all the glory indeed, it is all of grace I expect to be saved only for what He has done and suffer'd. At another time she cryed out, O wondrous Grace! frequently when she appeared to have neither strength nor voice, she began to our astonishment singing Now O my Joshua bring me in. Towards the close of her illness finding herself very heavy to sleep, she supposed the Apothecary had put something of a sleepy nature into her medicines, which she desired him not to do, telling him, She was not afraid to die. A few days before she died, she said to me I am going to God and You shall go too. On tuesday she said Open the door and let all them Sisters come in and

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we will all go to Church together. I said You are going to the Church triumphant, where they sing Hallelujah, and was going on when she caught the rest from me and said Yes where they sing Hallelujah to God and the Lamb. She continued speaking of Him and longing for Him till (contrary to her expectation) she sweetly slept in Jesus without struggle, sigh, or groan. She went off so easy that both the Persons with her thought her only asleep. ____ I might say much more if time would permit of the goodness of God to her, but must conclude abruptly. I am

Sir

Your affectionate Daughter
Eliz: Marriott

Reference: EMV/501/109

Date: 28 December 1764

Correspondent: Samuel Franks²⁹¹

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Charles Wesley in Bristol"

Location: [London]²⁹²

Annotated: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Dec. 28 1764 Franks of J. Mathews released"

Dear Sir

28th Decr 64

This Day about 3 in the Morning our Dear Friend compleated his Warfare. About 2 Yr Bro.^r was w^h him,²⁹³ after a time he went to prayer and having finished all relating to him, while he continued for the LORD. I, strengthning & supporting his Wife; he gave up his Spirit w^h Patience. & Thankfulness, into the Hands of his merciful & faithful Creator & Redeemer without a Sigh or Groan. His Senses were acute to the last moment. I think such an Instance of Patience, Resignation and Self Diffidence I scarce ever met w^h. Some of his last Words uttered Yesterday were, "Pray for me yt I may not deceive myself." his meaning was that he might not overate ye supporting & comforting Grace GOD had blessed him w^h. Allowing for the Body's passing down his Mind; for some Weeks Past his Soul has been a Sacrifice of Prayer, Praise, & Thanksgiving. The LORD prepare me to follow him. I thank him I grow more weary of all transitory Things, than ever. May I experience & daily increase in all the holy humble heavenly Mind w^c was in Jesus! Mrs Matthews is very disconsolate; but as well as can be expected. My Wife joins in Love & Duty w^h

Yr affectionate Servt

Saml. Franks

²⁹¹ Samuel Franks (d. 1773): Appointed Book Steward in 1759, Franks occupied that position until 1773, when he committed suicide at the Foundery over a discrepancy in the accounts. He also served as the first steward of the Preachers' Friend Society. (Principal sources: George John Stevenson, *City Road Chapel, London, and its Associations, Historical, Biographical, and Memorial* (1872), 48,161)

²⁹² From the reference to John Wesley

²⁹³ 'Fri. 28. Between two and three in the morning, I was sent for to John Matthews ... Just at three ... he fell asleep [died]. A man of so faultless a behaviour I have hardly ever been acquainted with. During twenty years, I do not remember his doing or saying anything which I would wish to have been unsaid or undone.' (JWJ, 28 December 1764)

Reference: EMV/501/110

Date: 1765

Document: "A short account of the experience of Sister Mecham"

Locations: London

a Short Account of the Experience of Sister Mecham²⁹⁴

She was Early endued with much of the Fear of God & her own Mother remark'd she was scarce ever seen to Smile till twelve Years old, she married Young (about 20 Y^r old) when it may be said her troubles began; for her first husband being Quite unconcern'd about his Salvation: took her a Walking on a Sabbath day, as they went, she thought the People she saw, were all going the broad way to destruction. Yet she went in wth him to the Lake House; the next day convictions follow'd her so strong she thought she had committed the unpardonable sin and was tempted to destroy herself: at one time in particular when her husband was going out on a saturday night as was his custom she lock'd her chamber door & had a Knife ready But her husband without any Cause that he knew of return'd (doubtless sent of God) went up directly to the Chamber door & finding it fast burst it open directly, when she flung the Knife away behind the Bed. the same temptation continued some months none knowing it but God but meeting with a friend a Disenter that she thought was a Christian, she open'd her mind to him but he being ignorant of such experiences acquainted her husband & friends Contrary to her Desire & as she thought his Promise, she now thought there was no such Person as a Christian to be found. immediately her friends sent for the Rev^d M^r Wilson & Marlow²⁹⁵ both Curates of Shoreditch who took a deal of Pains with Her (tho' for sometime they could not but think she had committed some Enormous Crime) she kept constant to the Prayer of y^e Church & hearing both sundays & weekdays but durst not take the Lord supper fearing she should do as Judas did till M^r Wilson meeting her on the day before good friday ask'd if she intended receiving the next day she was started at the Question but told him no for the above reason but M^r Wilson telling that if she would not he would never speak to her any more she complied rather than disoblidge him & there she receiv'd a full sence of the Pardoning Love of God & went home rejoicing. this is about 30 Years since, it should be notic'd that in the time of her troubles her friends taking her out to White chapple Mount when thousands of People were there to see a shame siege she cried out aloud there is not among all these such a Wretch as I and fell down as dead, also at hearing a sermon of the Rev^d M^r Wheatly on the sin against the Holy Ghost, she also fell down as dead. this was about the time the field Preaching began hear. which she was often Persuaded to hear but would not being rivetted so strongly to the Church, till our Brother Barnes who liv'd in the Neighborhood knowing M^r Wesly was going to Preach on a Morning on our Lord temptations sent her word desiring her to Come to hear him at 6 in the Morning she came tho against her Inclination & hear'd; when ask'd How she lik'd she told M^r Barnes he had told M^r Wesley all her life, which when he declar'd he had not. she thought God had directed the word to her

²⁹⁴ Mary Mecham is listed as a member of the married band led by Mehatabel Chiffinch at the Foundery in June 1745 (Stevenson, 37)

²⁹⁵ Michael Marlow (d.1795) served as curate of St Leonard's Shoreditch, London, from 1735 to 1744 (clergy of the Church of England database)

& continued hearing in the mornings & evenings; her husband being then at Sea (who would else have oppos'd it) He died in the West Indies leaving her with one child, His relations were very kind to her in his absence till she came to the Foundery they then sent for Her to ask'd if she intended to Continue with the Methodists she told them she hop'd that the day she left them that God would require her soul from her body. & from that day they all forsook her, the great enemy of her soul who had long lain idle began to renew her old temptations upon her now tho' not Quite so Powerfully as before about 23 Years ago she married again; on consulting the Lord in Prayer these words were strongly impress'd on her mind. You shall have trouble in the Flesh nevertheless I spare You a Year after & after a Lying in God was pleas'd to afflict her with a Cancer in her breast but the Temptations of her soul were beyond all, that You might Say Tears were Her Meat day and night about 17 Years ago God visited her with another sharp affliction an Ulcer in the womb, both which bodily afflictions continued to her death and a fever generally once a Year about 9 or 10 years ago she receiv'd a great Blessing under the Rev^d M^r Cha^s: Wesleys Preaching when you said you had come that they might receive a second benefit which was a great support to her, she was never so well as when she could be in the House of God & many a time has dragg'd her frail body there tho' her pains were so great she thought she should never get back, she often rec^d great comfort from M^r Walch M^r Morgan M^r Nelson²⁹⁶ & in Private confirsence. Yet the enemy press'd her so very sore with Blasphemous & hard thoughts of God that within a fortnight of her death she cried out in Agony she fear'd she should be damn'd at last she was naturally of a Quick spirit and a very tender Conscience which frequently caus'd her much trouble for when having said a thing she would keep her word however difficult so to do. She may Justly be said to have been a Faithfull & Loving Wife and Mother, a kind friend & neighbour a good Mistress and a Compassionate Christian.

S. Mitcham's death 1765

Reference: EMV/501/111

Date: 8 October 1743

Correspondent: Thomas Middleton²⁹⁷

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Locations: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Tho Middleton Oct 8 1743. Now in the harbour”

²⁹⁶ John Nelson (1707–74). Born in Birstall, Yorkshire, Nelson was converted in 1739 while working as a stonemason in London. The next year Nelson returned to Yorkshire and commenced preaching tours which introduced Methodism to much of his native county and adjoining areas. In 1742 he was appointed by Wesley to the regular itinerancy and exercised a highly successful ministry in many parts of the north of England and the Midlands. His experiences were used by the Wesleys in their preaching and publications and helped to establish Nelson as one of the best known of the lay-preachers. (Principal sources: Lenton; Lewis.)

²⁹⁷ Thomas Middleton is listed as one of the unmarried men of the Select Society that met at the Foundery in February 1744 (Stevenson, 33)

Dear Rev:^d Sir

October 8, 1743

Downing Street

Westminster

Ye are my Father my Counsellour and my Guide. The Lord hath made you a means to deliver my Soul out of Trouble; I sometimes stand amaz'd at my self and am even a Mistery, how I have been kept as a Bush in the midst of a flame and not consumed. As I was walking through the Fire, the Lord was with me, or it had not fail'd, but that I should have been consumed. For as I was going on frowardly to follow my own heart's lust, his loving Spirit pursu'd me, and hedged me in on every side, so that I could not accomplish my will. I was often constrain'd to retire to prayer, and their the Lord would shew me his will, but I stopt my Ears, and would not hearken, but when departed followed on to do my own will, till at length I was ready to take my own will to be the Lords, so near was I to be given up to my own Inventions. But The Lord in Mercy still pursued me; First with Blessings. In setting before me the Happiness of enjoying him alone, hear and hereafter to all Eternity. He also pursu'd me with Judgments, in representing to me the Miserable Estate of those that tast of the Love of God, and fall away doing despite unto the Spirit of grace and also of the Blackness and darkness forever. And also, under the means of Grace I could have no Fellowship nor Communion, but they was a wearisomness unto me, and a half an hour seem'd to me, to be an hour. Yet I was not suffer'd to stay from them: but when I came to Preaching or any of the Ordinances, I was struck with such a Sense of my Wretchedness and Misery, in departing from God; That my first Expressions were God be mercyfull unto me, God be mercyfull unto me, God be mercyfull unto me. Thus was it with me and a great deal worse till it pleased God of his mercy to send me to you, your sharp reproof, and advice through the Blessing of God, brought me to a resolution, and to have my Eye single to the Lord. But O' the deceit fullness of my heart, and the crafty wiles of Satan how was I again departing from my own stedfastness, how sorry was I that I had wrote to you my mind as I did, for thought I, I might have had my own will, and others might not know but that it was the will of God. But God posseseth the heart and the reins neither is there any thing hid from him with whome we have to do. for whether shall I goe from his presence, there is no hiding place as I can find, tho I have sought it carefully. But from the second time I was with you I sought to hide myself no more, but wanted to pour out my soul to the Lord and to shew him of all my trouble. I wanted to weep my Life away at the Saviours feet, to wash his feet with tears, and to kiss his feet but my heart still remain'd hard till the next day which was Sunday. Came to the Foundry in the morning, and the hymns and the Preaching seemd to be directed Immediatly to me, they was to my Soul as healing medicens and at the Chaple, all the service my heart was poured out before the Lord: it was full and ready to breake. And perticularly at the Lords Table. Just as I came to it, you gave out a Hymn which express'd Gods Mercies and Deliverances, it was so suitable to me that it reach'd my very Heart. all that day I thought I could desire no greater happyness than to mourn and weep continually.

I Experience your words, that my peace would return again, if I gave over thinking to oppose the will of God. I find that yet I have an Advocate with the Father, who is the Propitiation for this, and for al my Sinns

Whence to me this wast of Love,
Ask my Advocate above;
See the cause in Jesu's Face,
Now before the Throne of Grace.

The only thing that now besets me is lightness of Spirit, a Temptation I least of all expected, I being always so opposite unto it; but I believe it is my punishment; but I am amazed that I should be so when my heart is in heaviness, and I have so much reason to mourn as I have, and sometimes do. but I make my prayer unto God and I look to be delivered from that, and from every evil Word, and Work.

Be pleas'd to order to Consult who can be set as leaders over the Classes at Hyde parke corner and Gravenor Square, N^o: 133 & 134. they being so far from me that I cannot attend them, As for the J. Classes in Westminster, I do not know, but I may be able to look after them.

From Your Unworthy Son,

Tho:^s Middleton

Reference: EMV/501/112

Date: 1762

Correspondent: Unknown

Document: Conversion and death of Joanna Mussell

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Joanna Mussels death 1762”

A Brief Acct. of the Conversion & Death of Joanna Mussell

About the year 1742 Mr Chars Westley Preach'd in Mr Moons Tanyard near St Phillips²⁹⁸ Plain upon the Parable of the Prodigal Son, I will arise and go to my Father &c under which Sermon she was deeply convinced of her lost Estate, and felt the need of a Saviour, under deep Convictions she labourd more than six months, and was often heard to say, “oh I have a precious immortal Soul, and know not whether it will be saved or lost.” Mr John Westley about this time preachd in the Malthouse on Temple back on these words Be not afraid it is I, her Sorrows rather increased during the Sermon, but after, she came home & threw herself on the Bed as on bereav'd of all Comfort, tho' continued pouring out her broken complaints to the Lord, when on a Sudden a profound Silence seized her Spirit and she saw as it were a bright Cloud presented before her and in the midst of the Cloud the form of a Man with his hands and Eyes lifted up to Heaven, and it was revealed to her that it was Jesus making Intercession for her, at this her burthen was much lessen'd, but not intirely taken

²⁹⁸ St Philip and St Jacob's Church, Tower Hill, Bristol

away, The next day she related this to one of her sisters, doubting what could be the meaning of this impression, who advised her to go on and the Lord would do for her greater things than these

About three days after this as she was walking in the Street crying and praying (for Prayer was now her constant Exercise) she heard a voice saying, Daughter be of good cheer thy sins are forgiven thee, immediatly her Soul was set at liberty, and forgetting the business she was going to do, returnd home praising and glorifying God, and calling on all that came near her to Join in that work, nay could scarcely refrain from telling the Birds that flew, what God had done for her Soul, that they might also worble out his Praises, thus she went on for many months admonishing every one she convers'd with to Turn, Repent & Live, and her labour was not in vain, for a young man in the same house but not of her family was taken Sick and it proved unto Death whom she attended, He was very Ignorant and hardned at first, but God wrought wonderfully with her Exhortations & Prayers, that he was soon deeply convinced of Sin and in less than a week found pardon and soon after dyed Triumphantly, her Gifts and knowledge of the Scripture increased and her Life seem'd Harmony and Love ---- But not suspecting an Evil heart within ready to Join with Satan on all Occasions, was not sufficiently Watchfull and Humble, ---- Satan whisper'd to her how highly favourd she was of God who had made such an Alteration on her, shewing the Gifts she was endowed with, and what Good she had already done &c, this bait she too readily swallowed, and by ascribing that Honour to her self which belong to God only fell into great darkness, and all her gifts with her memory & health was taken away from her, Satan now continually accusing her of her Infidelity and bringing texts of Scripture to increase her Condemnation, this made her conclude she was lost to all Eternity and that all hope of Salvation was vain, Satan not only obraiding her with many things, but stirred up her Husband and near friends sorely to persecute and threaten her during which she constantly attended the Word morning and Evening, tho' found but little encouragement, but would often say when returning home from the Room²⁹⁹ & hearing the Birds sing, "see how these worble out their makers Praises but I hang my head like a Bullrush, oh that it was with me as in the months that are past," this it continued till the year 1745 when Mr John Westley coming to Bristol she conversed with him about her deplorable State who talked to her closely & comfortably, after which the darkness a little disipated, and she cryed out with great earnestness "Rejoyce not over me o mine Enemy, tho' I am fallen, I shall rise again, and taking courage she persued this glimmering light, and soon the Lord returned to her saying I will heal thy backsliding and love thee freely, I will be thy God, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, Nothing shall be able to pluck thee out of my hand, from that time she held her Confidence in God, though often in much weakness & heaviness being led thro' many cross Providences, perticularly the Death of her Husband in 1746 which laid her open to much adversity, especially as her Bodily health or memory never return'd to her again to that degree which she before enjoyed.

²⁹⁹ Bristol New Room

The beginning of December last it pleased God to afflict her with a lingering illness attended with violent pains of Body, those pains were often so great that humane nature sunk under them and life could scarcely be perceived in her, and Satan her Potent Enemy watched all occasions to inject hard thoughts of God, telling her if God loved her he would medigate her pain, and endeavoured to persuade her that she was deceived, & her Hope was only that of a Hypocrite, and her past Experience Delusion &c

She struggled with those Temptations and kept close to God in Prayer, often in these words "Lord more Faith & Patience, now is the time, Satan is nigh, look upon thy feeble Dust, save me or I shall rebel against thee, make me more than Conquerer through the blood of the Lamb", and her gracious God who knows how to succor those that are tempted, came seasonably to her relief applying those Promises, My Grace is Sufficient for thee, fear not only believe, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee &c many other parts of scripture, which so strengthened her Confidence &c refreshed her soul that she often forgot her Pain of Body

Mr Charles Westley administered the Sacrament the 15th Febr^y under which means she was much refreshed and Strengthened.

The conviction of the necessity of being fully renewed after the Image of God took deeper root in her heart than ever, and was her constant Petition for the Sin she was most addicted to, was a Quick Impatient Spirit leading to anger, this in time past did very much trouble her and too often got Power over her which have given her many hours sorrow and often would complain "Lord shall I perish at the hand of Saul" this sin she now particularly watched & prayed against, and not without an expectation of Deliverance, for being asked if she expected full Redemption from this and all sin, she answered "I firmly believe it as though I now enjoyed it, for the sin that Murther'd God shall die for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, and he cannot lie"

About a week before her death, she felt this Quickness taken away for which mercy she continually thanked God for, and was enabled more cheerfully to give herself up to do and suffer the whole Will of God.

Sunday the 28th Febr^y the Pangs of Death approached and violent Pains attended, and about 10 o'Clock in the Evening her pains being exquisite Satan came upon her with great Violence, She Struggled for some time and then broke out in this complaint "My Agonies must end in Death, Lord Jesus pity my Distress," he soon fled from her, and about 12 o'Clock her pains abated also and came no more on her, by which means she was enabled to spend her time in Silent communion with God, The next Day as she lay in this composed frame, these words came so loud, that she could scarcely be persuaded but what the person who attended her must hear them, Thy Life is hid with Xt in God; Wednesday morning early, The 3^d of March, she called for her two

Children, and after joyning in Prayer, her son ask'd her, how is it now between God & your Soul, she answerd with a faltering tongue, Beautifull, my Jesus supports me wonderfully, I have no doubt; he ask'd if Satan troubled her, she answerd No, he makes attempts But cannot hurt me; She then took them both by the hand & gave them their last charge, prayed for them and commended them to the grace of God, & then added "Glorious Saviour of my Soul, I lift it up to thee" her speech failing could proceed no farther, she continued in Prayer & Praise (tho' her words could not be understood) till near five o'Clock in the Evening, when she calmly breathd out her soul into the bosom of her Redeemer

Reference: EMV/501/113

Date: 29 January 1768

Correspondent: [John?] Lambertson³⁰⁰

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Document: Account of the death of William Naylor

Location: Leeds

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "W. Naylor's death Jan 29 1768"
2. "An account of God's dealings with Mr Wm Naylor 30 days before his death"

A most Surprising Instance of Love the Lord hath lately shewn to one of my neighbours, who has been in a decline of body about 3 years he has been inclinable to all manner of Sins & that to a very high degree except the Sin of murder, & that he has been near committing upon his Wife Sundry times, one would be allmost ready to think he had been born in Hell; His Soul had lay upon my Spirits a long time, he would not suffer any person of any Religious turn of mind to come at him; he was confin'd to his chamber about 6 weeks, 30 days before his death, I took an oppertunity & went to his house, his Wife being present at my entrance, I ask'd her if it would be agreeable to her husband to ask him how he did, she said she thought it would not; but said she would go & ask him, & when she returnd she said nothing at all, therefore I concluded there would be no admittance, however his Wife went up Stairs again to carry something which was wanting, I then thought if I do not see him at this time I never shall, upon this Lifting my heart to the Lord I took courage & follow'd her up Stairs without any manner of invitation, no person can suppose the anger which appear'd in his countenance I sat down without asking & dropt a few words in the tenderest maner I possibly could for fear of blocking up my way, before I left him the first time I ask'd him if it would be agreeable to him to make him a Short visit at times to that he gave little answer, however I Repeated my visit the next day and took a little more freedom with him by telling him the danger of living and dying without an Interest in the Redeemer, he seem'd now to be more attentive & I found more liberty to speak to him, before I left him the 2^d time I ask'd him if it would be

³⁰⁰ John Lambertson, clothier of the Bank, Leeds, was one of the original trustees of the Boggart House, the first Methodist Chapel in Leeds, Yorkshire (Peter S. Forsaith, *A Kindled Fire: John and Charles Wesley and the Methodist Revival in the Leeds area* (1988))

agreeable to him to offer up a few words in Prayer to GOD on his behalf, he said he thought there could be no great harm in it, upon this he went down upon his knees to my very great surprise now from this time forward I visit him twice every day till he left the world when my first week was expir'd it pleas'd the Lord to convince him of the deplorabl condition he was in, he was terrify'd & affrighted at the Sight of himself, he perhaps had as dreadfull a conviction as ever man had; the next time I went he said M^r Lambertson I have turn'd over such a sight as never man did; he said I have seen Hell & them foul fiends in it & thats my place there's nothing for me but banishment from the presence of GOD for evermore and many such dreadfull Expressions as these too dreadfull to dwell upon, In this condition I think he continu'd 2 days & 2 nights he was now ready to go into [in...] despair I told GOD had not shewn him Hell to put him into it; but to convince him it was the place he merited; & likewise to pray to GOD to be deliver'd from it, he said do you think so? I told him the Blessed Jesus dyed for the very vilest of the vile, but he Replyed I can have no part in his death I have been such a wretch

I bid him lay his soul at the Feet of the Blessed Jesus, he immediatly replyd I will, but do you think he will have mercy upon such a Hell deserving creature as I am; I told him I verily believ'd he would, if he from the bottom of his Soul could cry for mercy; He said Oh! great is y^e faith for me! in 2 days after the convection was ended the Lord gave him a Secret hope he then Said if he Send me to Hell I'll praise him there, The next visit that I made him he said these foul fiends of Hell I hope hath no thing to do with me now, I'll be glad to see you evr'y hour if you please, and would never have had me from him, Evr'y visit now that I made him fill'd my heart with Transports of Joy. The next morning I went as formerly he said I have been conversing with Jesus, this was his Language my Soul lays at the Feet of my Blessed Saviour I answerd him let it continue there & if you perish I'll perish with you!

He would have delighted any Christians heart to have convers'd with him he had been much inclin'd to drink strong Liquors but after he was convinc'd of sin would scarce take what would support him, he said it keeps me from praying & it keeps me from my SAVIOUR, the day before he left the world, I ask'd him if he did not chuse to take a little of something to refresh himself his answer was I'll sup no more 'till I sup with my Blessed Jesus in his Everlasting Kingdom; he further said I would be glad to suffer something for my SAVIOUR who suffer'd so much for my sins; A few hours before he departed I ask'd him if he had any fear of death his answer was death will be a Welcome messenger to me The last 2 hours that he liv'd he lay as one dead with his hands graspt together we did not expect him to speak one word more; but that GOD who knows what will most advance his own Glory gave him something further to speak, & when the 2 last hours was ended he loos'd his hands from together, & put one of them out to his Wife, she took hold of it & with broken accents said did you want to say something to me my dear; Now this same man said to his Wife only 5 weeks before his death he would curse her to his latest breath, now claspt her in his cold arms, & with a much louder voice then he had spoke for a fortnight said GOD Bless thee! GOD Bless thee! GOD hath pardond all the Sins that ever I committed in my life GOD Bless you all praise GOD & Sing'th; away he went Triumphant to Glory he died in the 33^d year of his age left a wife 1 Child & a small Estate

5 persons of Credit heard all these last dying words

Follow after he cries as he mounts to the Skies
Follow after your Friend
To the Blissfull Enjoyment that never shall end

Leeds Jan^y 29th 1768

Reference: EMV/501/114

Date: 5 July 1745

Correspondent: A. Nowel

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Locations: Cardiff and Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"July 15 1745 A. Nowel"

Cardiffe July the 5th 1749.

My Dear Fr'd & Father,

Since I parted wth You, You have been often in my Thoughts, & could I but retain that simpathizing Spirit wh I have felt towards my Suffering Fr^d I should think the 5 Weeks I spent at Bristol was not lost, but rather that Time, & all the Fatigue of a dangerous Passage home to be abundantly recompens'd. 'twas not altogether in vain that you read those sad Lines to me, I think I then found God in some measure fulfilling the Desire of my Soul. I know you need not my Compassion, because incapable of relieving y^r Distress. Yet I want to feel y^r Sorrows & to pray for you. I believe If I were near You my Heart hard & stupid as it is would be often affected wth a Sence of w^t y^o have & w^t y^o daily suffer, I could not see y^r Affliction & hear y^r Groans unmoved, surely I could not. 'twas my Regard for You wh caus'd those uneasie Apprehensions of w^h I complain'd, but I did but fear as y^o assure me where no fear was y^r late Behaviour has encourag'd me to use that Freedom w^h I am naturally inclin'd to use towards those I w^d esteem my real Friends. where I am sensible there is Sincerrity I can bear wth every Thing, & excuse every Weakness, therefore expect every one Who vouchsafes to admit me in the Number of their Friends, & hath in some measure proved me faithfull, will thus bear wth me.

I was so overpower'd the Day I left Bristol wth a sence of my Obligation to all my Fr.^{ds} that I had little to say in return. how shall I be sufficiently thankfull? I must desire You'l thank M^{rs} Vigor & her sisters in my name their Kindness having been more abundant to me upon y^r Account. I want to be usefull to my Fr.^{ds} but am sensible of my Unprofitableness I w^d fain avoid the Cross. How grevius is it to a gratefull Mind to reprove a dear F.rd because 'tis so disagreeable to Human Nature to be convinc'd of its Errors either in Principle or Practice, that 'tis seldom we can admonish one another but 'tis thought the reprover must think Himself wiser or bett.^r than ourselves, & therefore His Esteem for us must certainly be lessen'd. I wanted an Oppertunity of talking wth Y.^o more particularly ab.^t our F.rd I w^d fain have every Hindrance to Her Souls Health removed. Twas wth Concern I observed that needless Anxiety she hath for her Fr.^{ds} I have known her to be burthen'd 2 or 3 days in writing a Lett.^r to y^o, wh hath for that Time allmost wholly emplyd Her Time & Thoughts, she is fearing this may be thought too free, or that may be thought amiss; how y^o can act in this Particular I cannot Advise I observ'd a Word y^o mention'd one Day, that You

were burthen'd even amongst Y.^r Fr.^{ds}, I knew partly w.^t Y.^o felt, & could not wonder at y.^r constant desires to quit this Vale of Tears I could almost say Amen to y.^r Prayer but how apt are we in the bitterness of our Soul to utter Words without Knowledge. were you or I to talk w.th a Person under y.^r circumstances we would not point them to Death as the Remedy of their Woe. no, y.^o would say wait upon the Lord & you shall renew y.^r Strength, He will shed His Love abroad in Y.^r Heart & make all y.^r Ways Pleasantness & all y.^r Paths Peace, and Y.^e shall rejoice evermore. tho' I have not Faith to believe I shall thus see the Goodness of the Lord in the Land of the Living but think my Sorrow remediless in this Life. Yet I dare not speak this to others (except those who know the Conflict of a Soul w.th the Powers of Darkness) because 'twould be inconsistent w.th the Principles I profess to believe. at my Return I found this Society in a very declining Way, many are weary & faint in their Minds. others are altogether gone out of the Way so that the Hands of those who labour amongst us are much weakened insomuch that they are few who seek the Truth in the Love of it, some rest in notions, others in a dead Form. may the Lord hasten y.^r coming in pity to us, y.^r sending any of those who have lately been amongst us will be of little Advantage. They don't so much want to know, as to be directed in Practice, to be built up in the Faith w.^h by y.^o hath been deliver'd to us. Our Society hath been injured by being reputed wise, but I cannot condemn them herein. for whether I am wise, or a fool, I desire to be instructed how I may attain communion w.th God, indeed all Forms & Opinions seem to me as nothing. & I wait as one stript of all dependance upon anything but the immediate Power of GOD. Yet I cannot but highly value every instrument whereby GOD conveys Light, Life or Comfort to my Soul, & I may truly say that excepting y.^r, & y.^r Brothers Preaching I found but little Food for my Soul at Bristol but whatever my Thoughts are on these things I have so much wisdom as to conceal my sentiments in regard to the good of others but speaking them to y.^o cannot be amiss, because my Heart is open to receive y.^r Advice, to bear y.^r Reproof & to acknowledge any Fault, or Error y.^o may convince me of, be but as free w.th me as y.^e would w.th y.^r own Soul, & I trust y.^e shall never have cause to repent y.^r Kindness to y.^r weak unworthy Fr.^d, I do really desire to see y.^o, & am not altogether selfish herein tho' y.^o especially are a Preacher to my State. but whether y.^o come or not I desire God to bless y.^o w.th every Spirituall Gift, to give y.^o a right judgment in all Things, & to prosper the Work of y.^r Hands, & make y.^o even here a Witness of His uttermost salvation, then you will surely receive this Saying Thou shalt weep no more. if 'tis not imprudent in me to ask such a Favour I would desire when you write that y.^o w.^d transcribe ten, or a doz.ⁿ of the First of those Lines. I do acknowledge I stand in need of means to excite my stupid Soul both in regard to the Love of GOD, & my neighbour, & nothing seems to me so effectual as a lively Description of anothers Sufferings to oblige me to remember those in bonds as bound w.th them. my Mother & sister, & M Wells desire their Love to y.^o

I was told Mrs Jones hath taken it ill that Y.^o have not writ to Her, I writ to her since my return, & urged all the Reasons I could in Y.^r Excuse.

Reference: EMV/501/115
Date: 25 August 1755
Correspondent: A. Nowel
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Address: "C Wesley"

Location: [Glamorganshire]

Annotation: In the handwriting of Charles Wesley:
“Aug. 25 1755. A. Nowel of Murderer saved!”

August

y.^e 25.th

My dear Friend

I did not see our Fr.^d Hodges³⁰¹ in his Return, but am told He is bett.^r since He got to Wenvoe, but was quite tir'd when he did alight at Coz.ⁿ Glasscots, having made too great Speed in his Journey. I can't find that He proposes to get to Bristol again, (at least not soon) He design'd to Visit the Prisoner on Sunday, but that He found Himself so weak. I am pleas'd to find my Fr.^{ds} at Bristol are well & was glad of Y.^r Letter, & think I may say Y.^r Sentiments with Regard to our late Interveiw are just. it did not lessen my Love, but increase it. Since Y.^r Departure I have been often troubled on many Accounts. I visited the poor Murtherer on Wensday, who continued in a very uncomfortable State. no Intercourse by Prayer unto God. between, lay a great Gulph. The poor wretched Creature harbour'd some Hopes of Life, & was strongly sollicitated to deny the Crime, but that He w.^d not consent to do, but He vainly attempted to get the Girls Father not to prosecute him so strongly, & also expected that He might be begg'd off, & in this Manner His Thoughts ran till Fryday Morning, when he rec.^d Sentence of Death. the Judge inform'd him that none were to be admitted to him but the Clergy. which Prohibition proceeded from one of the Grand Jury having represented the Mothodist[s]

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as a People who caused Scism amongst their followers & that they were Raise[rs?] of Sedition & Deceivers of Mankind, & further charg'd you with having declared that the poor guilty Felon was in as good a State, if not better than any present & that he would be an happy Soul, on which there was a Motion made to petition the Judges that whenever You, or Whitefeild³⁰² or any of the stroling Preachers came about, you might be taken up, & prosecuted. But it pleas'd the Almighty (to Whom alone be the Glory) that my Step Father (who was second on the Jury) stood up, & ask'd the Person who affirm'd this, whether he was sure that what He advanc'd was Truth, for said he, I know somewhat of this Matter myself, & as far as I can understand, M.^r Wesley only declar'd, that every Man in an Unregenerate State (as all Men are in by Nature) without Repentance, could not be sav'd, & therefore they stood in as great Danger, & in as much Need of Mercy as that poor Wretch, but as to anything besides, I believe You were misinform'd, & for my Part I will have no hand, I will not consent to anything against them, neither would I advise You (to the Foreman) to meddle with it. on this one spoke, & then another, that they w.^d not admit it, & so the Scheme was

³⁰¹ John Hodges (*fl.* 1740–5) was Rector of Wenvoe in Glamorganshire. He met Charles Wesley in 1740 and may have introduced the Wesleys to the wealthy landowners Robert and Mary Jones. Hodges attended the first three Conferences, but seems to have lost interest in Methodism in later years. (Principal source: A. H. Williams (ed.), *John Wesley in Wales, 1739–1790: Entries from his Journal and Diary Relating to Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1971).)

³⁰² George Whitefield

broke. however they so far influenc'd the Judge, as to cause him to give those Orders to the Jaylor, who was smartly reprehended in Court for his having admitted the Methodists to visit the Criminal, & to preach in the Prison on that Occasion also my Step-Father declar'd that he thought the Jailor did not deserve Blame for that he was the best Jailor that ever we had

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As soon as the poor Creature returning into the Dungeon, he sent to desire Coz.ⁿ Glasscot to come to him [w]ith speed, & then declar'd to him that he desir'd the Parsons might not visit for he expected to receive [...] Good from them. by the Favour of the Jaylor however, some of the Methodists were allow'd to visit him. but yesterday they were oblig'd to procure a Special Warrant from the Judge for Coz.ⁿ Glasscot, Thom.^s Price of Watford & Parson Wells only to have access unto. these watch'd great Part of the Night with Him but yet the poor Creature remain'd in a sad dangerous Situation. I w.^d fain have spoke with him this Morning but was refus'd. Coz.ⁿ Glasscot walked by the Cart side 'till he came to the Gallows, but before I saw them come to the Heath (whither I went & waited to see his End, but with little Hope). News came that the miserable Creature had cut his Throat in the Night, w'h tho' it ~~did~~ was not deep, yet he fainted in the Cart. this was a Dreafull Omen, & I had almost given up all Hope, when to our great Surprize, as soon as the Cart stop'd he got up, & stood on a Plank laid across, & with a compos'd & chearfull countenance made a very earnest & strong Discourse to the People. after w'h Coz.ⁿ Glasscot pray'd fervently having before ask'd him how it was with him. he declar'd he had no Fear of Death but resign'd himself freely into the Hands of the Lord, having strong Assurance of Happiness. this was surely an unexpected Turn, even beyond all that any of us could hope. The Name of God be ador'd, & His Mercy, his unbounded Mercy to the Cheif of Sinners be exalted! You'l excuse my Tediousness on this Head, being willing to add to Y.^r Satisfaction by every Circumstance of this misterious Proceeding. My spirit yet in a Flutter neither can [...] the Surprise [...] affected my whole Frame. indeed I did not think

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myself capable of writing in any Order, my Thoughts so crowded each other.

My Brother is not come Yet, but we expect him every Day. My poor Mother has been extreamly ill, but is got about again. when I can I will inform you of the Subject of Josiahs Discourse at the Gallows,³⁰³ unless You may hear it sooner from Other of Y.^r Friends, let me hear from You soon, w'h

will I hope add to the Satisfaction of

Y.^r Aff.^{te} Friend

A: Nowell

³⁰³ The details of this execution appear to match (although not exactly) those of Josiah Hugh, who was convicted of the murder on 11 June 1755 of Mary Rees in the Glamorganshire parish of Penmark. Hugh was hanged on 10 September 1755 (<http://www.britishexecutions.co.uk/execution-content.php?key=8867&termRef=Josiah%20Hugh>)

Reference: EMV/501/116

Date: 23 December 1754

Correspondent: Anne Partridge

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Leigh

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Anne Partridge. A seal, at Leigh Dec.3 1754. Not unto me O Lord, not unto me!”

Dear and Rever:d Sir

I beg pardon for making so free with you: but duty obligd: me to acquaint you of the great Blessing I have Receivd ~~from you~~, by your ministry: the Lord gave me to expect some blessing from you from the very first time that I heard of your coming which made me Long to see you: tho: I never had seen you in the flesh Dear Sir the Lord gave me to take your message as from himself he was so pleas'd to Shew me a glimpse of his face nay he even forsd me to believ for my unbelieving Heart was Ready to cry how can these things be seeing I am a Hell deserving sinner but the Lord gave me to see plainly that it was His Spirit alone which convincd. me of that and that He was both able and willing to forgive and Receive me thro the merits and Righteousness of His Dearly beloved Son Christ Jesus which brought these words with power to my Soul: yes I yield I yield at Last: listen to thy Speaking Blood: me with all my sins I cast: on my atoning God I saw as it were the Lords frown turned into a Smile it forsd tears of joy to overflow my Eyes I cannot express How I felt in my soul Dear Sir let me beg of you to Remember me before the throne of grace I know the Lord will Hear you: nay He has heard you already for me: I am free at this time from any doubt or feare Blessed be my God for it I pray God increase my faith.

Dear Sir I earnestly beg of God to give you to watch in all things to endure afflictions Do the work of an Evengelist make full proof of your ministry. I pray God give you a double portion of His Blessed Spirit and were ever you go may He always watch over you for good which is the Earnest prayer of me your friend and servent

Ann partridge

Pray Sir please to give my
Duty to the Rever'd M^r John Wesley

Reference: EMV/501/117

Date: 18 October 1773

Document: Death of Mrs Sarah Pearce

The Experience & Death of M.^{rs} Sarah Pearce who departed this Life on Monday y.^e 18.th of Oct.^{br} 1773.

The first memorandum that I made of y.^e D.^r departed Saint (w^{ch} was all so Excellent & weighty as to have deserv'd the Utmost notice) was on y.^e 23.^d of F.^{br} 1773, when she

dwelt very much upon the Devils first Temptation of Adam in ye Garden when he tempted him to disbelieve God's faithfulness to his word by saying "Thou shalt not surely dye".³⁰⁴ This said she was Satan's first dvice & is still his greatest. Perhaps he may be suffer'd to buffet me with it in my last moments _ but Jesus has overcome him, & will make me more than Conquerer thro' him!

At another time she said the Lord has given me great patience _ I who allways had good Health what a mercy that I am enabled to bear my afflictions with Patience? well I am not to parly w.th my Enemy_ no I have nothing to do but to look to Jesus when assaulted by the enemy _at another time she said _ Seeing Death before her, what a mercy that I have not been once Suffer'd to doubt of my Interest in Christ. well said she if the Lord heard the prayer of Moses, how much more that of Xst as express'd in the 17th of St John. At another time I ask'd her how she found herself _ happy _ said she waiting my dismissal. for blessed be the name of the Lord, the Sting of Death being taken away, I have no fear of Death _ no no I have not follow'd a cunning devised fable but a reality _ I shall soon

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soon sink into the ocean of Divine Love, & swim therein to all eternity, its Views are now delightful to my Soul, Oh Lord who wou'd not but love & Serve Thee! one said to her concerning a Sermon she had just heard from the words _ you have sown in Tears & are going to reap in Joy.³⁰⁵ yes said she, I am going in, with my last sheaff oh precious Grace, grace said She, is but glory in the budd. on being ask'd if she had any Text of Scripture on her mind for the subject of a funeral Sermon She ans.^d _ Trust in the Lord forever _ for in the Lord Jehovah is Everlasting Strength³⁰⁶ _ he has (said ^{she}) been a Faithful Covenant keeping God to me, & a Strong Tower of Refuge, & will be same to all Believers, & they too will feel his power to Save; oh how good is he to a vile worm, he has brought me from the kingdom of Darkness into that of his Dear Son, & when this Tongue ceases to praise him here I shall do it with a better to all Eternity! oh Jesus (said she) my Lord & my God how good art thou in preserving me all my days _ even to grey hairs_ Thy faithfulness & Truth is my Shield, & buckler _ Oh how shall I praise thee enable me Lord to one present whom she had been the instrument of awak'ning she said come on _ there is room, he casteth out none, fear not, he that has begun the good work will carry it on _ oh my lovely Jesus _ Oh my blessed Lord_ I want to be gone to praise Thee

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as I ought _ returning to the person before mention'd, who was much affected with her conversation, she said _ oh come my dear _ & I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my Soul, I shall praise him to all Eternity _ he is an unchangeable God _ we change but he changeth not; this has been my support during my Pilgrimage. At another time she said to her Friend, just as she awoke in the morning, I have been as it were in Heaven _ her F.^d said awake, or in y.^r sleep? in both s.^d she, for I have been in the arms of my Saviour all night & so fill'd with y.^e Love of God y.^t I can't express it,

³⁰⁴ Genesis 3:4

³⁰⁵ Psalm 126:5

³⁰⁶ Isaiah 26:4

& I long'd for you to wake that I might tell you of it _ at another time she said when pitied by her Friend, to See her in such a deplorable weak state _ poor said she, I am rich indeed _ her F.^d observ'd to her _ you have been Silent a long time pray how have y.^u been in y.^r Soul why said she I've ^{been} making melody in my H.^t to the Lord I have y.^e full assurance of Faith w.^{ch} none can take away f.^m me, I can't talk I am so weak, but God is my Strength, & portion forever, & I am waiting with longing Expectation for my Change. her F.rd return'd in y.^e Even.^s, to whom she said _ I did not expect to see y.^u any more _ on being ask'd if the Enemy was kept from distressing her _ she replied yes_ my God is my Support & he keeps him off, & fills my Soul w.th his precious presence, oh! he is a Faithful Covenant keeping God, & I shall as Surely be with him soon as you are now alive, Oh! how precious he is to my Soul,

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he will save me he will not leave me now, nor let me go, He is my Saviour my Lord & my God _ friends can only look on _ but can't help me now, but my God Sticketh closer than a Brother _ but I don't trust so much on my own feelings, as on God's word & promises to me, on these I hang on these I relye. blessed be his Holy name, he doth favour me, in keeping The Enemy from me _ turning to her F.^{ds} she said the Lord will bless you both, & give y.^u a double portion of his Spirit, guide you by his Counsel, & bring y.^u to glory. at another time she said - I am in the Valley & Shadow of Death, but there is Light in the Valley _ when a Funeral Sermon was mention'd _ she said_ say nothing of me but that I am a poor Sinner, sav'd by rich unmerited Grace _ an unprofitable Servant, Sav'd by the washing of regeneration, & renewing of y.^e Holy Ghost. The Even.^s before she died she was ask'd by a F.^d if she co.^d look back with comfort on her past Life; no no said she I can reflect on nothing with Comfort but Jesus; on his Glorious Rightousness. Heaven & Earth shall pass away but his word cannot fail me. on being ask'd whether the Enemy attempted to bring her to doubt of y.^e Genuiness of her Faith? no, said she he cannot do that _ it has been long so clear to me. on being ask'd if she had any fear of the agonys of Death _ she said no _ I can trust the Lord with all that Her Fr.^d at leaving her desir'd her to remember him she ans.^d _ Jesus remembers you now He is in his Kingdom. She slept but little the following night, & was so ill that she said the pains of Death were upon her, at Six in y.^e Morn.^s the Rev.^d M.^r Glascott pray'd with her, & at y.^e end of every Sentence she join'd in the most hearty Amen, & on Taking leave of us she pray'd for us, still bearing the same blessed Testimony

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of her own happy State _ she soon after this grew very bad, the agonies of Death seiz'd her, she desir'd frequently to be mov'd ask'd for drops [air &c:] & in her Extremity say'd many times My God help me out, my Jesus help me, By thine agony & bloody Sweat deliver me: she once say'd Jesus where art Thou, her last words were _My Christ pity pity. & in a few minutes more she breath'd her Last.

Reference: EMV/501/118
Date: 29 March 1760
Correspondent: John Parry

Addressee: "To The Revd Mr Charles Wesley"

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"March 29 1760. J. Parry my brother who loves the Church of England"

S^r Being at Spittlefield's Chapel³⁰⁷ Sooner than Common on Sunday March the 16 and I had there time to Exercise my thoughts, but among the many things, that Came to my Minde, that of our Assembling there was Upermost. and after I had put my thoughts (as it were) on the tenters and had Strain,d them as much as I Could to find out what was that thing, which you Said was of the Utmost Importance but Still was at a Loss till you Came and Open,d the matter your Self. and I must Confess that all was Very Agreeable to me not only what you read, but also your Very loving Addition there unto.³⁰⁸ and as I am a man that was, in a very Strict manner brought up in the Protestant faith it gave me the greatest Satisfaction Imanag^gble when I Came fully to Understand that there is two of you United together in the flesh and in the Spirit that did, do and will wish well to our Zion I mean the Establish,d Church of this Land, and are also willing Workmen to Build Up her Decay,d Walls once again. as for my Part I Little thought to have Seen these Days, to here the things that I here and to See the things that I have Seen, but above all, I Little thought to have

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³⁰⁷ London: - Grey Eagle Street chapel (commonly referred to as Spitalfields): Site - Grey Eagle Street, Spitalfields.

Built as a French Protestant Church and acquired by the Methodists in 1750. During the 19th century, after the Methodists abandoned the lease, it became part of Truman, Hanbury and Buxton's Brewery and was later demolished.

As a consecrated building, Grey Eagle Street was a centre for sacramental worship. In August 1755, it was the scene of the first Methodist covenant service, which was attended by 1,800 people.

Another place of worship in Spitalfields was also occasionally used by the Wesleys during the 18th century– Wheeler's (Sir George's) Chapel. It is probable that when the primary sources mention "Spitalfields Chapel", it is Grey Eagle Street to which they refer.

Principal Source: Sugden and online archeological survey report of the former Truman Brewery site, Grey Eagle Street (2004)

(http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/adsdata/arch-417-1/dissemination/pdf/headland1-5669_1.pdf)

³⁰⁸ '... walked to Spitalfields Chapel, still under my burden, but there it left me, after I had delivered my own soul, by warning the people in strong faith & love. I read the reasons ag[ains]t leaving the Church, enforcing each: then my hymns: & then pray[e]d *after* GOD. A spirit of unanimity breathed in all, or most of our hearts. Great confidence I felt that they will be none otherwise minded than myself; that they are determined to live, & die in their calling.' (Letter of Charles Wesley to his wife Sarah, 17 March [1760] Reference DDCW 5-108 MARC)

Experience, and the things, that I do and have done, but in this I am brought to see that Gods ways are not as our ways Neither are his thoughts as our thoughts, but this I see that the right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to Pass, and this is Evidently Seen by many of our society who is Deeply taught of god, and knows more of the minde of god towards them than I do yet with that Little that I have receve, I do Call Upon them all to joyne with me to Lift Up there Voices Like trumpets and to be resolved together, to give our god no rest Day nor Night till he make our Jerusalem the Praise of the Whole Earth, as for my Part S^r I cannot See Any Cause, or Excuse, that man can make, why he should forsake her Communion because (as far as I can See) her Doctrine Discipline and Litergy is Such if (Properly attended to) as Leads to holyness of Life here and of Consequence to Live with god hereafter. Neither is there any man on the face of the Whole Earth, but may finde something or other in the Litany or the other Prayers that is agreeable to his State Let it be what it will

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and as for my Part I do Desier to be more and more thankfull that I was brought up by so tender a mother and the more that I Partake of the good that is bestowd within her Walls the more I do Vallew her. and I trust that I have Suck, and at the breasts of her Consolation and am Satisfied, and as there is allway some good to be bestowed on them that walks in the way that She Points out I am resolved by the grace of god Never to forsake them ways but to be Like Solomons horse Luck that Crys give, give, and good reason have I to Cry out Continually when I See Day by Day that god is raining Down his manna round about our tents and if we dont gather our Portion Every Day tis our own faults, and if I or any of my Brethren or Sisters, of this Society have been remiss in our Duty Let us all to a man Call Upon our own god for his grace to help in Every time of Need and Now may the god of all grace so bless Every member of this Society, that we may be all as burning and Shining Lights in the midsts of this Crooked and Perverse generation in wich we Live may we Every one Live the Life of the righteous and then we may Expect that our Latter End will be Like thirs I hope S^r you, ll Pardone this freedome and give me Leave to that I am your Humble Servant to Command

March the 29 1760

John Parry

Reference: EMV/501/119

Date: 1773

Document: Account of the death of Mary Pollard

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Blessed Mary Pollard released 1773”

D^r Sir

Our deceased Friend (as You well know) was many years a mourner, sometimes indeed with a degree of Hope; at othertimes she seem'd shut up in unbelief. about 2 years ago She was seize^d on a sudden with a fit of illness that confined her to her Bed,

when it pleased the Lord greatly to allarm her Fears; Death & Judgment were set before her with all the horrors of meeting an incensed God without a Saviour, and to add to her distress, Satan that busy Foe suggested that on such a Day & in such an Hour She should die and eternally perish; this temptation She kept to herself in the utmost torture of mind: in the meantime several of our Friends visited & prayed with her, whom she heartily thank,d for their concern, but did not believe anything would avail for Her: till (watching the moments as they fled) at length the hour was past, then Hope began to revive, She cry,^d out now Satan I know thou art a liar: & from that time She believed the Lord would not take her hence 'till she had seen his Salvation. soon after Her confinement in her late illness, She thought it would be for her End & often said, I know I shall not be long here, her Sister asking her "are you willing to die" she answer,d "how can I be willing to die when I do not know God".

Her weakness increasing, the conviction of her guilt & misery also increas^d & the burthen of unbelief under which She groan^d; in constant earnest prayer She besought the Lord for mercy, & tho' for a time He seem,^d as one that heard not, yet she feebly trusted in Him, at the same time wondring that she could, since she did not know Him.

This Evening 5 weeks, as her sister & another were sitting & talking together in her Room, She (who could not hear, & I hardly think knew they were there) broke forth in these words "my Saviour and my God! now I know Thou art mine"! She again & again repeated, "my Saviour & my God," & added, "I pray'^d unto Thee, that Thou would'st not take me before Thou had'st made me ready; now, Thou wilt soon come & fetch me, Thou wilt not leave me long here; come Lord Jesus, come quickly": with many other like expressions of Communion and Fellowship with her Saviour, that lasted for some time: after which, one present said to her, well my Friend now you can believe, "Yes, (said she) when the Lord works who can let, 'tis not in man, but of God,s free Grace" She was all the night very comfortable & next Day, telling Those

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who came to see her, what God had done for her Soul, often repeating these words "I have found my Saviour, & I will never never let Him go", & "if such a wretch as I have found favor, let no one dispair". a Day or two after she seem'd a little clouded, & said "I was self confident & have lost my Saviour pray for me; desiring to be kept quiet that none might disturb her, She lay for hours as if asleep, but when ask,^d would answer "no, I am not asleep so often as you think". we could not discover Her to be in any deep distress, only the siftings of Satan, for when ask'^d by any one, how she was "reply,^d "I am going to my Father,s House." & so strong was her desire to die, that she often refused any refreshment "why (said she) will you give me things to keep me here, let me alone I want to be gone", a degree of impatience She then felt, which afterward gave her great concern: very little complaining was heard from her, only, now & then "none knows what I suffer." Some days before her Death, the outward man seeming a little to revive She express,d a sorrow lest she should recover saying "I thought that I was going to my Father,s House but I am coming back". She soon after found her mistake for being ask,^d ^ by one who sat up with her how she did; answer,d "I am going home," the person said where is your home "in Heaven (said she) & do you pray & come after me", to several other Persons she said "prepare to meet your God"; & to one added "before the Evil Day come". as her Dissolution drew near, the pains

of Death came on so violent that every nerve shook & even the Bed under Her, in this time of Tyrall Her cry was “My God & Saviour help me, help me, help me out, Come Lord Jesus come quickly” then for several Days She lay as the pasive clay (her speech failing) ‘till breathing Her last She was taken to the Paradise of God.

Reference: EMV/501/120

Date: 25 August 1755

Correspondent: Thomas Price

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: “To The Revd Mr Charles Wesley at the Room in the Horsefair, Bristol³⁰⁹”

Location: Cardiff

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Aug. 25. 1755 Price of Felon saved at last”

Dear sir / Cardiff y^e 25th of Augst 1755

This Day that poor unhappy criminall suffered here and was Left in a stupid condition of his Eternall state almost to the last, B^r glasscott & self attended him untill 12 a clock last night he seemed to us to have some small hope that Jesus Xt would come to vissitt him though at that time he told us he was not affraid of Either temporall or Eternall Death this morning we came to him again about 6 a clock he seemed then to be much in the same condition _ after we had spent some hours with him in Exhortation & prayer to our great surprise when the jaylor came to have the cord put round is neck there appeared two small cutts near his throat _ upon wch he asked him how that happened & I asked him did he attempt to destroy himself he owned he had

³⁰⁹ The New Room in Bristol is the oldest place of Methodist worship in the world. The site was acquired by John Wesley in May 1739 and the building erected by the end of the same year. The present structure appears to date mainly from 1748 when it became necessary to expand the premises. Stylistic similarities with the Friends’ Meeting House at Quakers’ Friars (1747) suggest the Quaker George Tully may have been the architect.

The New Room was John Wesley’s principal base in the West of England and the venue for early Methodist Conferences. In addition to a worship function, it also provided accommodation for Wesley and his preachers, as well as a dispensary and schoolroom.

By the early 19th century, the importance of the New Room had been superseded by more modern chapels, such as Portland Street (1791-92). In 1808 the building was sold and it became a Welsh Calvinist chapel. In 1929, it returned to Wesleyan Methodist ownership and was restored by Sir George Oatley.

The New Room is still used for weekly worship, although its primary function is now one of heritage site and visitor attraction. It is grade 1 listed.

Principal source: Listed building description (<http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1202025>) and the webpage for John Wesley’s Chapel: The New Room, Bristol (<http://www.newroombristol.org.uk/Home>)

Last night with a old knife: you must think this gave B^r Glasscott & self a great shock so far with his forging a lye that the Blood upon his Cloths was occasioned (as he told one of y^e fellows who knocked of his fetters) of his Bleeding at the nose that really we thought he was given up to a reprobate mind, but [him] see y^e free grace of God and the riches of his mercy in _ Jesus Xt: that as soon as he came in sight of the Gallows the Lord out of his abundant clemency sett his soul at liberty I asked him how it was with him about two hundred yards from the place of Execution his answer was as if he was happy or to that Effect I further asked him w^d he have the cart to stop he made answer with a chearfull countenance no no drive on when he came under y^e Gallows he stood up and gave a very pathetick Exhortation to the spectators & justified the ways of god & that the only people, that god was with these Days were those who went under the name of Methodists and adjured y^m not to speak one word against y^m and that y^e occasion of his coming to that Ignominious Death was in leaveing them & going after sin he s^d a great many more things very affecting w^{ch} can't well be mentioned at present; however after he had done B^r Glasscott spoke & prayed very moveingly to the people & now as he was going off the stage of this life his last words were to this effect I belive in _ Jessus Xt: and am sure I shall go to heaven; thus I have given you a short scetch of his departure god grant we may all fight the good fight of faith & finish our course with joy & am in the Best of friends
Rev.^d Si.^r

Yours affectionatly
Tho^s Price

Reference: EMV/501/121

Date: 28 February 1764

Correspondent: B[rother] Richards³¹⁰

Addressee: "To The Revd Mr Charles Wesley Free"

310 Probably - Thomas Richards (1717-98): Born in Cardigan, South Wales, the son of an Anglican minister, Richards matriculated at Trinity College Oxford but does not appear to have graduated. He came into contact with the Methodists at a very early date and by 1740 was a member of a band formed by John Wesley at Bath. Richards started preaching soon after and was referred to by Wesley in later years as one of the first itinerants.

In 1742 he was listed as one of the class leaders at the Foundery and in the early months of 1744 was exercising an itinerant ministry in Yorkshire and Derbyshire. In 1746 John Wesley appointed Richards to have charge of Methodist premises in Newcastle and he was also a trustee of Methodist properties in Bristol and Kingswood.

Richards left the regular itinerancy in 1748 to teach at Kingswood School and the following year he married Mary Davy the school housekeeper. By 1751 he had lost the confidence of Wesley in his teaching ability and he re-joined the itinerancy.

Richards left the itinerancy at an unspecified date, entered the Anglican ministry and went on to serve 30 years as curate of St Sepulcher's Church, London (Principal Source: Lewis)

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"Richards sense of sanctification Feb.1764"

Revd. Sir

Tho' I have not had the pleasure of receiving a Letter from you, since you left London, I have had the Satisfaccion, of hearing of you by several of the Brethren whom you favour'd with Letters, thro' whom you was pleased to convey your Love to your friends who met you on Sunday Evenings, among whom, I would take the pleasure of ranking myself.

As the time draws nigh, that your Brother will leave us, for a great part (as we suppose) of the Summer,³¹¹ permit me to observe to you what great Satisfaccion it will be to your friends & well-wishers, & I am perswaded to the Society in general, to see you here upon his leaving us. Indeed it was the sense of yo[u]r friends that you and he should have had a personall Conference before he left London, with which some of them (I suppose) may have acquainted you, in order the better to concert their [...]³¹² for the good of the Society & prevent ill-designing persons [fro]m insinuating themselves into the favour of the one, at the expense of the other. But as I understand he told the Leaders yesterday, that he should see you at Bristol I agree it will answer the same End. It was very pleasing to hear from your Brother, that as expected you would be here in March; "So (says he) we agreed before he went out of Town"; which gives us the agreeable Satisfacc[i]on that there is a good Harmony subsisting between you & him; & we hope yo[u]r next Interview will be a means of Strengthening & increasing it.

I would observe with great Satisfacc[i]on, that since you left us yo[u]r Brother has preached in the general in the good old way, & rarely touch't upon instantaneous Sanctificac[i]on. One Sunday he leant pretty much that way, which occasioned me to write to him : in answ[er]. whereto he wrote me "That it is his settled Judgm[en]t, & has been for many Years – That

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every believer may expect to be sanctified in a moment in an inexpressibly higher Degree, than he was, when he was justified."³¹³ I think this is reducing the matter to a narrow compass, for here is no full or entire Sanctif[icatio]n insisted on, but only an higher degree & therefore I wrote him – "that if this great work of the Spirit be not understood to be confined to one p[ar]ticular Operac[i]on, as if it was only at one p[ar]ticular time throughout his whole life that a Believer is to expect to be so highly favour'd, I can readily receive it & I know of none but what are like minded. ffor I believe that Experience shews, that every Believer who continually watches unto Prayer, is favour'd with many fresh manifestations of the Love of God, in a higher, sometimes undoubtedly, in an inexpressibly higher Degree, than when he was justified, & that a further or higher Degree of Holiness is brought into the Soul,

³¹¹ John Wesley left London for Bristol on 12 March 1764 and did not return to the capital until 11 August (JWJ)

³¹² Stained manuscript

³¹³ This letter does not appear to be extant

proport[i]onable to the Degree of Love shed abroad in the Believer's Heart. So that I am p[er]swaded of the Truth of what you sayd a 12 Month ago in publick, that where the Love of God fills the Heart, & so long as it fills the Heart, there is yo[u]r Judgm[en]t is, that it may be brought in again." So far my L[ett]re. How far yo[u]r Bro[the]r approves of it, or how far you may approve of it I know not, but I thought it proper to menc[i]on this to you now, on Acco[un]t of the Expectacion of you two conferring together before you come to Town.

And now S[i]r what should hinder your speedy coming to supply yo[u]r Bro[the]rs lack of Service. All things are ready. A Lodging is ready to receive you & yo[u]r ffamily. Your ffriends are ready to wait upon you. The Congregation is ready to receive the glad Tidings of Salvacion at yo[u]r Mouth. The holy Angels are ready to guard you. The holy Spirit is ready to assist you, & bless yo[u]r Labour of Love among us. The blessed Jesus is ready to own & bless his Word dispensed by you. And the eternal ffather is ready to crown your Endeavours with Success. My Wife [...Chris?³¹⁴]tian Love to you & yo[u]r Spouse & yo[u]r lovely offspring, with yo[u]rs Affect[i]onate]y

28 ffeb[rua]ry 1764 B Richards

Reference: EMV/501/122

Date: 30 August 1764

Correspondent: [Thomas] Richards³¹⁵

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Charles Wesley att Bristol"

Location: London

Annotation: "portage paid 4d"

³¹⁴ Obscured by a wax impression

³¹⁵ Probably - Thomas Richards (1717-98): Born in Cardigan, South Wales, the son of an Anglican minister, Richards matriculated at Trinity College Oxford but does not appear to have graduated. He came into contact with the Methodists at a very early date and by 1740 was a member of a band formed by John Wesley at Bath. Richards started preaching soon after and was referred to by Wesley in later years as one of the first itinerants.

In 1742 he was listed as one of the class leaders at the Foundery and in the early months of 1744 was exercising an itinerant ministry in Yorkshire and Derbyshire. In 1746 John Wesley appointed Richards to have charge of Methodist premises in Newcastle and he was also a trustee of Methodist properties in Bristol and Kingswood.

Richards left the regular itinerancy in 1748 to teach at Kingswood School and the following year he married Mary Davy the school housekeeper. By 1751 he had lost the confidence of Wesley in his teaching ability and he re-joined the itinerancy.

Richards left the itinerancy at an unspecified date, entered the Anglican ministry and went on to serve 30 years as curate of St Sepulcher's Church, London (Principal Source: Lewis)

In the hand of Charles Wesley:
“Aug. 30 1764 Upright B. Richards of J. J.”

Rev.^d S.^r

Upon my coming into Chapel³¹⁶ last Sunday morning, to my very great surprize, I found D.^r Jones³¹⁷ in the Dock, leading prayers. It seems he had officiated the Sunday before at Spittlefields,³¹⁸ which I had heard nothing of. After Sermon I had some talk

³¹⁶ Probably West Street chapel (also referred to as Seven Dials): 24 West Street, Seven Dials (English Heritage Building ID: 478551).

Built as a French Protestant Church in about 1700 by John Ardowin. The congregation moved elsewhere in 1742 and in the following year, John Wesley signed an agreement to lease the premises, probably through the good will of the rector of St Clement Danes, Thomas Blackwell. Wesley preached there for the first time on 29 May 1743 and it quickly became one of the most important Methodist centres in London. As a consecrated building, it had particular significance as a centre for the celebration of the sacraments.

West Street was superseded by Great Queen Chapel in 1798 and the Methodists gave up the lease. It later served as St Giles (All Saints) Mission Church. The building still stands, although it is now commercial premises. It is grade 2 listed as a building of historical/architectural significance. Principal source: Sugden; listed building description (<http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-478551-24-west-street-greater-london-authority>) and *Survey of London: St Giles-in-the-Fields, volume 5, pt II*. ed. W. Edward Riley and Sir Laurence Gomme (1914) (<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=74291>)

³¹⁷ John Jones (1721–85). Born in Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, Jones was educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Oxford, and qualified as a doctor of medicine in 1745. Initially under the influence of Howell Harris and the Countess of Huntingdon, he began to preach at the Foundery in 1746 and almost immediately occupied an important in John Wesley’s plans. From 1748 to 1758 Jones was the first headmaster of the newly established Kingswood School and later took charge of Methodist Societies in Bristol and Cornwall before moving to London as Wesley’s chief assistant in the capital. Jones left the itinerancy in 1768, was ordained into the Anglican ministry, and ended his days as Vicar of Harwich. Jones’s wife Sarah, the former Miss Perrin, was an early female exhorter and a close friend of Charles Wesley. (Principal sources: Lenton (GCAH) and Lewis)

³¹⁸ London - Grey Eagle Street Chapel (commonly referred to as Spitalfields): Site - Grey Eagle Street.

Built as a French Protestant Church and acquired by the Methodists in 1750. During the 19th century, after the Methodists abandoned the lease, it became part of Truman, Hanbury and Buxton’s Brewery and was later demolished.

As a consecrated building, Grey Eagle Street was a centre for sacramental worship. In August 1755, it was the scene of the first Methodist covenant service, which was attended by 1,800 people.

with him about it. He was very shy & desir'd I would speak to your Brother: however upon my acquainting him (which I think I had your authority for) that he had promised you both by word & letter, not to officiate without your Concurrence, he put it off, by saying it was not just so, or something to that effect. I afterwards spoke to your Bro.^t & desired to know how D.^r Jones could officiate as a Clergyman among us, consistent with the principles & practice of the Church of England, of which we professed ourselves members; whereto he urged the validity of the Greek Ordination;³¹⁹ but upon my telling him, that was not to the point; he sayd or signified, that field preaching & extempore prayer, were as much against the principles of the Church of England, or to that effect & after a few Altercations, he sayd he would defend [unreadable text] the D.^r's officiating as a Clergyman against all Objections; whereupon I told him I had delivered him my reserves against it in writing near half a year ago, which he had not yet answerd. I enquired of him if you concurred in this proceeding; he sayd you half concurred. I was too short in not asking him what he meant by that, but acquainted him with D.^r Jones's promise to you, that the begining of the D.^r's Ministrations among us, would be the end of yours; whereto he replied he could not help it if [some people] would ask absurdly, but that he must act according to his Conscience, or to that effect. Whereupon I told him (as I also did D.^r Jones) that I could not acknowledge the D.^r as a Minister of the Church of England; & I accordingly avoided going to that part of the Table where he administered the Cup.³²⁰

My Desire at present is, to have your sentiments in what maner to act in this [unreadable text] Affair. Perhaps there are but few that view it in the Light that I do, or that care to speak their minds freely about it. Was it canvast? at the Conference & concluded upon there? If it was, I think your Bro.^t would have [mentioned] it to us, which I do not find he has. Let me intreat you to write to me in a post or two, whether you think it for

[page break]

me to submit to D.^r Jones' now Character or not;- especially considering how strounously I have opposed it both to yo^r Bro.^t & him.

I hope this will find you the father of another living & well formed child, or at least that you will soon be so. My wife joins in Xtian Love to you & your dear partner, & Children, with

Another place of worship in Spitalfields was also occasionally used by the Wesleys during the 18th century – Wheeler's (Sir George's) Chapel. However, it is probable that when the primary sources mention "Spitalfields Chapel", it is Grey Eagle Street to which they refer.

Principal Source: Sugden and online archeological survey report of the former Truman Brewery site, Grey Eagle Street (2004)
(http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/catalogue/adsdata/arch-417-1/dissemination/pdf/headland1-5669_1.pdf)

³¹⁹ Reference to ordination by the Greek Bishop Erasmus

³²⁰ John Wesley was certainly in London on Sunday 26 August 1764, but makes no reference to this incident in his journal (JWJ)

Dear S^r,
Yrs in all Xtian affection,
B Richards

30th Aug.^t 1764

Reference: EMV/501/123
Date: 13 May 1767
Correspondent: John Richardson³²¹
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Address: "The Revd Mr Cha Wesley at the Foundery, London"
Location: Bristol
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"May 13 1767 Richardson - alive"
Additional: Postmarked "19 MA" and "NEWCASTLE"

Newcastle, but going to Kirkleatham³²²

Rev.^d & dear Sir,
May 13. 1767 -

You asked life for me & truly he giveth it _ my strength began to come from the hour prayer was made, surely this is the Lords doing. I beg that public thanksgiving may be made_ I took sweet Counsel a few days w.th M.^r Berridge,³²³ his words fell upon my

³²¹John Richardson (1734-92). The son of an ale-house keeper from Kirkleathlen in Cleveland, Richardson was educated at Scorton School and St John's College Cambridge, graduating in 1756. He was ordained into the Anglican Church and served several curacies, before being expelled from his parish for evangelical preaching.

Richardson joined the Methodists in 1762 and was appointed by John Wesley to be an assistant in London. He later served as one of the readers at City Road Chapel and officiated at John Wesley's funeral. (Principal sources: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974); Lewis)

³²² Kirkleatham, Yorkshire

³²³ John Berridge (1716-93). Born at Kingston-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire, the son of a prosperous yeoman, Berridge was educated at Clare Hall, Cambridge. After graduating B.A. in 1738, he was ordained and held a college fellowship until 1764.

From 1750 to 1755 Berridge served as curate at Stapleford, near Cambridge. He then took the living of Everton, Bedfordshire in July 1755, although he continued to live in college and employed a resident curate.

Berridge experienced an evangelical conversion in 1757 and became a good friend of John Wesley and George Whitefield. In addition to carrying out an active parish

heart, indeed he has the Spirit of God. As I passed on truly the Lord was w.th me, my Soul bowed before his presence _ the farther I got from London, the nearer I came to it. I had all my Companions w.th me & about ^{me}, upon the great moors & waste places, esp.^y Barnby Moor. I had a glimpse of w.^t the Apostle meant when he said "Absent in body &c" - I only stayed 3 days to bury my Mother, & set out for Hartlepool w.th a preacher, the Lot here fell upon me to tell the little fflock about Jesus. M.^{rs} Romaine's house, where I lodged, is a house

[page break]

of prayer - At Sunderl.^{d324} I was constrained to speak of him that loved me &c - At N.Castle³²⁵ the Lord gave me a Word, & I trust he made it bread to his Children _ I remember, & it was grief to me that I had said "I will not appear publicly at N.Castle. this will teach me a lesson against "I will" - It is impossible to be dumb here _ O Sir, it is good to visit the Churches _how they explain y.^t Word, "truly we have fellowsp one &c - If you could travel [~~travail~~], the people w.^d eat you up. In my next I can give some account ab.^t return.^g _ . At pres.^t I am blind _ I have rec.^d someth.^g for [Cas...] at Sund.^d _ I beg my kind Love to M.^{rs} Wesley & little ones, & am, Dear Sir, Y.^t obliged Serv.^t in X[t]

J. [Richardson?]

PS. M.^{rs} Wesley gave me the inclosed as I was going to seal this _ she carries very fair
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Reference: EMV/501/124

Date: 16 March 1761

Correspondent: Mr J. Robertson

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: 'To The Revd Mr Wesley at Bristol'

Location: Pitcombe, Somerset

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"D[ea]r Robertson's Dying Summons. March 16.1761"

Rev.d and Dear Sir

ministry, Berridge undertook extensive preaching tours in the midlands. A highly effective evangelical leader, Berridge was both intellectually gifted and a skillful teacher.

Wesley and Berridge had a public falling-out after the latter switched his allegiance to Calvinism and attacked the Wesleys in print. The rift widened when Berridge published a collection of hymns in 1760, including several by the Wesleys which he had altered to reflect Calvinistic views. (Principal sources: Lewis; Kenneth Hylson Smith, *Evangelicals in the Church of England 1734-1984* (1988), pp.43-44 and DNB)

³²⁴ Sunderland

³²⁵ Newcastle

it would be a great act of Charity in you to make one, and I believe your last visit to your poor Dying friend who is earnestly desirous to talk with you concerning the World he is going into haveing very little to do in the present. I wish Thursday morning could suite your conveniency & that you cou-d spare me one night or two if you possibly could. Kind Compliments to M^{rs} Westley & M^r & M^{rs} Stonehouse.³²⁶ I have not Spirits even to indite any more

but that I am

your obliged
faithful Serv^t
J. Robertson

Pitcomb March 16 1761

[The text below is written in pencil and may be a later insertion on the back of the letter]

M^r St's Complim^{ts} to M^r W. & if I can be of any Service in this melancholy account I will with all my Heart tho I have not been on horse Back since my dislocating my arm ye last time

Reference: EMV/501/125

Date: 1739

Correspondent: Joseph Saunders

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Jos Saunders. [shorthand – Dissenter] 1739"
2. "Jos Saunders's a Dissenter's approbation 1739"

S^r

One that Is a Dissenter from your Church³²⁷ (In Outward forms) came to hear you Expound, & having Rec^d & Experienced the Love of God, In his own Soul, Cannot but Rejoice, to See that Love, shead abroad In the hearts of others Especially when he sees, that the Lord Jesus Christ, who Is the head of the Church, Is Exalted above all,

³²⁶ George Stonehouse (1714-93). Born in Hungerford Park, Bedfordshire, Stonehouse was educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, and entered the Anglican ministry in 1736. He met John Wesley after his return from Georgia and was converted shortly afterwards. In 1738 he became Vicar of St Mary's in the London parish of Islington where for a time Charles Wesley acted as his curate.

After coming under the influence of the Moravians, Stonehouse resigned from his parish in 1740 and spent twelve years with Count Zinzendorf in Germany. He also travelled widely in pursuit of his studies of Syraic New Testament manuscripts.

After his return to England, Stonehouse lived in semi-retirement at Dornford in Oxfordshire. Source: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860* edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995)

³²⁷ Church of England

& that gosple Spirrit Reviving again, In a Church, that has thus Long Lain asleep & Depended So greatly on Its own Righteousness which Is & Ever will be, filthy Rags.

I also know, that whoever Speaks In the Cause of God, to show man, his hell Deserving State by Nature, & his Inability to get out of Itt without the Righteousness of another, (which Is the Lord Jesus Christ) these people, that Do thus Exalt the Lord Shall have Many Enimies, both In y^e World & from Itt. but Least they Should be Discouraged, God Says, he that Is for Us Is stronger than he that Is against Us. (& so he Is) for all power Is In his hand. & I being a Child of Gods, Rejoice with you to think that our father, Is Reviving his own work, In this our Day. O may this Spirrit of Gods be Increasing More & More abundantly In Every heart, Especially yours, & all that Love our Lord Jehovah In Sincerity & truth. & May Every one of you that Expound Gods word, be blessed with a Double portion of his Spirrit, to Strengthen you to goe on In that good work God has Called you two. & that You may be Still more Strengthened, & Comforted, to goe thro: Your Labour, with patience, pleasure, & Delight, the allmighty which Directs all our Actions guided my heart to Let you know that he hears & answers all your prayers, & I Doubt not but many Souls will be brought home. But this I am assured on & have Experienced that Many are Comforted, & Refreshed by your societys, & the kind behaviour & Disposition that Is amongst you. & may that God of Love Increase his Love & Spirrit In Every one of your Souls. & as Itt Is Every Christians Duty to do what good he can In the world According to his ability. I send these tokens of my Love to you & your brother & all the Children of God & humbly pray that the Spirrit of Love & Meekness May Reign More & More In Every one of our hearts & that Every Soul May be Comforted & Refreshed with these Lines Is the Ernest prayer, Design & Desier of your unknown freind but Loving brother thro: our Lord & Saviour Jesus Christ.

Jos: Sanders

Brethren Pray for Me & My family

God Says Out of the Mouths of babes & Sucklingins I will perfect praise

O that Itt May be So hear

Reference: EMV/501/126

Date: May 1742

Correspondent: Elizabeth Sayce

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: [Bristol]

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Elis Sayse May 1742"
2. "Elis Sayse's Exp[erience] May 1742"

Reverend Sir

According to your desire, I have Endeavour'd to give you as full account of the State of my Soul at Present, and also of Some Part of my former Life, as I thought would be Proper, as it does at Present occur to my Mind.

It Pleas'd God, that about Five years ago, I went to hear Mr. Whitfield Preach at St. Nicholas Church,³²⁸ and thought that Strange Things were brought to my Ears, the Word came very Sweet, but my understanding was not open'd, But I approved of his Doctrine, ~~and~~ which seem'd as a Lovely Song of one that hath a Pleasant Voice, and heard him constantly, And when I heard him Recommend Mr. Wesley to the People, as one to be Prefer'd ~~before~~ before him, I thought that ~~it~~ Impossible.

When Mr Wesley came, I went to hear him in Nicholas Street Society, but at that time the Word had little Effect on me. But at his Preaching at Clifton Church³²⁹ the word came very Sweet and with Power; and I Shed Tears, but knew not well for what reason. I went Constantly to the Societies, and at one Time, when the People were taken with Violent Fits of Conviction, Some of whom being in a few minuts Set at Liberty, and Sang Praise to the Lord, and I also Sympathized with them, and thought that I also must have been Partaker of their Condition before I c'd be a Christian, and wish'd to undergo the Same Convictions.³³⁰ When I came home, I did not refrain from Acquainting my Neighbours what Strange Work the Lord was Reviving in the Midst of the Y[e]ars.

Sometime after, Mr. John Wesley went for London, and Mr. Ceneck³³¹ came hear, who I heard Expound at Bedminster, on the Revelations, ~~wh~~ but it was all a Mystery

³²⁸ St Nicholas Church, St Nicholas Street, Bristol, was founded in the middle ages. The present building, which dates largely from the 18th century, is probably the fourth St Nicholas on the site. Heavily damaged by bombing during World War II, the church remained an active place of worship until 1959. It was then converted to use as a museum and secular public building.

³²⁹ St Andrew at Clifton near Bristol. John Wesley preached here on successive Sundays May 13th and May 20th 1739 (JWJ)

³³⁰ 'I was interrupted at Nicholas Street ... by the cries of one who was "pricked at the heart" and strongly groaned for pardon and peace ... another person dropped down ... a young man who stood behind fixed his eyes upon him and sank down himself as one dead, but soon began to roar out and beat himself against the ground' (JWJ, 21 May 1739)

³³¹ John Cennick (1718-55): Born in Reading, Berkshire, into a Quaker family, Cennick was converted in 1737 and two years was invited to assist the Wesley brothers at Kingswood. In June 1739, Cennick preached as a layman without any complaint from John Wesley and can therefore be regarded as the first official Methodist lay preacher.

Cennick sided with Whitefield in the debate concerning predestination and in 1741 parted company with the Wesleys. Later that year he opened a Calvinist Tabernacle at Kingswood and traveled with the Welsh evangelist Howell Harris.

Cennick was an evangelist of outstanding ability, who preached widely across the south of England. In 1745 he joined the Moravians and offered them his associations of converts. Cennick visited Germany in December of the same year and was sent by Count Zinzendorf to Ireland where his ministry was to last five years – perhaps as many as 220 religious societies were formed there through his work. He was ordained into Moravian orders in 1749.

Cennick died in London following a period of poor health which was exacerbated by financial difficulties and disagreement with the Moravians.

In addition to publishing his sermons, Cennick also wrote many hymns and published one of the first hymn-books of the revival, *Sacred Hymns for the Children of God*

to me. When you Expounded on Isaiah, It all Seem'd very Sweet, but when you, or another said that we deserv'd to be Damn'd, I thought I might be Excepted, thinking I was not so bad as to ~~deserve it~~ a Whore or a Drunkard. But soon after, I saw that my Inward Parts were very Wickedness, and could put my self on a Level with the Chief of Sinners, and I was very angry with my Husband when he Put himself in the Bands. I had great Convictions, Insomuch that when I went to Bed I fear'd I should be in Hell before the Morning. I was afraid to go to Prayer for fear of the Devil, who I thought was in Every Corner of the House; and in this Condition I came to hear the word, expecting to quiet my Conscience which was as the Troubled Sea that cannot rest. In this State I continued for Several weeks. When my Husband talked of Faith, and Forgiveness of Sins, I thought we might receive Forgiveness of Sins but not in such a manner as to know and feel it applied. Thus I went on in Darkness and Deadness until it Pleas'd God who Quickeneth the Dead, in great mercy Pass'd by me when I was in my Blood and said unto me Live; which was at your Repeating the 11th. verse of the XXXIII Chapter of Ezekiel, "Say unto them, As I Live, saith the Lord God, I have no Pleasure in the Death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his Way and Live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die, O House of Israel?" I gladly receiv'd the Exhortation, and could with great Joy testify that I had Redemption in his Blood, the forgiveness of my Sins, when I came home, I could not be Persuaded by my Husband, not to think that Christ lived in me, being so overflow'd with the Sense of Pardoning Love. But Soon after, I gave Place to the Reasoning Devil who ask'd, "How can these things be"; and so I was in Doubt ab.t the certainty of it, which increas'd the more, when I felt Stirrings of anger; and what to do I knew not. One Night, my Husband and I were coming to the Room³³² where I expected to hear you, but one told us that Mr. Ceneck was to be there, at which I was so displeas'd that [page break]

I would have return'd and attempted to go back Three or four times, had not my Husband used his utmost Persuasions that I might not. But as soon as I came to the Room, I was for going out. But I found at Mr. Cenecks giving out a Hymn, that I was taking the Enemy's Part ag.t my own Soul, for when the Hymn was Sung, Those Four Lines of another Hymn came to my Mind which are under written and the Lord Spake those words to my Soul and applied them to my Heart, so that to the great Comfort of my Soul, I could once more Declare, that the God of Tender mercy had heal'd my Backsliding and write Pardon on my heart as with a Pen of Iron; for I could wish to die that Instant, because I was not at all afraid to meet the King of Terrors [...]---

I know thou wilt accept me now,
 I know my sins are now forgiven!
 My Head to Death O let me bow,
 Nor keep my Life, to Lose my Heaven

Thus I went on my way rejoicing. Soon after, I Enter'd my Self in the Bands, and when I came in the Bands the first time, I had reasoning with my Self in This manner; As I have now Enterd into the Bands, I must certainly Cut off the Right hand and Pluck out the Right Eye, and Forsake all that I may be Christ's Disciple, for no Man Putting his hand to the Plow and looking back is fit for the Kingdom of Heaven. I did not long continue in the Light of God's Countenance, but fell into Doubts and Feared, and the Poor and Needy sought water but there was none, and her Tongue failed for

(1741). (Principal source *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*, edited by Donald Lewis (1995) and *Dictionary of National Biography*)

³³² Probably Bristol New Room

Thirst, I was so feeble that I could Scarce Speak, my Sorrows compass'd me abt. on every Side, I thought I should never anymore have the Oil of Joy for the Spirit of Heaviness, I had no rest in my Bones by Reason of the absence of my God; my very Body was ready to ~~Perish~~ and for the Grave, the Spirit had well Nigh failed before him, and the Soul which he had made. Sometime after, I went to hear your Brother Mr. John, Preach at Temple Backs,³³³ where the Power of God was in an Extraordinary manner; But I was So much cast down that I was Oblig'd to have the help of one of Our Sisters to Place me in a Convenient Place for hearing, where I sometime waited to ~~See~~, Expecting to find Relief, being Sensible how God did visit others then Present with his Loving kindness and the word Seeming to me as a Tynkling Cymbal I was as a Dead Man out of Mind, But before it was over, I heard Mr. John Speaking Thus, Is there one Soul among you that Seems to be forsaken, or from whom God hath hid his face, Is there ne'er a one that would gladly accept of a Saviour, in Speaking which words or some other to that Effect, he fasten'd his Eyes on me and applied himself to me as though he had known my Desperate Case; and offer'd Salvation to us So fervently till at last I received it in Such a manner as I never Expected, I felt in my inmost soul that I was forgiven; It was as if I was Flying on the Wings of Love up to my Saviours Breast, The Angel of the Lord came upon me and a Marvellous Light Shone into my Prison; and my Chains fell off. I found that my Saviour was a Physician that heal'd both Soul and Body: In Short, I cannot Express the Happiness I then Enjoyed. I always found great comfort when I reced Bread and Wine in Remembrance of our Lord's Body and Blood, which I actually fed on by Faith

[page break]

Faith, as my Body is fed by meat and Drink, and always Left a Lasting Impression on my heart. One time in Particular, at receiving the Sacram.t, I felt the Power of God in Such a manner, that I was as one that had but little Strength left and Seem'd to the Minister as though I was in Heaviness, who told me, that it was a Place for rejoicing and not for Mourning. at one time I heard you Encouraging us agt. Martyrdom, at which I Seem'd to Stagger, fearing when I sh'd be call'd to Suffer for Christ, I Should Recant. But sometime after when Parting with a Friend, I thought I was a Stranger and Pilgrim on the Earth, and could readily (had I been call'd that time to Suffer) Jumped in, and clap'd my Hands in the Flames, for I counted all things but Dung and Dross so I might Win Christ. But I Soon was lifted up, and Trusted in the Gifts and Graces, and I was Rich and increas'd with Goods and had need of Nothing. But all this while, I was not Sensible that I was lifted up, until you met ~~my~~ our Private Band & when you ask'd me if I was not troubled with Self and Pride, which Struck me as Dead, for I knew not what to answer. And when I came under the word, I found it to be Quick and Powerfull and Sharper than any Two Edg'd Sword, Piercing, even to the Dividing asunder of Joints and Marrow and a Discoverer of the Thoughts and Intents of the heart, for I was so Sensibly cut by it as my Body might be by a Sword, and would often wish to withdraw my Self from Such Searching. Thus I went on Mourning for the Loss of my Saviour as one that mourneth for his only Son, I was as Noahs Dove, and could find no rest till I was again taken into the Ark, The Name of a Saviour was as Ointment Pour'd forth, I hunger'd and thirsted for my Lord, and every Place seem'd Melancholy by Reason of his absence, I could not lift up my heart to God, for he Seem'd as though he was not Pacified with me, ~~and as~~ I had no Power to

³³³ District of Bristol

Pray to God, but to the Son, It was he to whom I Sued for Pardon, that he might reconcile me again to his offended Father, which he did One Night I was at Prayer. For before I had Ended my Prayer to Christ, that he might reconcile me to his Father I could not only cry my Lord, but my Lord and my GoD. ~~And I~~ And in the Night, time, I had Such a view of the Presence of GoD, that humbled me to the Dust, I became in his Sight as a Dead Dog, I saw that I was in his Sight less than Nothing and Vanity; and as a beast of the Field. During my Seeing the vision, The words that came to my Mind were those, I will make all my Goodness Pass before thee³³⁴ Behold there is a Place by me, and Thou Shalt Stand upon a Rock;³³⁵ And it Shall come to Pass, while my Glory Passeth by, that I will Put thee in a Clift of the Rock, and will cover thee with My Hand when I Pass by; and I will take away mine Hand, and thou Shalt See my Back Parts: but my Face shall not be Seen.³³⁶ So Gracious a Sight it was, that I know not how to forget it, "Rejoice O Heaven, and ye that Dwell therein, Shout with Joy ye Worms of the Earth, for the Lord Omnipotent's Condescension in thus Humbling himself to behold a Sinful Worm, even Dust and Ashes, And favouring me with Such Amazing Love and Condescension. After this, the Lord was Pleas'd to uncover my heart more and more, and so all Evil Tempers did beset me sore, but the Lord gave me Strength as ~~the~~ my Day was. I have gone through Close Trials, which always work'd together for my good, for I found that Temptation always Stir'd me up to lay hold on the Lord, for Suffering Faith did always brighter glow and Purify the heart. I go to Prayer, Generally, with Reluctancy _____ but when I am at Prayer I find the Lord Reproves and Convinces me ~~that I~~ of

[page break]

of my folly, for as much as he then gives me an Extraordinary Blessing and could then wish to be always at Prayer. Since Mr. John's coming here this last time,³³⁷ I find that I am Quicken'd and Strengthen'd Considerably; and more Especially when the Hymns on Universal Redemption are Sung. At a certain time when the Leaders met, everyone was ask'd, concerning the Witness of the Spirit; when I was ask'd when I had received it, I mention'd the time, at which, we were all affected so much that we were all as One Mighty Blaze of the Fire of Love ~~Firey Love~~, God being in the midst of us as in the Holy Place of Sinai. The more I Press forward The more I feel of the Evil and Corruption of my heart, and though I feel my Sins rise as Mountains, yet the Lord gives Power ag.t them, he deals tenderly with me, and no Temptation happens, without his making a way for me to Escape, that I may be able to bear it. I doubt not, but the Lord who hath bestow'd upon me his grace and Blessings in Such a manner as he has done, will (If I am Faithful to his grace) bring me into the Rest of the People of God. I have no more to add, but that I Shall acknowledge you as my Father in Christ, and that it is my Bounden Duty to Pray to God to give you ~~his~~ the Choicest of his Blessings in Time and Eternity, your unworthy Serv.t & Daughter in the Lord --

Elizabeth Sais

³³⁴ Exodus 33:19

³³⁵ Exodus 33:21

³³⁶ Exodus 33:22-23

³³⁷ JW was in Bristol for short visits in February and March 1742 (JWJ)

Reference: EMV/501/127

Date: 23 July 1771

Correspondent: J. Southcote

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotated: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Southcot July 23 1771"

Rev.^d Sir

Your kind[^]& unexpected favour gave me much Pleasure. I am glad that you are all well, & that I am in your Remembrance. Thanks be to Christ, that I am in his blessed remembrance also. I have often been about writing you, but as I had nothing to say but of myself, & as I'm apt to say too much on this subject, I laid the thot.^s aside. "Incidit in scyllam &c."³³⁸ However, as you are pleased to enquire "how I go on", I come now to inform you.

Since you left us I have seen good days; having had a little glimpse of Him who is altogether lovely,³³⁹ even Jesus who was slain for us. For many years, I have heard of him, & spake of him; but alas! did not really know him. I have long groan'd under an evil nature; but I have seen the Lord. He is the burthen of my song. my glorying is of him. My Religion & experience is Him & Him alone. I have had a Religion & experience, but it was not Him. He was not the beginning & end of it. And now I am at a

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loss what to say or render to Him. "Love so amazing so divine; demands our life, our soul, our all."

But there are some seasons when those divine & soul-transporting joys are suspended, & the poor soul feels itself, as it really is, inexpressibly weak & helpless; and then, without clamour[^]ing with the Lord, for those, I endeavour resigning myself just as I am to Him, whom I call, & even then feel to be, my husband: He hears, & pities helpless souls.

Thus I creep on, being deeply assured that without him I'm nothing, nor can do nothing. All my safty, strength & all is in a continued union with Him, as the branch in the vine; this separat^{ed} is nothing indeed. and this divine union with Him, who is all a Poor sinner can want, can only exist from moment to moment. Look, & we are saved. Cease to look, or advert to another object, & we are not saved.

³³⁸ "Incidit in Scyllam ..." He runs on Scylla

³³⁹ Song of Solomon 5:16

What I now chiefly want is the spirit of Jesus, that spirit w.^{ch} cried “Father forgive them, they know not what they do.”³⁴⁰ How easy to love them who love

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us, as well as them who do not oppose us; but to embrace them who do, to seek their good, to manifest (not in words) but in deed that spirit w.^{ch} was in Jesus, is what I want. I mean to a greater degree. Jesus sought, laid himself in the way of poor sinners; this I want to do, if by any means some may be saved. I have attempted saying something of the saviour to perishing souls, & this sort of preaching seems to carry a divine testimony & savour with it.

We have had a Prophet amongst us (young M.^r Hill³⁴¹), but many of the religious as well as others, call him, mad; but GOD is with him, & the sound of his Master’s feet behind him. Many, many souls have been cut to y^e heart; even of the baser sort. I rejoice that Christ is preached by him, & that the world goes after him. He has been an instrument of good to M.^r Rouquet³⁴² What a change! Blessed be GOD, even our GOD, for ever & ever.

Your friend Pine³⁴³ is much stirred up. He wants

³⁴⁰ Luke 23:34

³⁴¹ Probably the evangelical preacher Rowland Hill (1744-1833)

³⁴² James Rouquet (c.1730–76). Rouquet was of Huguenot background and was converted while a pupil at Merchant Taylor’s School, from where he went up to St John’s College, Oxford, in 1748–9. By 1751 Rouquet had been placed in charge of Wesley’s Kingswood School and three years later was appointed to a curacy in Gloucestershire.

After being dismissed from his parish for his evangelical leanings, Rouquet moved to Bristol and for the next twenty years exercised a varied ministry in prisons, almshouses, and as lecturer of St Nicholas.

A friend of the Countess of Huntingdon, Rouquet married one of her circle, the sister of the Dowager Countess of Deloraine. In 1765 he became Vicar of West Harptree, Somerset, and in 1771 exchanged parishes with the Curate of St Werburgh’s in Bristol.

Rouquet tried to maintain friendly relations with all sections of evangelical opinion, although by the end of his life his outspoken support for the American Revolutionaries imposed distance with the Wesleys. (Principal sources: CCEd; Lewis.)

³⁴³ William Pine (fl.1771-94). A prominent Bristol Methodist, who in addition to founding two local newspapers did much to promote the publishing and sale of Methodist literature including the first edition of John Wesley's works.

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the Lord to live & dwell in him. I have been mistaken he says. The same discovery Bro. Procter has made, & is actually crying “what shall I do, to be saved?” There are a few others in the same condition. We have reason to bless GOD for sending Bro. Benson³⁴⁴ amongst us. He informs me that many in Wiltshire are likewise stirred up.

My wife thanks you for your remembrance of her, & begs her duty to you. She has been very poorly since her lying in. Her daughter is well & hearty. She would have sent Mrs. Wesley's oilcase, but her illness prevented. she hopes to do it shortly.

M.^r Baynes is ordained, & came off with great honour & respect. The Lord was with him all the Time.

Some of our friends have been tossed by the appearance of the storm; but I hope not shipwrecked. I am told that some of y^e principals are ashamed of themselves. How good is it to be ashamed of, even an apparent bad spirit. I am, Rev.^d Sir, your dutfl. Son

Bristol, July, 23, 1771.

J Southcote.

Pine was a member of the conservative wing of Methodism and clashed with John Wesley over the American ordinations. After Wesley's death, he sided with the chapel trustees during the Portland Street Chapel affair, (Principal source: Jonathan Barry, *Methodism and the Press in Bristol 1737-1775* (1992), WHS Bristol Branch Bulletin No 64.)

³⁴⁴ Joseph Benson (1749-1821). Born into a prosperous farming family at Melmerby in Cumberland, Benson was intended by his father for the Anglican ministry. He received a sound classical education from a Presbyterian minister and became a teacher at the age of sixteen. Converted in 1765 under the influence of a Methodist cousin Joshua Watson, he was introduced to John Wesley and was appointed classics master at Kingswood School.

In 1769 Benson entered St Edmund Hall Oxford but was denied Anglican orders because of his Methodist sympathies. After serving for a short time as headmaster of the Countess of Huntingdon's ministerial training college at Trevecca, he joined the Methodist itinerancy in 1771.

Benson was a great favourite of John Wesley and the two often corresponded. He went on to become President of Conference in 1798 and 1810 and served as its secretary in 1805 and 1809. In 1803 Benson was appointed connexional editor and in this capacity was a major influence on the development of the *Methodist Magazine*.

Despite his own experiences, Benson was a staunch supporter of the link with the Church of England and two of his own sons entered the Anglican priesthood. (Principal sources: Lewis and DNB)

Reference: EMV/501/128

Date: 1742 May 24

Correspondent: Mary Thomas

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“May 1742 Mary Thomas’s exp[erience] a seal”

Reverend Sir according to your desier I have given a Short account of my State when mr Whightfield³⁴⁵ came first to town I went to hear him I very much aprovd of his docktrin when I heard him preach the Last Sermon att Rosegreen [Bristol] and telling that there was one Coming after him whose Shoues Lacthett he was not worthy to unloose I found that was he that Stood by him I found great Love in my heart to him after that the first oportunytee I had I went to hear mr John Wesley and my consciance Soon told me that it was the true Gospell of Christ that he preacht I likewise began to think how I had Spent my Life haveing Lived almost fivety years in this world I found that I was ignorant of God I always thought my self as good as my neighbours and a great deal better than Some of them that did curs and Swear and gott drunk I always had a good name amongst my acquaintance which was pleasing to flesh and Blood but the Lord Soon Shewed me that I was a divel and had only decevd my self and all that knew me when I went to church I Seldom found any thing there that disturbd me except it was being there to Long but when I came to hear mr John Wesley I found nothing but discontent in my mind he told me things that I had Said and don when I was a child and from my youth up even untill now and consiance always Said thou art the woman So that I had no peace in my mind when any one did cry out in the room I always wishd to be the next in hopes to receve forgiveness of Sins but God did not See fitt to Grant me my request: when you came first to Bristoll I Seemd to like you better then your Brother I thought your way of delivery was finer then his I thought I Should be easier in my mind in hearing of you then I was in hearing of him but alass I found it wors and worse and worse every day Last St James fair³⁴⁶ was twelve month you ordered the Ssociatee to come and Speak with you which I found a great grief to me for I was for I was ashamd to think I was no better but I came as I was and you asked me if I was Justefied and I Said no you told me I was in a State of damnation which words pierced my heart tho it were what I had heard many times yett it never pierced my heart So much as it did then I then was ready to cry out my punishment is more then I can bear I Saw my Self banisht from the presence of God I then began to think the day of Grace was past I began to think how I was brought up when I was a child to know the Lord and what a love I had for Christ when I was a child but after I was grown up I did reject the Spirit of the Lord in doing that I knew I ought not to do and the Lord hath said my Spirit Shall not always Strive with man I could find no comefort for me I knew not where to go I began to wish I never had heard them I was quite out of hopes and wisht I knew the worst and earnestly desierd the Lord that he

³⁴⁵ George Whitefield

³⁴⁶ From 1238 until 1838 an annual fair was held in the grounds and surrounding streets and land of St James Bristol over the first two weeks in September. It was regarded as the most important of the Bristol Fairs.

would by what was preacht that night Shew if I Should be Savd or not for I Longd to know the worst when I came to the Room³⁴⁷ you was there the chapter you was on was concerning the woman taken in adultry and the Lord Said unto her neither do I condemn thee go and Sin no more the word Seemd as Spoken to me I know not where I was for a Short time I felt Such a heft go of my heart that I cannot express it I was assurd that Christ died for me I feard nothing where I went I had Christ with me I was in this Joy for about a fortnight when being att the room one night before you came there was two young women Sate behind me and telling how they was and how they had cryd out Such a time and what an agony they had been in before they had recieved forgiveness and they Said that those that did not feel those agonies that they decievd themselves hear the divel gott me again in his Snare in putting me to think I was not Justified because I had not been tak'n in Such a mannor here I Soon Lost my Joy and began to drive on heavily Some times I was ready to give it all up then the Lord Shed abroad his Love in my heart and I could a lost my life for the truth of it but as Soon as that Joy abated I was in fear and So continnud till the tewsdays before mr John Wesley fell Sick when he was telling of the five wounds Christ had recieved for us then I found his Blood aplied to my heart Saying Daughter be of good cheer thy Sins are forgiven thee then I found Great Joy and Sweetness in my Soul I then went upon tryal into the bands and there I found Great Love to my band when mr John Wesley came Last to bristol I was taken in to the publick bands I have not now Such Joy as I had I See my Self the worst of Sinners and Stands amazed to think that I am out of hell I See I can do nothing to the Glory of God I find every immagination of my heart is only evil Continually but I know when Christ Speaketh the word I Shall be made perfectly whole in the mean time I begg your prayers that the Lord will give me power to fight manfully under his Bannor against the world the flesh and ye divil and may God power a duple portions of his Spirit upon you and your Dear Brother and all his faith full ministers & grant that the word may be as Seed Sown into Good ground and that wee may bring forth frutt and hundred fold which is is the prayers of me your unworthy Servant

Mary
Thomas

May ye 24th: 1742

Reference: EMV/501/129

Date: June 1742

Correspondent: Naomi Thomas

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Naomi Thomas's exp'ce June 1742"
2. "Naomi Thomas's June 1742"

Revd. Sir

³⁴⁷ New Room Bristol

I have given you as full act. of the State of my Soul at Present, and also of Some of my Former Life as I thought would be necessary, as it now comes into my mind

When Mr. Whitefield came here to Bristol to Preach in the Churches, I went to hear him & also wherever he Preach'd, or Expounded; and heard him with great delight; but though I did believe his report, yet the Arm of the Lord was but in Little or no degree reveal'd to me before the Lord was Pleas'd to Send your Brother mr. John, to Preach his word, in Such a clear way and manner as he did; which made me often think it was Another Gospel, in comparison of what I heard before; and it Pleas'd the Lord to cause it to have great effect upon me; for many times by his Preaching, I have been, as it were Sawn Asunder, and at my Witts end; not knowing what to do; and then I found that what I had done was as nothing, & had not as much as begun to be a Christian; but Still I was out of Christ & in a Sinful State, & under the Covenant of works; and chain'd down under the Wrath of God; & thought I must have for ever Perish'd. So I went on bemoaning my Lost State by Original Sin. A small time after, I went to hear your Brother Mr. John at Baptist Mills, where the Lord was Pleas'd to Shew me Plainly & more fully than before, yt. I was under the yoke of Bondage, & yt. I was a Slave to Sin & the Devil; I then knew not what to do, but could Scarce keep myself from crying out, in the Bitterness of my Soul; What Shall I do to be Saved. I came to my House but none but the Lord knew what I felt at that time; neither can I express it. I went on for a long time in Doubts & Fears, and without any hope, neither could I tell my Condition to any Person, but Still I was asham'd of my own Vileness – which made my Burthen yt. heavier. I went to hear yr. Brother at Clifton Church, where the Word came with Such Power into my Soul, yt. I was taken in Such a manner, yt. I never was in before; and was afraid I Should Expose myself before all the People; but could not mind one word of all he Spoke; for my Bones Seem'd to me as if they were out of joint, but I made Shift to come home with much ado. Monday morning following, I went to Newgate to hear yr. Brother, where I was taken in the Same manner as before and Still I was afraid men Should See me, So I came home; one of my Friends would have me go with her to the Brickyard the Same Day, but I told her I was afraid to venter again; knowing how it was with me Twice before; but in the Evening I went to the Society in Baldwin Street, and there I found that the Lord had not Forsaken me, but made his Power to be known by Such a Rebellious Wretch as I (who had resisted the motions of his Spirit), in taking away my Senses and Strength for a Small time, and afterwards giving me Ease for a little Space from the Burthen I was under, and Enabling me to come home as if nothing had been the matter with me; and giving me Such Joy and comfort all that Night yt. I cannot Express. So I went on (expecting a greater deliverance than what I had already reced:) in great Joy and Peace. Afterwards I heard yourself, Sometimes being wounded by it, and afterwards heald again, The Lord Setting his Seal to your ministry, So as to cause it to come to my Soul with the Demonstration of the Spirit & of Power. One time in the Bowling green, you Preach'd on those Words, I in them and they in me, which came with Such Power to my Soul, yt then I had Redemption in the Blood of Christ The Forgiveness of my Sins, and fill'd with such Joy that I cannot Express. A little time after I went to hear you at the Brickyard where the Lord was Pleas'd to give me a Clearer Sense of his Pardoning Love than before, for then I could Speak to you, and not before, and at mrs. Englands Society I desir'd you to return Thanks for the great mercies I had receiv'd by your ministry that Evening, neither can I declare the comfort I have receiv'd through your ministry, time after time, neither can I be but astonishd' at the Goodness & love of God to Such a Sinner. Thus I went on in Peace

and Joy until I found mySelf much Ruffled in Mind, and begun to Question the Truth of all I had experience'd before. But bless'd be God who Soon gave me Relief, from those Words, written in a Book which I then open'd. Think not thyself wholly left, although for a time I have Sent thee Some Tribulation, or withdrawn thy desir'd comfort; For this is the way to the Kingdom of Heaven; From and through which Words I was comforted and Supported considerably under the Troubles my Soul was in at that time, and the Lord Enabled me to call upon him though in a broken way, and at that time I could Say that

the Lord had begun that good work in my Soul, & that he would enable me by his grace to hold out to the end, and endure with Patience what he Should be Pleas'd to lay upon me while on Earth, I would keep me from all Sin. I went to hear you at the Malt Room on Mathew XXIV. and could then Say it is good for me to be here, at which time, you describ'd what Wars & Rumours of Wars were in the Souls of Men, and told us that if we did not Experience it in our own Souls, we never knew what it was to be born again; which I hoped I did, for I had found Such conflicts and Fightings in my Soul many times. At a certain time – I heard you expound on the Five Wise, and Five Foolish Virgins; By the Lamps are meant, you Said, An Outward Profession of Faith and Holiness. By Oil in Our Lamps was to be understood, True Repentance and Faith in Christ; and then you told us, we could not be Christians unless we had our hearts Furnish'd with the Graces of the Holy Spirit of God, as a Prevailing and abiding Principle in Our Souls. In the Evening I heard you expound from the Same Chapter, when you Shew'd the necessity of good works, and Said we could not be Christians without them, neither could we be Saved by Works without Faith in Christ; then I Seemd to be dead & dull, until the next Morning, when (.Blessed be God) I was again in Love and Peace, and desired to be more Heavenly minded, that I might See more of my own Vileness and the Corruptions of - my own wicked heart, and that the Lord would enable me by his Grace to hold out to the end. Friday following, in the Evening, I heard you Expound on the Sufferings of Christ, & what he underwent for Poor Sinners, with which I was much affected, So that my desires reach'd out after him that is altogether Lovely. So I continued next day, in Love and Joy, and also till Sunday following, when I went to the Lords Table, ~~where~~ in comfort and belief that in and through Christ I Should be accepted. But Soon after I was in Doubts again, and did not know what to do, But the Lord was Pleas'd to confirm those Words to me, which I before received, and believed, touching the Sufferings which Christ has gone through in Our Stead; and So was again restor'd to my Former Peace and Joy; and Still desired the Lord in his own way and time to deliver me from all sin; For I know and Sometimes do believe that the Lord will cleanse me from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit and enable me by his grace to Perfect Holiness in his fear, notwithstanding all my Tears and Distresses I am in, many times, occasions by my own Deceitfull heart, though often like a Water'd Garden; Yet I do hope that I Shall Renew my Strength, and wrestle untill I obtain the Blessing, and lay hold on the Promises of the Gospel, and until they are fullfill'd in me. O that I may enabled by the Grace of God, to Say with Holy David. Thy Words have I taken as mine heritage for ever, for they are the Joy of my heart, with many Such Texts of Scripture the Lord has been Pleas'd to comfort me; But I must own with shame that I have fallen by my negligence, and unfaithfulness to the many Graces and Mercies that I have received from time to time; and am Sometimes ready to cry out O that it were with me as in Months past. I went on in this uncomfortable manner, dead, Dull, and weary of myself, and did not care whether I came to hear the Word or no; but the last time you came from Wales, in the Morning, I heard you

expound; when the Lord manifested himself to me again. But I Sometime, after grew Slack, and gave way to my corrupt and Deceitfull heart, and did not attend the Ordinance of hearing the Word as I used to do, which made me grow dead and Slack, and almost without desire to hear the Word at all; and made me Sometimes afraid to call upon the Lord in Prayer; But the Lord was Pleas'd to Shew me my Vileness, and the Corruption and Deceit of my heart. The last time you met the Bands I Seem'd unwilling to meet; But Blessed be the God of mercies and Long Suffering, who (in tender compassion to Such a BackSlider as I) melted me down with his Love, in Such a manner that I could find no words whereby I might worthily Praise him, who Loveth Such a Sinner as I, as though I had never Sinned ag.t him; and who have been So often calld upon, to return to the God of my Salvation. Dear Sir, Pray for me, that the Lord would never leave me nor Forsake me but that he would enable me to hold out to the end, and not begin in the Spirit and end in the Flesh, but be a follower of them who through Faith and Patience Inherit the Promisas, which is my earnest desire, and that I may go on from Strength to Strength, although I am now in the Dark, but yet I know, the Lord has not wholly Forsaken me, although (through my own Deadness and coldness) the Lord hath left me to walk in Darkness at this time, But yet I do hope that the Lord will deliver me out of the Present State which I am in at this time, and Oh that I may look on him whom I have Pierc'ed a fresh, and mourn for my Sins and the Lord grant that I may never rest till I am in Christ a new Creature. Yesterday Evening I heard you in great Joy, though in much grief to think that I had So back Slidden from what I was but yet the Lord did then appear to my great comfort, and through the Exhortation I was enabled by the Grace of God to hope against hope, that the Lord will deliver me from all appearance of Evil, which is and I hope Shall be by Divine Assistance ye. Earnest desires of who desires your Prayers for me, your willing tho' unworthy Servant

Naomi Thomas

Reference: EMV/501/130

Date: 9 March 1756

Correspondent: William Turner

Addressee: 'To the Revd Mr Charles Wesley'

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "W. Turner. A seal. Mar. 9 1760"

London March ye

9th: 1756

Reverend S.^r, under your preaching on monday last in the forenoon, I was sett at Liberty from the Spirit of bondage, into the glorious liberty of the children of God, which for I desire to give humble & hearty thanks to Almighty God, (my reconciled Father) for the same, through Jesus Christ my once bleeding but now exalted Saviour. Behold, on good friday I abstain'd from my usual diets, for Christs sake & my comfort, which I found to increase greatly, and whilst you was preaching peace by Jesus Christ, I by precious faith found that peace of God that passeth knowledge, it is to me something remarkable, that God should bless me with his pardoning love in a

manner near the same as was happy Cornelius,³⁴⁸ by the same word preach'd, and the same number of Days abstinence, I doubt not your Joy for the same, and desire to remain your humble

Serv:^t for Christs sake
W:^m Turner

I think it incumbent on me to make known the manner of my being convinc'd of sin, of the manner of my small progress in the divine life, such an Instance perhaps you do seldom hear of, about a year ago a friend lent me a book of Mr Romaines³⁴⁹ published out of the song of songs (but first I must acquaint you that I had labour'd hard early & late (being by trade a Joiner) for some months but my Master broke & it was to me a great temporal loss, had no freind living & away from all old acquaintance in a strange place thought I must seek happiness from God so began to amend my life by going to sacrament & fixing resolutions to lead a new life).

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but on perusal of M.^r Romaines discourses I found my self not right because I could not call Jesus Christ my belov'd & my friend from my heart, I soon began to see the

³⁴⁸ Acts 10:1-21

³⁴⁹ William Romaine (1714-95) was born at Hartlepool, County Durham, the son of a corn merchant of French Protestant ancestry. Romaine was educated at Houghton-le-Spring Grammar School and Christ Church Oxford, where Charles Wesley was a tutor. Romaine was ordained into the Anglican priesthood in 1738 and at first served as a curate in Surrey. In 1739 he engaged in a bitter controversy concerning the views of William Warburton, part of which dispute found its way into the press. In 1741 Romaine was appointed chaplain to the Lord Mayor of London. He underwent an evangelical conversion in about 1748 and the following year was appointed afternoon lecturer at St Dunstan-in-the-West. Romaine used this opportunity to preach evangelical doctrine to large crowds despite the opposition of church officials. He was soon generally acknowledged to be the principal preacher in the capital and in 1750 was afforded a further opportunity to evangelise, when he was appointed assistant morning preacher at fashionable St George's Church in the West End of London. In 1751 he also accepted for a short period the professorship of astronomy at Gresham College.

From 1756 Romaine served as a curate and morning preacher at St Olave's in Southwark while retaining his position at St Dunstan's. He also exercised an itinerant ministry, preaching as far afield as Yorkshire and the West Country, and served as one of the Countess of Huntingdon's chaplains. In 1766, following a long dispute concerning his election, he was finally allowed to take up a position as the Rector of St Anne's, Blackfriars. For fourteen years Romaine was the only beneficed evangelical in the city and his parish was a focus for evangelical activity, attracting large congregations. In addition to his ministry, and place after Whitefield as the leading Anglican exponent of Calvinism, Romaine was an important Hebrew scholar. He published a four volume revision of Marios de Calasio's Hebrew dictionary and concordance between 1747 and 1749 (*Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*, edited by Donald Lewis (1995)

want of a Saviour, I thought of the words of the most fairest learn of me for I am meek & lowly, I endeavour'd to copy after the example, (& may the Lord be pleas'd to give me grace so to continue,) & found much comfort my hatred to sin increas'd, & love to holiness, for I had been shewn the spirituality of the Law, I did look up to the author & finisher of my faith, & rested on him relying on his righteousness, & renouncing my own, I did see first the great want of faith, but by looking up to Jesus it was increas'd, & I had power to die to all outward sins, but found a very stony heart, Jesus by his spirit often knock'd at the door of my heart to depart from creature comfort, which was my bossom sin, blessed be God I have rich amends for parting with it, I have hated my self for my ingratitude to my God, but never was under much burden of sin, whoeh under the word preach'd oftimes had great doubts, wether or know I was not deluded but strongly rely'd on my saviours power & willingness, O that the Lord may anoint you and all your fellow laboures in Christs vineyard with his holy Spirit that you may not faint & that your prayers may be that I a youth about 25 may be kept unspotted from this unhallowed world, grace be to all that loves the Lord Jesus in sincerity Amen.

Reference: EMV/501/131

Date: May 1742

Correspondent: Elizabeth Vandom

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

“Elis Vandom rapt in Devotion May 1742”

Reverend

And Dear Sir.

I Desired to Send you a few Lines to Lett you know how gracious the Lord is unto me. but Cant Express it by any means for it is inexpressible: god^s love overflows my Soul Continually I Can Cry unto the Lord. methinks I Could always pray for all my brethren & Sisters in Christ. and for all mankind: my heart is filled with his Love toward all: yet I Desire more of his Love although he has filld me as with marrow and fatness. my Soul Still hungers after him. indeed he has wrought a great work in me O how shall I Praise him enough. how Shall I give him thanks. for all his mercies and Loving Kindness unto me.. indeed I Could always praise him I am never weary of praising. but still I can neither praise him nor Love him Enough. all my Desire is unto him and to the remembrance of his name. I Coud be allways among gods Children – all my Delight is to Do his will in all things. my Soul Continually Crys father thy will be Done. I am happy: happy indeed in the Lord O who would not Desire to Love the Lord Jesus in Sincerity and truth. Seeing his yoke is so Easy and his Burthen very Light: O that I could but Perswade all to embrace him. God has given me to feel in a measure. how he so Loved us as to give his Life a Ransom for all for methinks I Could Lay Down my Life. for any Soul: all this has god Done. but I cannot Express what I feel: for wherever I Go my heart is ready to break with Love. but grieved often to See the Careless world. O that they all felt what I feel. and much more.. that we might all rejoyce together in the Lord. Dear Sir pray for me that the Lord may never

leave me no not for one moment: for then I Should fall and may the Lord bless you
with all heavenly blessings and Strengthen you mightily. with his might O Chapion of
God: Reverend Sir I am your unworthy Daughter in Christ
Elizabeth Vandome

Reference: EMV/501/132

Date: 1742

Document: Last words of Francis Vigor³⁵⁰

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
“Frank Vigor’s last words 1742”

Some of y.^e Exspressions of Francise Vigar was these Or words to y.^s effect A little
before his departure

his prayer first, Lord fit & prepare me for thy Eternal Kingdom, Lord have mercy On
me & Grant I may Never goe into y.^e World again Exscept I live Agreeable to thy
Gospel; O Lord Jesus thou wast y.^e Lamb Slain from y.^e foundations of y.^e world,
thou hangest on y.^e tree for all mankind; O Lord grant y.^t thy dearth & Sufferings may
not prove ineffectual unto me

I love Said he y.^e whole world if ever I lives to get up again I hope we Shall strenghen
one another In y.^e work of y.^e Lord the day before his departure he Said I desire
nothing but to be with God In Glory, I thank thee O God for y.^e Light thou hast given
me, Once I was Sorely disstressd, but now it is all peace & joy In y.^e Lord, these &
many more Exspressions he utterd to y.^e Same purpose, he was never heard to speak
afretfull word no not In y.^e greatest of his pain but was patient & resigned to y.^e will
of God from y.^e very begining of his illness to y.^e very last moment. he wast ask’d if
he knew he Should goe to God he answerd he was Sure if he died y.^t he Should, O
says he there is none like unto y.^e God of jeshurun O for a thousand tounges to speak
my dear redeemers praise

Reference: EMV/501/133

Date: 7 January 1752

Correspondent: James Waller³⁵¹

³⁵⁰ Probable relation of Elizabeth Vigor (d. 1774), who was a close personal friend of the Wesleys and one of the earliest converts in Bristol. A lady of means, she provided hospitality to many of the preachers and left over £100 in bequests to the Wesley family upon her death in 1774. (Principal source: MARC: Methodist papers.)

³⁵¹ James Waller (d. 1802). A prosperous lace merchant of London who, in December 1750, married Elizabeth Gwynne, sister to Sarah Wesley. Despite some Gwynne family opposition to the match, it was apparently a happy union, and the Waller and Wesley families were very close. Waller assisted Sarah in the management of her

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Jam's Waller. Jan. 7 1752 in at peace & trusting to be my Crown"
2. Shorthand annotation
- 3.

Dear & Rev^d S^r

I Rec^d your kind letter & Return you my Sincere thanks for y^e same, I Bless GOD, I came safe To this Place on Saturday Night, where I found all our Friends in good health Except my Dear Partner, who is lower in Sperits then Ever I saw any one, in [this?] Life, but still I hope in Time [s]he will Recover her strength and be better then Ever, As to my little Son Never was their a more hearty Child in Ludlow³⁵² since it has been a Town Most People tell me that it is as fine a Boy as Ever they Saw, I make no Doubt but you think I believe it We all seem to be at Peace & in Friendship with Each Other, I sincerely Wish we may always Continue so to our Lives End, Surely Nothing Can be more Pleasing to a GOD of Love then to see Brethren Dwell Together in Love, it is my One Desire that Nothing may Evermore happen to break into it, I am much Oblig'd to my Dear Friend for his Prayers for me. I Assure you I stand much in need of them Many are y^e Temptations which besett me but yet I have a good hope through Grace that I shall be more then Concour,^r through^h Him that hath Loved me, & Wash'd me in his most Preteious Blood, Dear S^r I am Perswaided that Notwithstanding all [...] Unbelief & hardness of Heart, I shar[e...] your Crown of Rejoycing in that Glorious Day, When y^e Lord shall Come with Thous^{ds} of Angles to Judge this World, I then trust I shall be Admitted with you in y^e Realmes of Bliss, To Sing Praises to GOD & y^e Lamb for Ever, My Kind Love attends your Dear Partner, Wishing you all Happiness Concludes me

Dear S^r

Y^r Son in Xt

J Waller

Reference: EMV/501/134

Date: 11 August 1762

Correspondent: John Walsh

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

"Walsh's Ranters Aug 11 1762"

financial affairs following Charles Wesley's death. (Principal source: MARC: papers of the Wesley and Gwynne families.)

³⁵² Residence of the Gwynne family

To the Reverend Charles Wesley. London. August 11, 17[62]

Sir

The Account You desired me to write, of my own Experience & Remarks on others, requiring much haste, You will be sure to find it both irregular & inelegant, as well as extremely short for such a Subject. I can write nothing well, unless I take time to compose, correct & alter, with such a degree of slowness & diffidence, that an Account of the Lord's Dealings with me, which I begun almost three years ago, will probably be not finish'd in 3 or 4 more. but as in the present case, you desire only Truth and Intelligence, I shall be content with making myself understood, & thus hurry over the matter, without any farther Apology.

At the Age of six Years I was much given to Swearing, Drunkenness, & other Sins. At Seven the Lord strongly drew me by the Cords of Love, & I delighted in his presence, abhorred Sin, & thirsted after Righteousness. I then suffer'd great Persecution, especially from other Boys. the Lord soon after hid his Face, & I forgot him a considerable time. He return'd again convincing me not of actual, but original Sin. I knew his terrors a long while, sought his Face, & was hated by all or most about me. At Ten I was justified, declared it, & pray'd publickly. great was my spiritual Joy, & so great my Pride thereupon that I would scarce acknowledge GOD my superior, sinn'd against him by desire of the Creature, which is yet my besetting Sin & besetting Temptation, made several vain attempts to gratify that sensual Desire, & lost the Knowledge of GOD. I was alarm'd soon after by a Dream, sought him earnestly, was persecuted vehemently, & found his favour again: which I lost & found, lov'd & hated Sin, from time to time, till I was fourteen Years old: when I was ashamed of all my past Religion, went to Sea, & inspite of innumerable Visitations & Providences, no Weapon that was formed against me being ever able to prosper, I sinn'd against my GOD with a high hand. I counted my past Experience Foolishness, & hated the Remembrance thereof till I totally forgot it. I fell into such a State in the year 1747. as may be call'd indeed Scepticism, but consisted more of Atheism than either Deism, or Pythagoreanism; which were the only two Systems I could ever adopt in those Days, beside Atheism. I then made a great mock of true Religion, laughing at the glorious Trinity, challenging the GOD who died to save me, while arguing against [h]is Divinity, once especially upon Constitution Hill,³⁵³ to strike me [d]ead with Thunder & Lightning if he were a GOD. & that being not done, I insisted on having gain'd my Point with my Antagonist. but, strange to tell, I was yet favour'd, & visited Night & Day, by the unknown GOD: Take the following Instance, which I copy verbatim from the Description of a Tour I made in Hampshire: "September 17, 1755. My Companion stay'd at Petersfield, while I [v]isited Stonard Hill. _____ this Prospect entertain'd me above two Hours; & me thought the Solitude gave a keener enjoyment of this Vision; the Weather being the finest of the whole year, & all things gilded by the clear Sunshine:

Delightful Solitude! O bright Abode,
To think of Nature & of Nature's GOD!
Now sacred Temples, Altars, I despise;
And hail my GOD; & view the Azure Skies.
Then down to Earth I turn my curious Eyes,

³⁵³ London

And still his Footsteps all around me spy.
No Objects strike me but his Glory teach;
No Sounds are utter'd but the Godhead preach.
I'll in the Chorus join my humble Voice,
And like the little buzzing Flies rejoice.

thus, from the Scenes of unadulterated Nature, my Contemplation took wing to the great Architect: no reasonable Soul arriving, to take a proud Offence at my lowly Rapsody:

While eager Words their feeble aid impart,
Mix'd with the sighing Language of the heart,
God of all Worlds! thy Glory to rehearse:
Musing the vastness of the Universe:
How vast yon flaming Sun! that glowing Sky!
How vast this Earth! & what an Atom I!"

Before the end of September 1755, my Sister Leadbetter, whose turning Methodist about a year before made me wish her

[page break in the original manuscript]

dead & think her mad, venturing to give me some kind advice, I proudly gainsaid till her unaffected Piety beginning to touch me, & GOD being pleas'd to make her the Instrument of my Conversion, the strong Chain of Atheism began to loosen about me, so that I went with her to hear your Brother; whose Words I thought incomprehensible, but felt the sweet presence of my unknown GOD; who girded me then, as oft before, while I knew him not.

I was justified November 24, 1756. before & after which, Mr. Swain often told me what difference of Opinion subsisted among Christians. wherefore I besought the Lord, both frequently & earnestly, to defend me from all opinions, be my only Teacher, & keep me from all error: at which times he would dart these Words into my Mind,
"Cease ye from Man, whose Breath is in his Nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of."

About the beginning of the Year 1757. Mr Swain surprised me with the first Tidings of the strange Doctrine of Perfection in the Flesh: wherefore I begged of the Lord to shew me whether it was right or wrong; who giving me no Answer, but continuing to bless me as usual. I was contented with seeking him alone as formerly, and thought within myself, of Perfection, "Do you stand on one hand while Predestination keeps on the other, & I will go strait forward; between the two, to the GOD of my Salvation." but the Preaching of Thomas Walsh³⁵⁴ at last brought me over to the

³⁵⁴ Thomas Walsh (c.1730–59). Born in Ballyline, County Kilkenny, Ireland, the son of a carpenter, Walsh was raised as a Roman Catholic but became dissatisfied with his faith and at the age of 19 joined the Anglican Church. In the same year he joined the Methodist Society in the town of Newmarket and in 1750, after seeking advice from John Wesley, began to preach in both Irish and English. In 1753 Walsh was appointed

belief of Perfection. I then sought it with extreme Earnestness, counting my knowledge of GOD a small thing, because I had not found him out unto Perfection: but generally when I pray'd to be made perfect, he would cause an Idea of the Room wherein I was justified to rise before me, & a sweet repetition of those Words to pass through me, "There he gave the Blessing, & Life for evermore." yet would I not desist from seeking Perfection: as to Sanctification, a very great & astonishing degree of it was given me about 6 Weeks before my Justification. perhaps there is no Sin so strong as that which beset me; & yet in a single Moment, the mighty GOD, in answer to my Request, so fully destroy'd its power, that for above [...], years, I confidently believ'd it would subsist no more.

It seems needful in this place to break the thread of my Narrative, & insert a L[ette]r which I wrote to Mr Berridge³⁵⁵ several years after; because that L.r contains an account of Experiences which I had about this time. that Gent:n, who had always protested against Perfection, having sent me a L:r in its behalf, I wrote this Answer verbatim.

"Edgware.³⁵⁶ May 28, 1761."

"Dear Sir.

to the English itinerancy. His wide appeal prompted John Wesley to declare that with six men like Walsh he could turn the country upside down. Walsh suffered from poor health made worse by refusal to rest. He returned to Ireland in 1758 and died at Whitefriar Street Chapel in Dublin. (Principal sources: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* and Lewis, *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*)

³⁵⁵ John Berridge (1716-93). Born at Kingston-on-Soar, Nottinghamshire, the son of a prosperous yeoman, Berridge was educated at Clare Hall, Cambridge. After graduating B.A. in 1738, he was ordained and held a college fellowship until 1764.

From 1750 to 1755 Berridge served as curate at Stapleford, near Cambridge. He then took the living of Everton, Bedfordshire in July 1755, although he continued to live in college and employed a resident curate.

Berridge experienced an evangelical conversion in 1757 and became a good friend of John Wesley and George Whitefield. In addition to carrying out an active parish ministry, Berridge undertook extensive preaching tours in the midlands. A highly effective evangelical leader, Berridge was both intellectually gifted and a skillful teacher.

Wesley and Berridge had a public falling-out after the latter switched his allegiance to Calvinism and attacked the Wesleys in print. The rift widened when Berridge published a collection of hymns in 1760, including several by the Wesleys which he had altered to reflect Calvinistic views. (Principal sources: Lewis; Kenneth Hylson Smith, *Evangelicals in the Church of England 1734-1984* (1988), pp.43-44 and DNB)

³⁵⁶ A district of Greater London. In the 18th century, Edgware was a small village located 10 miles north of the city

Seeing you give me permission to write without reserve, & have never taken offence at the freedoms I use, my intention is now to set before you the chief Observations I have made concerning such of the Methodists as call themselves perfect. I have had free conversation with 8 of them, & shall say something of each, I trust without partiality, when I have told you a little of my own Experience therein.

About ½ a Year after my Justification, I began to seek Perfection with great desire; & expected it from time to time, till I receiv'd the Gift so called: which I take for a kind of Sealing, or doubling the Faith that preceeded it. You may read in Mr Wesley's German Travels, of several at Hernhuth receiving the same. but, how are the mighty fallen! My great mistake about it was, That after being so blest, I should sin no more; because the propensity to Sin would be taken away, so as never to return. but surely the Promises of GOD are still conditional, & he yet says to every Saint of his, "Be thou faithful unto Death, & I will give thee a Crown of Life." I felt Sin again in my heart at the end of 27 Hours; & spoke as freely thereof in Band, as I did of the perfect Gift. but the first Person call'd perfect, who heard me talk of Sin being yet in my heart; w.d have had me count it only temptation. I have often since that time, felt the perfect Love of GOD, I suppose more than 1,00 times, casting out all Fear, & not seldom the whole propensity to sin. I believe also, this to be the common Experience of all real Xtians; but have long suspected, that many Professors of Justification had it not, or have surely lost it: & when the Lord manifests his Love to any of these, it is no wonder they should mistake it for Perfection. As to such whose Experience resembles mine, I believe they are ashamed to retract their first Declaration. Whether I am right or wrong in those Thoughts, it seems to me certain, that your Preaching was not wrong at all in the Year 1759. for the Lord own'd it altogether: nor could I perceive, any difference when you was at London, except an increase of his Talents. the good GOD increase them to You more & more.

I come now to the Persons intended.

Mrs. Burroughs of Deptford told me, she rejoic'd so much when made perfect as to shed many Tears; & saw daily, some time before & ever since, the Air full of Spirits; the good resembling Stars, or pieces of Silver Coin, & fewer in number than the evil; which resembled Eeels or Serpents, & enter'd the Mouth, Nose & Ears of every Person, or almost all she met with, & would frequently lay themselves cross their Eyes; but the good were far swifter in operation. the shadows of the evil appear'd to her also in the Water, when passing the Thames, & I think the good with them. I could see nothing amiss in her Life; but a boisterousness attended her Zeal for GOD, whom I believe she really loves.

I met in band at Deptford with Mr. Joyce, a zealous loving Person, who has long counted himself perfect. he said, Satan brought the figure of a naked Woman to tempt him every Night; but on his praying, it disappeared; & a round Light, above a foot Diameter, then appear'd till he fell asleep. I have seen no evil in him, except it were his desiring me to make interest with Lady Huntingdon, to get him the Place of Master Sailmaker in Deptford Yard; because of the great good a perfect Man might do with such a Salary.

The remaining six are in London.

Mrs Crosby³⁵⁷ was desired to talk with me, on account of her eminence among the Perfect, when I had experienced & lost what is call'd Perfection: but being unable to speak of any thing above what I knew, she fled from me soon after in the Chapel, & refus'd to visit my Sister Leadbetter any more; lest I sh:^d bring her to a 2:^d Interview.

I think it improper to name the next young Woman; who had not long declared herself perfect; when she desired me to give 2 Shil:s [shillings] on her account to another; for she had no change, & w:^d return it the next time we met. I did so, & often saw her afterwards without receiving it: whereupon I said at last, "I gave what you desired me." "No, said she, for I gave it myself." wherefore I went again to the Person in distress; who denying the matter, I returned to the perfect one; who then said, "If I did not give her 2S:, I am sure I gave one." & so ended this trifling Affair. I made no reply; but co:^d never since think her perf:t, tho' probably justified.

Mrs. Clay You are no Stranger to: I bro.^t you her promise, at Everton,³⁵⁸ to speak no more against the Work of GOD which was carried on thro' your Ministry; but meeting with her afterwards at Bedford, she disputed ½ an Hour against it.

Mr Bell³⁵⁹ coming to tell me his Perfection, the Day after your L:r which favours that Doctrine came to hand, I credited his assertion, sought the same, & hearing you was at

³⁵⁷ Sarah Crosby (1729-1804). Born in Leeds, Yorkshire. Little is known of Crosby's early life before her conversion to Methodism in October 1749. Initially inclined towards Calvinism, she changed her doctrinal position after hearing John Wesley preach. In 1750, at about the time of her marriage, she joined the Foundery society in London and was a class leader by 1752.

Crosby appears to have been deserted by her husband in about 1757 although details are vague. After the failure of the relationship, she shared accommodation with other female Methodists in the vicinity of the Foundery.

In January 1761 Crosby moved to Derby and commenced a preaching ministry, one of the earliest Methodist women to do so (see also under Mary Bosanquet). She returned to London in April 1761 and by the middle of the decade, had joined the Methodist community established by Mary Bosanquet and Sarah Ryan. In 1768 she moved with the community to Morley near Leeds, where she exercised an extensive and varied ministry that including preaching and acting as a spiritual mentor for both men and women. In 1777 for example, she recalled riding nearly a thousand miles to speak at 220 public meetings and 600 private meetings.

After Bosanquet moved from Yorkshire in 1781, Crosby relocated to Leeds, where she shared lodgings with the Methodist Ann Tripp. She continued her ministry until a week before her death in October 1804. (Principal source: DNB; Lewis, *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*)

³⁵⁸ The parish of Everton in Bedfordshire, where Berridge was the Anglican priest

³⁵⁹ George Bell (d.1807): Born at Boringham in County Durham, Bell served for a time in the Life Guards regiment of the British army. He was converted in 1758 while living in London and quickly gained a reputation at the Foundery for holiness and

London, wrote a Line to let you know thereof. but have since had sufficient cause to think him less conscientious than I ever found him before. but as he was always ready to imbibe some new notion, I hope his Faith will overcome this, even as it has the rest.

Mr. Wake, of the Life Guards, whom I always tho:^t a well meaning honest Man, has told me, That his Perfection is compleat with regard to his Body, but his Mind still roves from GOD. & he fear'd it was wrong to speak thus freely to me; [lest] being weak, I might stumble at his Acknowledgement.

Mr. Langshaw, a Stranger whom I met one Hour in Band, seems fill'd with Love & Zeal, just as John Keeling was, & calls himself perfect: which I dare not gainsay.

I can recollect no more Persons whom I have had any particular knowledge of, while counting themselves perfect; & I will not relate any thing by hearsay. GOD give you discernment to set me right, if this L.^r be wrong. I receiv'd much benefit by yours of March 23:^d; & so have some of my Friends, especially Mr. & Mrs. Swain: but your allowing Perfection, has caus'd me to write all the foregoing Thoughts upon it.

O, may GOD give me such Perfection as chiefly consists in the height of Love, evidently seen in Mrs. Hardwick, & the depth of Humility, evidently seen in Mr. Fletcher!³⁶⁰ yet these declare themselves poor Sinners; & utterly disclaim Perfection,

powerful extempore prayers. Wesley believed that Bell possessed the power to heal but grew uncertain about his other rather extravagant claims. He left Methodism in 1763 after his prophecy that the world would end on February 28, caused considerable hysteria in London (Principal source: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974)

³⁶⁰ John Fletcher (1729-85): Born in Nyon, Switzerland, the youngest of eight children, Fletcher studied classics at Geneva and after a short-lived attempt at a career in the military, arrived in England in 1750. He worked as a tutor to the two sons of Sir Thomas Hill of Shropshire and started attending Methodist worship in 1753. Fletcher was converted in January 1754 and his talents and saintly character quickly brought him to the attention of the Wesley brothers.

Fletcher was ordained into the Anglican ministry in March 1757 and was appointed curate of Madeley in Shropshire, serving as Vicar from 1760. As far as his parish responsibilities allowed, Fletcher assisted the Methodists during visits to London. He was also closely connected to other non-Wesleyan branches of the evangelical movement and served as a chaplain to the Countess of Huntingdon.

The Wesleys held Fletcher in very high regard. As early as 1761 it was proposed that he become their designated successor as leader of the Methodist movement and this remained John Wesley's hope, periodically expressed, until Fletcher's early death. Physically fragile and of a retiring nature, Fletcher was loath to commit himself to a prominent role, although in his later years he did show more inclination to travel in support of the Methodists. In the early 1770s, Fletcher played a significant (albeit reluctant) role in support of the Wesleys in their public doctrinal controversy with the Calvinists.

tho' not the Doctrine. I strive to know the Trees, my dear Friend, by their Fruit: for Discernment is a useful part of Xtianity.

The Lord guide you by his holy Spirit, & suffer not your Thoughts to err.”

“I am your affectionate Brother, in the Hope set before us,”

“J: W:”

this Letter had such an effect of Mr. Berridge, that he has ever since opposed the Doctrine of Perfection. alas, alas!

I will now turn back to the year 1757. The fear of GOD prevented me from saying I was perfect, but evil was far away, & GOD continually with me. once indeed I felt, in process of time, upon a great Provocation, that anger was yet in me, & at the end of 14 Months, perceiv'd the same again: but in respect of my besetting Sin, it seem'd as totally foreign to me as to an Angel of GOD; nor was the Lord ever, that I know of, absent from me or out of my Thoughts, & I wonder'd exceedingly that my Brethren who had known the Lord longer, did not rejoice in him as I did. for none could I find, no not even among the Boasters of Perfection, who know any thing of my Joy. wherefore I would put them in Mind of such Scriptures as this, “Let the Inhabitants of the Rock sing; let them shout for joy from the tops of the Mountains.” my talking thus would amaze them, & make them stare, as if they thought me distracted. but still I tho.^t, they might rejoice if they pleas'd even as I, because they were also Believers. Nothing more delighted me than the seeming Extirpation of my besetting Sin: a strong Temptation to which, began its Assault in July 1759. the Waters roar'd amain, the Fires flamed exceedingly: but none could come near enough to touch me. a little Presumption may have made me say, like our present Perfectionists, “Satan comes indeed, but finds nothing in me.” thus I went on to the middle of February, 1760 when all things conspired to cast me down from the Mount of GOD. but rather would I have parted from Life itself than my great Blessedness, I never ceased from watching & praying, I was free to my thinking from the very Shadow of Sin, & went about doing good with all my might, even at the frequent hazard of my Life, & to this very Day, the Lord has not shown me that ever I was remiss in following him; yet in effect, he then said unto me, “Go, thou down also & possess the Sins of thy Youth. I give thy besetting Sin dominion over thee, & thou shalt desire, but not enjoy it.” such has

As a parish priest and pastor, Fletcher was regarded as a role model. The purity of his character and devotion to his parishioners overcame early suspicion of his high Christian standards. He introduced informal worship on Methodist lines but centred on complete devotion to the Church of England. He helped to found day schools and Sunday schools and was tireless in visiting the sick and needy. From 1781 his ministry was shared with his wife the famous woman preacher Mary Bosanquet and she continued the work after his death.

Fletcher's most enduring legacy has been in his interpretation of theology. His arguments regarding Christian perfection and the baptism of the Spirit have been very influential in the development of holiness theology particularly in the American Pentecostal movement. (Principal source: DNB and Lewis)

indeed been my lot: for on the 19th, Sin & Temptation, like two mighty Robbers, while I resisted even unto blood, prevail'd against me; & have ever since trampled me under foot; but as I have never committed any wilful Sin, I cannot say that I have ever since fallen into any Condemnation. yet has my Warfare been astonishingly great, nothing of the kind perhaps being more bitter than my Temptations, & nothing sweeter than my Consolations. Take one Instance, of the latter.

“August 4, 1760. Being alone in my House at Knightsbridge, I was inexpressibly harrass'd with my besetting Temptation this Afternoon, running up Stairs & down as if distracted, & praying in vain to be deliver'd from corrupt Desire, till I fell into a kind of Despair, & could say little more than this, “Lord, if I perish, be it at thy feet.” I c.d hardly reach West Street at the Chapel time; where the Sermon, as customary, proved a dead Letter to me: the Temptation however ended with it; & I wonder'd at my resembling so lately an incarnate Devil. but when the 2 last Lines of the Hymn, were sung, at least that I heard, as follows,

“Thy Warfare's past, thy Mourning's o'er,
“Look up, for thou shalt weep no more.”

to the best of my remembrance I heard only this, “_____ Mourning's o'er,

“Look up, for thou shalt weep no more.”

& instantly lifting up my Soul in strong Hope, I wish'd for the repetition of those Lines; but when sung again, could only hear, “_____ Thy Warfare o'er,
“Look up, for thou shalt weep no more.”

but O, what joy did I then feel! & what a visionary Scene appear'd to the Eye of my Soul! for it seem'd as if I saw myself lying on a Death Bed, & heard & saw the Almighty speaking to me from a Cloud, & filling my Soul with as strong Assurance, as if he had even sworn by himself to me,

“_____ Thy Warfare o'er,
Look up, for thou shalt weep no more.”

the first Impression caus'd me to weep with a small audible Cry: then I lean'd along, for some Minutes, while the Tears of gladness ran down my face, & I trembled much; for the same gracious Words & appearance, tho' lessening by degrees, long visited my Soul: & I co:d scarce describe it with dry Eyes, till next Day. _____ I then counted it as firm a Promise to me from the Lord, as the following Promise from the Angel was to Daniel,: “_____ thou shalt rest, & stand in thy lot at the end of the Days.” I believe also, from hence, that my Temptations & Trials will not entirely cease, till I am going to expire.

Such being my general Experience, I consider'd it altoge:r [?], even from my Justification, & Wrote these verses thereupon, Sept:^r 19, 1760.

O, that I now could show thy peaceful ways,
And speak the Wonders of Redeeming Grace!
But Language fails, & utt'rance melts away,

Before the Blaze of this my Gospel Day.
O King of Glory, stoopest thou to shine,
On such vile Earth, & such a Soul as mine!
I know, I feel, thy precious Blood apply'd:
For me the great Jehovah bled & died!
No guilty Weight my Conscience longer feels:
I still am sprinkled, & the Blood still heals.
O, matchless Love, my trembling Soul to save,
And bid me triumph o'er the dreaded Grave!
If here thou lead, along the narrow Way,
And after bring me to the Realms of Day,
I'll sing thy Praises in the Courts above;
The boundless Mansions of eternal Love;
Where thy dear Saints, in blest communion sing
The ceaseless Triumphs of their glorious King;
Beholding & resembling what thou art;
Thou, from whose Presence I shall not depart,
But all the Heaven of Heavens be round me spread,
And everlasting Joy upon my head!
Glory to GOD on high, my Song shall be,
And, glory to the Lamb, who died for me.

September 18, 1760. I went from Knightsbridge to live at Edgware.

December 31. I dream'd of going round Mr Whitefield's Gallery at Tot'nam Court,³⁶¹ feeling great love to him & the People, & praying for them with strong joy. this very Dream I was favour'd with several preceding Nights. wherefore I cast away my Prejudice, & heard him the next Day with a good Will. and indeed it was time I should, tho' I knew it not, as the Preaching at West Street was much altered, & the Shechinah would no more visit me while his Word was preach'd in that Temple, except once while Mr John Jones³⁶² cried out, "O Death, where is thy Sting &c"

January 14, 1761. I heard that Mr. Berridge was perswaded to believe the Doctrine of Perfection at last Sunday's Love Feast.

February 25. The Men Bands at West Street were a greater number than usual, & disputed much about Perfection; which I counted a false Doctrine, founded on

³⁶¹ George Whitefield's chapel in Tottenham Court Road, built in 1756.

³⁶² John Jones (1721–85). Born in Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, Jones was educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Oxford, and qualified as a doctor of medicine in 1745. Initially under the influence of Howell Harris and the Countess of Huntingdon, he began to preach at the Foundery in 1746 and almost immediately occupied an important part in John Wesley's plans. From 1748 to 1758 Jones was the first headmaster of the newly established Kingswood School and later took charge of Methodist Societies in Bristol and Cornwall before moving to London as Wesley's chief assistant in the capital. Jones left the itinerancy in 1768, was ordained into the Anglican ministry, and ended his days as Vicar of Harwich. Jones's wife Sarah, the former Miss Perrin, was an early female exhorter and a close friend of Charles Wesley. (Principal source: Lewis. *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*)

spiritual Pride. they who pleaded for it were many, & show'd much warmth; their Opponents were few & cool: only Mr. Bell spoke with vehemence against it. March 5. I dream'd of hearing a large Company sing Hymns in the open Air, unintelligibly wherefore I went from them, & cried to the Lord, "O, let me hear thy Voice & live!" my joy was then great before him, & while I utter'd some other Ejaculations.

April 24. I rejoic'd in the Lord greatly, while walking thro' Hide Park³⁶³ & shunning the common Track. I felt a Deliverance from the whole propensity to Sin, as common in such Visitations, praised the Lord with great thankfulness, & vehemently besought him to hasten the Day of Judgment; which has been for some years the most earnest & frequent of all my Petitions.

April 26. I heard 2 Sermons at West Street, maintaining the Doctrine of Perfection; moreover the generality of the Methodists I convers'd with are of that opinion; all which co:d not alter mine, Of a Propensity to Sin being felt by the greatest Saints on Earth, at one time or other, when strongly tempted to their old Besetting Sin. yet have I been long acquainted with the perf.t love of GOD at intervals; to whom I can truly say, "Lord, I am Thine; & on thy side thou King of Glory."

July 4, 1761. Mr Bell who call'd himself perfect, being abroad, I sat in his House meditating; & after desiring the Lord to show me his true State, open'd a Bible, & cast my Eye first on, 2 Chron:25,2: "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart." about which time, (on account of my saying, neither him nor any other call'd perfect, appear'd to have so much of the mind that was in Xt. as Mrs. Hardwick &c.) he went abruptly from me, & when we met again, said, he w.d have spoke to me no more, if the Lord had not bid him receive me as a Brother.

July 5. While Mr Neal preach'd at West Street, I tho:t several justified; especially one who sat next me: but he said, He was justified before, & now made perfect; because he had wept with extreme Joy, as I have done 1,00 times; tho' without presuming to call myself perfect, or any thing better than a Dog or Swine. I was told by Mr. Bowen & Amos Copeland that their hearts were clean; the former in a Week after Justification. I went this Evening to Mr. Bell's Assembly by Grosvenor Square, & felt a strange overcoming power, without any Joy, while he pray'd that GOD w.d make me perfect.

July 7. Having kept some time from Totnam Court, on account of Mr. Whitefield's Illness, & my great dislike to Mr. Davis, I forget by what means I was induced to go this Evening; where I heard Mr. Davis a full Hour on, "- Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." & at the close, while I was in great heaviness, he strongly declared the Faithfulness of GOD; to whom I lifted up this Prayer, "Heaven & Earth, I believe, shall pass away; but not one jot of thy Word. O speak to me! bid me live for ever. let me be glad in thy Love to all Eternity for Jesus' sake." Immediately the Preacher cried out, "Heaven & Earth shall pass away, but not 1 jot of his Word. & can he give thee up? no: for he hath loved thee with an everlastg Love." all which the Lord applying, I trembled & wept with great joy, & strong assurance of his everlasting Love. This reconciled me to Mr Davis, & so fully put an end to my

³⁶³ Hyde Park, London

Bigotry, that I have gone ever since with equal readiness, to Tot'nam Court as West Street.

July 9. Out of 8 Men, with whom I met in private Band, 6 declared they had clean hearts; & the chief of them, Mr. Langshaw, to whom I said, "Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall: & be not high minded but fear." tho' he seem'd to like these, & most of my Words, call'd me afterwards in his Prayer, An Advocate for the Devil. & likewise bro.^t Accusations against Mr. Vardin, the Leader, who had no otherwise contradicted him than by recommending Caution.

July 12. Rec:^d the Sacr^t at W: Street, & heard Mr. Maxfield;³⁶⁴ who confidently said, to me & all such, "O Fools, & slow of heart." I heard Mr. Maddan³⁶⁵ at the Lock³⁶⁶ this Afternoon, 58 Min:^s, on, "Because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, he

³⁶⁴ Thomas Maxfield (d. 1784). Born in Bristol, Maxfield was converted in 1739 by George Whitefield and acted as a sub-pastor to Wesley before moving to London, where he was active at the Foundery. In 1741 he became one of the first Methodist lay preachers and for many years remained high in Wesley's estimation. Maxfield broke from the Methodists in 1763 over his alleged sympathy for the views of the visionary preacher George Bell. There was some talk of reunion in later years, and John Wesley preached in Maxfield's independent chapel in London. Despite this rapprochement, the division between them remained permanent. (Principal sources: *DNB*; Lenton; Lewis.)

³⁶⁵ Martin Madan (1725-1790). Born in London, the son of Colonel Martin Madan and his wife Judith, daughter of Judge Spencer Cowper. Madan was a cousin of the poet and hymn writer William Cowper (1731-1800) and the older brother of Spencer Madan, bishop of Peterborough (1729-1813).

Madan was educated at Westminster School and Christ Church Oxford and was called to the bar from the Inner Temple in 1748. After hearing John Wesley preach, Madan experienced an evangelical conversion and was ordained into the Anglican ministry with the help of the Countess of Huntingdon. In 1750 he was appointed to All Hallows Lombard Street, London, and to the chaplaincy of the Lock Hospital, where his preaching ministry proved so popular that a new chapel was built in 1762. Madan also travelled as an evangelist in support of the Countess of Huntingdon. His doctrinal leanings were Calvinist, but he maintained friendly relations with the Wesley brothers.

Madan was a gifted musician and organised well-attended annual oratorios at the Lock Hospital. In 1760 he published a collection of psalms and hymns, which went through thirteen editions by 1794.

Madan was involved in deep controversy in 1780 with the publication of his book *Thelyphthora*, which advocated the social benefits of polygamy. The uproar that followed publication forced Madan's resignation from the Lock Hospital chaplaincy and retirement from public ministry. (Principal source: *DNB*.)

³⁶⁶ Lock Hospital, Grosvenor Place, London. The hospital, which opened in 1747, was the first venereal disease clinic. The evangelical Anglican Martin Madan served as chaplain

hath also rejected thee from being King." I rejoic'd in the Lord several times; especially when he said, "He that toucheth You [...] toucheth the Apple of his Eye."

July 21. Mr Davis was in his Sermon when I came to Tot'nam Court, on, "My Grace is sufficient for thee." wherein he sharply preach'd against the Doctrine of Perfection, calling it the greatest Blasphemy that he knew. The Word came with power; & I felt the Lord's Presence from first to last, removing from my Soul a great weight of Distrust & Anxiety. my Rejoicings were so frequent, & so many Words applied, that it w.^d be tedious to write them. none came with so great energy as these, "Fear not thou Worm Jacob." I then so wept & trembled that several Eyes were upon me.

July 22. I waked with a Headach, probably from last nights Joy in the Holy Ghost a Joy which several of my West Street Brethren once vilify'd, entitling it a Frame & Feeling: but now in the Pride of their Wisdom, call even a little degree of it Perfect:ⁿ

July 27. With full confidence in my GOD, I went to Reading as Lieutenant of a Press Gang.

September 27, 1761. I rece.d a Letter from Mr Bell, lamenting my Imperfection. wherefore I wrote thus to him the next Day.

"My dear Brother,

You seem jealous for the Salvation of my Soul; & I thank You. The tokens of Inspiration are in your L:r; by which I know your Soul must be alive to GOD: for whose honour I am jealous on your account: my own Ears having heard you say, first, that you was perfect: then that you co:d not fall from your perfect State unless GOD himself co:d fall from his Throne. whereas I have pass'd thro' that delightful State wherein you now are, & of which you presume to boast, but am safely bro:t down, by the mighty Workings of the Holy Ghost, into the deep Vale of Humiliation; where I see distinctly, That you & I, tho' X:t be formed in us, are no better than dead Dogs by Nature; nor any more holy after the Flesh than the Fish of the Sea or Fowls of Heaven. I surely dwell in a Body of Death & Corruption even as they: nor is your Body better than Dust & Ashes. The Body of X:t was perfect indeed, & therefore co:d not see Corruption: but is your Soul united to such a Body? or do you not lie with a Woman to this Day, because your Flesh lusteth against your Spirit? Even a poor Heathen, Alexander the great, co:d tell his Flatterers, "I am surely no GOD, because I bled like a mortal Man when wounded; & because I desire Women." You must likewise acknowledge, that you are not changed into the clean, the holy nature of GOD, whose Dwelling is not with Flesh; or must deny that you desire your Wife when you lie with her. I doubt not but your Body is a Temple of the living GOD, as I know that my own is: & yet we must see Corruption; having dead Bodies already in GOD's account, because of Sin; that original Leprosy, which is diffused thro' all Creatures under the Sun, so long as they remain embodied. but I doubt not that you & I shall be clean at last, when taken away from the Body, & carried up to the Company of Spirits of just Men made perfect. ____ &c. &c. &c. ____ I doubt not my dear Friend, of our taking sweet council together again, if GOD prolong my Days; which I sometimes think are short'ning apace. One Scripture Sign of them that believe, is this, "If they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them." why not? "Because underneath us are the everlasting Arms." You have certainly drank a large Draught of spiritual

Pride; but the Lord will not let you fall, I verily believe, nor even be hurt when the Temptation is past. You perceive it not now, because rejoicing in your first Love; the time of the Gladness of your heart. My own Espousals to X:t, or the Celebration of them rather, continued about 3 years, & I had the same power over Sin as you have. O that our Bro:r Moss, or some other, who has been upon the Mount like me, & is come down again as I am, had such a zeal for the Truth, if not love to a fellow Disciple, as to glorify GOD by declaring freely, "That there is none good upon Earth but one; that is GOD." Isaiah says, "He will carry the Lambs in his Bosom." & again, "Whom shall he teach Doctrine? Them that are weaned from the Breasts." You are now a Babe in X:t; & must be wean'd, as I have been, which is a grievous Warfare, before you will understand the true, the lowly Doctrine, Of every Man being abominable by his nature & not one being ever made perfect upon Earth."

"The Lord enlighten more & more, both you, & your ever affectionate Brother, in the glorious Gospel," J: W:

"P.S. My love to our Brethren of the Guards:³⁶⁷ advise them to rejoice with trembling. I cannot find time to write all I would, & have scribbled over this upon a Common 5 miles from Reading. You cannot imagine the number & greatness of my Worldly Trials: I have lain all Ni:t in a Field; I have had a Town full of People rise up to destroy me; I have run as great risks in my strange Employment, as some Men run in the service of GOD; I have often gone at the hazard of my Life, in Sickness & bad Weather, to perpetrate what I approve not: & as to the Man I am connected with, it may be truly said, "The best of them is as a Brier." & almost all other Men have declared a kind of civil War against me. Where w.d your Perfection be in such Temptations as mine? I have Fightings without, & Fears within: but the Grace of GOD has hitherto been sufficient for me, & made me more than Conqueror over the World, the Flesh, & the Devil."

November 30. I return'd to London: having been hurt by nothing but my Besetting Temptation; which continued to increase upon me.

January 12, 1762. By Mr Berridge's desire, I bro:t Mr Bell to converse with him at Mr Whitefield's in Tot'nam Court Road: where I said little, for my own part, except the same observation which Mr Berridge made, That Mr Bell had then something dismal & shocking in his face, which indeed I had observ'd ever since March 27, 1761. when he first told me that he was perfect, whereas he had a remarkably good look before. what he now chiefly said was, That GOD had given him the Gift of healing, which he had already practiced, & of raising the Dead, which he should perform in GOD's time, That the Millennium was begun, & he sh.d never die, That he and several other Men had seen Satan bound & cast into the bottomless Pit, & the Angel had set a Seal upon him that he sh.d not come out to deceive the Nations: & that all Mr Berridge's excellent observations did not at all shake his confidence of these things. & indeed his whole Deportment, Calmness & Assurance, wrought so much upon me, that I had thots of asking him to heal my Mother; who was astmatic; & sh:d probably have credited all he said, for I had imbibed the Doctrine of Perfection a few Days before, if the Lord had not bro:t to my Remembrance a tedious & bitter Delusion, showing me withal, how mightily Satan was permitted in those Days to deceive the truly religious,

³⁶⁷ Bell had served in the Life Guards regiment of the British army

by appearing as an Angel of Light: wherefore I rejected once more the whole Doctrine of Perfection. as to the Impressions which from time to time, for the space of 5 years, I had believ'd to come from GOD, every one, I think, did really prove to be from him; except the Delusion I have just hinted: which added much to the affliction of my Soul.

February 17, 1762. A Man at West Street Bands declared he had been made perfect by Mr. Bell's laying his hand upon him. & on the 23:^d much the same thing befell me: wherefore on the 26th your Brother had S.S.³⁶⁸ put upon my Ticket.

February 27. I made little doubt of my being perfect till this Afternoon, when I co:d not tell whether I felt Anger or no at the ignorance of another perfect Man.

March 4. After dreaming of idolatrous Temptations, the Dream concluded with my praying to GOD, & I rejoiced in him so greatly that I awoke, upon repeating these Words,

“Repos'd in those Elysian Seats,
Where Jonathan his David meets:”
“There, where no Frosts our Spring annoy,
Shalt thou alone my love enjoy.”

March 20. I rejoic'd before the Lord a considerable time, in a Dream, with this & other triumphant Expressions, “Thou givest me here thy hidden Manna: wilt thou not give me hereafter the Morning Star.”

March 23. I wrote the following L^r to M.r Berridge.

“Dear Sir.

Being sorely distrest in spirit, the 22:d of last Month, I wrote the following verses:

Where, O almighty GOD, shall I find rest,
If thou no longer wilt inspire my Breast?
Faithful & true, where is thy Spirit flown?
And thy rich mercy, oft to me made known?
Why can I now no more prevail with thee?
Ah, why this Hiding of thy face from me?
How, from the daz'ling height of Happiness,
How am I fallen into deep distress?
O raise me up again, my Soul restore,
Let Soul & Body feel thy quick'ning Power!
Now as of old thy Goodness let me see:
Come Holy Ghost, thou well-known GOD, to me!
Still condescend my longing Soul to meet:
Come Holy Ghost, eternal Paraclete:
Still to my heart the Blood of Jesus bring;
Thy precious Blood, O Salem's peaceful King!
Ransom'd by thee from all the guilt of Sin,
But still defil'd & longing to be clean,”

³⁶⁸ Select Society

“Come that I may from all its power be freed:
Come, O my GOD, & make me free indeed!

Mr. Bell came the next Evening unexpectedly, & said, “Well, now let us pray together; & neither of you (for my Mother was present) resist the Spirit of the Lord.” he then pray’d, & I when he had done, but all seem’d unaffected: we then stood up, & he sung several verses; which I remember not, tho’ some were significant of my Name being written in the Lamb’s Book of Life: & on hearing those, I felt a Palpitation at the bottom of my Stomach, & a small giddiness in my Head; the Lord also gave me his peace at the same time. & Mr. Bell after singing, ask’d my Mother how she found herself; who reply’d, with Tears of joy in her Eyes, “Ah, Mr. Bell, it w:d be a happy thing if one co:d be always thus.” he then put the same Question to me, & I told him what an additional Peace I had found: he then left us; & in a few min:s the Spirit of the Lord so abundantly fill’d me, that I sat down in an Elbow chair, pray’d silently for an entire deliverance from the power of Sin, breath’d short, & panted in the multitude of Peace from 7 o’clock till ¼ past 8. when I seem’d going to die suddenly, & that I might resist it if I w:d: but the presence of the Lord being delightful, I said, “Let me fear only thee.” and casting my care upon him, I felt as if Lightning, or a slower ethereal Flame, had been penetrating & rolling thro’ every Atom of my Body: which being past, I did not breathe so short as before; but found a sweet Composure, & ineffable Calmness of spirit. I then walk’d about the Room rejoicing, & seem’d to feel my Body so light, that I might choose whether to walk or fly. Such has been my unaccountable Experience; neither know I whether I have felt any Sin or not, either spiritual or bodily, from that Hour to this, only in Dreams. but think I have more than once; & w:d rather call myself the chief of Sinners than a perfect Xtian. How great is the Mystery of Godliness! O that you & I may continually be taught of GOD, and rejoice in his Highness World without end!”
“I am your affectionate Bro.r, in X:t,”

J: W:.

“P.S. On hearing Mr. Bell ano.r Ni:t, sing the verses he sung Feb.^y 23:d, I co:d recollect that the chief Lines which the Lord then applied to my Soul were these,

“Sing, O my Soul, for thou hast cause,
“Thine Enemy is slain:
“Thy Sin that late thy Burden was,
“No more may rule again.
“The holy Child the Virgin bore,
“Delights in thee to dwell:
“Sing, O my Soul, for thou no more
“Shalt be afraid of Hell.
“Its Sting, thy Sin, he takes away,
“The Law is disannull’d;
“Thy Pardon seal’d in endless Day,
“And there thy Name enroll’d.”

March 25. I rejoic’d before the Lord in a Dream, while desiring & expecting his great Day: some of my Words then were, “I know that thou lovest me with an everlasting Love.”

March 30, 1762. I took Mr. Bell & Mr. Bowen to see a Widow at Highgate; who was ... near Death, & almost despairing of Mercy. Mr. Bell ask'd her a few Questions, & bid her speak a few Words after him; she did so & was justified: the Holy Ghost coming at the same instant upon us all, & with such power that I cried for joy a considerable time.

April 10. After a mixture of Deliverance & Uncertainty for 46 Days, I now clearly perceiv'd my besetting Sin to remain where it formerly was, even in me. several other Persons call'd perfect, tho' not Mr. Bell, from time to time acknowledg'd themselves to be in some degree as I was: but what I call'd Sin, they counted Temptation

April 20. I dream'd of Lewdness, & of abhorring it; whereupon I rejoic'd immediately in the Lord, while uttering these unscriptural Words, "I turn to thee, O Lord, as the lov'd Flower to the Sun."

May 14. One Woman roar'd, & another cried out at W:³⁶⁹ Street Sacrament. but only once did I ever feel the Lord present at those Friday Meetings of the S.S. where often, according to my Judgment, I have heard flat Blasphemy; tho' I forget the particulars.

May 16. My Soul being distrest above measure, by my besetting Temptation, I heard Mr. Davis at Tot'nam Court, 52 min:s, on Micah 6, 5. I wept & shook, several times, with full assurance & Joy in the Lord, especially while those or like Words were spoken: "The Lord is thy Refuge." "There is no Enchantment against Jacob, nor Divination against Israel. "I know thou art ready sometimes to conclude, That a Curse is come upon thee, & that thy GOD will not visit thee any more. but thou wilt always find him a Covenant-keeping GOD, whose Love is everlasting. Satan may tell thee otherwise; but believe him not, for he is the Father of Lies. Recollect the past Favours of the Lord: knowest thou not that he who deliver'd thee out of the Paw of the Lion, will deliver the likewise from every accursed Philistine?"

May 19. Being distrest again, I heard Mr. Maddan, 55 Min:s, on Job 19.25,26,27. I rejoic'd in the Lord with great Sweetness, Tears, & shaking, while those Words were utter'd, concerning the beatified Vision, "And the Tears shall be wiped away from every Eye."

May 23. I dream'd of saying with a loud Voice, to a tempting Devil, "I am Christ's, & Christ is GOD's." to which he replied, "I know it well."

May 26. In W: Street Bands Mr. Jackson, who is call'd perfect, said, X:t cut himself open with a Knife, & put him into his Breast. Mr. John Jones disliked the Expression.

May 31. After 6 Hours disorder of Body, & sadness of Soul, I heard Mr. Davis at Tot'nam Court, 42 Min:s, on Romans 8,11. I rejoic'd a little most of the time with deep Humility, & once with great extacy, strong Assurance, Tears, & Shaking, while he utter'd these & like Words, "Fear not; march, go on; thy GOD shall go with thee thro' Fire & Water." so ended my Heaviness.

³⁶⁹ West

June 22. I sweetly rejoic'd in the Lord, while hearing Mr. Dyer at Tot'nam Court, 36 M.s, on Philip:s 1,2,3. towards the Conclusion, especially, when these & like Words were utter'd, "Believer, the Day of thine Espousals draws nigh. _____ And in that Day, GOD shall wipe all Tears from thine Eyes."

July 1. I wrote the following Letter to Mr. Berridge.

"Dear Sir.

I hope you receiv'd my L.r of March 23:^d; in which [...]ted the Deliverance GOD gave me from present Distress, after Mr. Bell had sung a few Verses: that Deliverance was not one Day compleat; & yet like Elijah's Cake, it proved a means of strengthening my Soul above 40 Days; at the end of which I became weak as afore time, & have ever since lusted as usual in my heart, with frequent murmurings against GOD.

You have receiv'd in a former L.r, some account of a much greater & more durable Blessing, tho' of the very same kind as that which I found after Mr. Bell's singing. & I co.d mention several other Visitations of GOD extremely different from either of those, & exceeding them in point of Sanctification as well as Joy in the Holy Ghost. but it w.d be tedious to rehearse them, & impossible to recollect them all. one of the first was on Sunday, May 22, 1757. in the Fields of Risley in Derbyshire: so great & sweet for about an Hour was my Joy in the Lord, that I co.d then compare my State to none but that of St. Paul when caught up into the 3d Heavens. O, how much did I then desire to be dissolv'd, & see my GOD without a Veil! but he gave me to understand, that his Grace w.d be sufficient for me while upon the Earth: & tho' I heard no Voice, nor saw any thing, I was well contented to wait for my appointed time; being fully assured that he spake such a Promise to me. & why did I not after this, & 1,00 of the like unutterably joyful Communion with GOD, cry out, He has made me perfect! the reason is plain: A Messenger of Satan was then, or about the same time, first sent to buffet me, 2 or 3 years, chiefly with Suicide; & afterwards a Thorn in the Flesh ___ which remains to this Day, & makes me seem to myself, a perfect Beast; as the former did a meer Devil. Thus are the Favours of GOD always guarded to me, & from time to time he breaks the Pride of my heart in pieces.

Now I will tell you what I think of all who count themselves perfect. They have tasted something of divine Joy; but neither been used to it, nor felt it a 10th part so strongly or ineffably as I have. They are neither buffeted by Satan, nor have a Thorn in their Flesh like me; but are absolutely at ease in Sion. Pleasing as that State is, I believe it lays the Soul open to the greatest Snare of Satan, which is spiritual Pride. Alas for me! that very State would be my choice, if I did not fear GOD: who has led me thro' many a terrible fiery Furnace, into none of which am I ever willing to enter. and of all the Gospel Ministers, none has been a means of such blessing to my weary Soul as the Rev.^d M.^r Davis; who speaks most of them all to the real Saints that are tempted, & afflicted, tossed with Tempests, & not comforted." ___ &c&c&c"

J.W

July 11th. I felt evil Desire at the Table, just before Mr Dyer & Green gave me the Sacrament; which was the first I ever rece.d at Tot'nam Court Chapel. I look'd up to

GOD, & took it with these Words, "Yet will I cast my Soul on thee." I rejoic'd in the Lord after it for 10 minutes, with shaking & wat'ry Eyes.

July 16. I rece.d a L:r from M.^r Berridge. a small part of which follows.

"Dear Sir,

I rece.d your L:r of July 1. & a former of March 2 which I returned no answer, because I know not how to speak or write to perfect People, & therefore avoid Correspondence with them. Many things I saw in them, when at London, which griev'd me much; & many things here in the Country which have griev'd me more: Such Pride! Such Boasting! Such Censoriousness! Such Contempt of others!

But what is mighty strange, these perfect People still talk of growing. If they are really perfect, what can be lacking, except to continue in that State? As far as I can discern, they are

"unwittingly growing or grown out of Xt. They apply to the Lord for Grace by Prayer & Faith, & Grace is obtain'd: with this Stock they set up, & trade against the Redeemer; not seeking, as Paul says, to be presented perfect in Xt; Colos:1,28. but to be presented perfect in themselves." &c &c."

J.B:.

July 29. M.^r Bell & Bowen spake, & pray'd, as if I had not been justified.

July 30. I dream'd of triumphing in the Favour of GOD; & remember to have repeated these Words in my Dream, "Let the Saints shout for joy; let them sing aloud upon their Beds."

Now, Sir, if you desire to know the present & general state of my Soul, it is in my Judgment, "Suffering & Temptations." if the Opinion I have now, & at most times, of myself, I cannot express it more truly than by these few, which are my favourite Words to GOD & Man,

"Behold, I am vile.

As to the Papers, treat them as you please: you have the free consent of

Your affectionate Brother, in Christ,

John Walsh

August 15, 1762.

Reference: EMV/501/135

Date: 23 June 1763

Correspondent: Josiah Dornford³⁷⁰
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Location: London
Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
“Watts’ death June 23 1763”

Rev.^d & Dear Sir,

My late dear Friend M^r Watts when I first knew him about Twelve Years ago’ was as the generality of the Men of the World are, he was naturally of a Facetious turn of mind and fond of Company and I think I have heard him say he was guilty of almost every Sin except murther, he married a First Cousin of mine of whom he was extremely fond, who died in the Flower of her Age after they had been married a very little time; he had one only Brother who likewise liv’d with him whom God took away just within a few Days of his Wife – him he dearly loved for they liv’d together as I would wish all Brothers did. God having now shipwreck’d a[ll] his happiness here, he now began to be in deep [con]cern about his Soul and to search for happiness ab[ove] and he did not long seek in vain the Lord gave hi[m] many tokens of his love – but he was naturally what we call a fearing doubting Xtian he was extremely diligent in the means and tho’ he was very weakly, he would rise in the Morning in the midst of Winter and walk from Temple Barr to the Foundery, M^r Romoins³⁷¹

³⁷⁰ Sir Josiah Dornford (1734-1810) of Deptford, Kent, was a member of the Court of Common Council of the city of London and the author of several pamphlets on civic affairs and the reform of debtors’ prisons. He also served for many years as a Justice of the Peace for the County of Kent. His second wife Esther, whom he married in August 1791, was the widow of Thomas Thomason, whose son by her first marriage was the famous missionary Thomas Thomason. Both Dornford and his wife were friends of the female evangelist Mary Fletcher and Josiah corresponded with Charles Wesley (*Gentleman's Magazine* 1810, vol.108, 389, International Geneological Index, Fletcher-Tooth collection (MARC), *Dictionary of National Biography* under Joseph and Josiah Dornford and Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses* (1891)

³⁷¹ William Romaine (1714-95) was born at Hartlepool, County Durham, the son of a corn merchant of French Protestant ancestry. Romaine was educated at Houghton-le-Spring Grammar School and Christ Church Oxford, where Charles Wesley was a tutor. Romaine was ordained into the Anglican priesthood in 1738 and at first served as a curate in Surrey. In 1739 he engaged in a bitter controversy concerning the views of William Warburton, part of which dispute found its way into the press. In 1741 Romaine was appointed chaplain to the Lord Mayor of London. He underwent an evangelical conversion in about 1748 and the following year was appointed afternoon lecturer at St Dunstan-in-the-West. Romaine used this opportunity to preach evangelical doctrine to large crowds despite the opposition of church officials. He was soon generally acknowledged to be the principal preacher in the capital and in 1750 was afforded a further opportunity to evangelise, when he was appointed assistant morning preacher at fashionable St George’s Church in the West End of London. In 1751 he also accepted for a short period the professorship of astronomy at Gresham College.

preaching I have heard him say was very useful to him, and he attained by degrees (not all at once) to the assurance of Faith, he was very much tempted and had many spiritual combats with the enemy of Souls during his last Illness which was long and grievous being many months and his Body being afflicted and wasted away with Scorbutick Sores & Ulcers, no one I believe ever heard him complain, he was a pattern of Invincible patience and modesty he always thought he deserved infinitely more than what he sufferd and when I saw him a few days before his Death he lay as I would wish in my last hours, quite resign'd to the will of God in patience he possess'd his Soul. he repeated that whole Verse in Job. I know that my Redeemer liveth &c: with holy confidence & Joy and he said he long'd to be dissolved and to be with Christ, and feared to have ofended because he longed to be gone, a few days before he died all his pains were amazingly taken away, and he retained his Senses to the last a few minutes before he died one Brother that was with him ask'd him if he had power to look up and he reply'd Yes louder than ordinary, and his lips kept going till he expired; I would mention one thing more of him which is he was the fondest of the Bible I think I ever saw a man, he seldom going out without it in his Pocket, he always strove to speak in a truly Scriptural manner and was of a most forbearing disposition.

I am dear Sir,
with [a]ll Dutiful Respect
Yours Affectionately,
Pray excuse haste

Jos: Dornford

Reference: EMV/501/136

Date: May 1742

Correspondent: Joan Webb

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Joan Webb's exp'ce May 1742"

From 1756 Romaine served as a curate and morning preacher at St Olave's in Southwark while retaining his position at St Dunstan's. He also exercised an itinerant ministry, preaching as far afield as Yorkshire and the West Country, and served as one of the Countess of Huntingdon's chaplains. In 1766, following a long dispute concerning his election, he was finally allowed to take up a position as the Rector of St Anne's, Blackfriars. For fourteen years Romaine was the only beneficed evangelical in the city and his parish was a focus for evangelical activity, attracting large congregations. In addition to his ministry, and place after Whitefield as the leading Anglican exponent of Calvinism, Romaine was an important Hebrew scholar. He published a four volume revision of Marios de Calasio's Hebrew dictionary and concordance between 1747 and 1749 (*Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*, edited by Donald Lewis (1995)

2. "Joan Webb's May 1742"

Reverend Sir I Was one that allways Live'd A sober Life I kept to my church and sacrament every Sunday for Som time I had strong desiers to serve God but I was often terified at the thoughts of Death I had to text of Scriptuers that often came to my mind one was he that keepeth the Whole Law and offendeth in one point is Gilty of all the other was perfect Love casteth out all fear and I thought I had not that perfect Love which made me often to fear then I thought to pray – more and oftener for I was very desierous to Love God A Little after that M^r Whightfield came to town and I went and heard him but was not awakend as yett my Husband att that time Left me and I was in Great trouble one day I opened the Bible and where I opened I read which was Isaiah the 41 and from vers the 8th to vers the 15th I found great comfort in those versis I did not know that I was to aply the promises to my self I had then some hope that God would bring me out of all my trouble the first time I went to church after my trouble the tex was the Last vers of 54th chap of Isaiah I felt the words but did not know that it was from God my heart was soft with weeping I after came to hear M^r John Wesley he put it very close to us whether we did Love God I thought I could then make answer is surely for I had took Great care to Live a sober Life but I thought how should I be suer that I did Love God then he said that some of you will say how shall we know if we Love God he said that it was as easie to know as to know whether we was hott or cold I thought it was not he said if we Love^d one ~~one~~ man or woman better then another we must certainly know it I then thought did not I Love my husband better then God I was willing to put it of and thought it was my Duty I heard him again and was fully convinced that I did not Love God which was a sore burthen to me I was so griev[d] with the thoughts of not Loveing God that my other troble abated I had then sweet drawings I often heard the Word and one time M^r Wesley expounding upon these words he that is born of God doth not commit sin I thought as mikodemas did how can these things be for I thought the best Christians did sin while they Live^d here I was carefull in hearing and it was made very plain to me that he that was born of God might live without sin it was great things to me but I thought nothing was imposable with God I was taken with a great tremling and turning my head to the window and looking in the element I thought I saw God and Jesus Christ standing at his wright hand I strove to hide my tremling from the people It was so powerfull that I was oblidge to come out for fear I should fall down I was so ignorant that I did not know that I was to be justefied I knowed it soon after that and thought if ever I was that was the time but was not able to Lay hold of it I desierd the Lord to show me if we was to know our sins were forgiven I opened the bible and read a chapter in the Episles of John and was fully convinc'd I laid down the Book and said I would wait Gods time I was very desierious to put my self upon a level with harlots and publicans but I was not able for I still thought my self better then they I then spent much time alone in tears and prayers desiering the Lord to show me and one day in pray the Lord show^d me in a moment that I was the same by nature as the cheef of sinners then I could see what great reson I had to Bless God for I saw that it was nothing in me but the restraining Grace of God that kept me I could not rest day nor night my burthen was so great I put in a note to desier the Lord to show me if that I was justefied I then recev^d the wittnes in my self I thought I felt Christ in my heart such comefort I never before tasted it Lasted some few days before the enimie of my soul came to tell me it was great things to know my sins was for given I then came upon tryal in the bands whome I heard had the same temtations which greatly Strengthen'd me when ever I was doughtfull it came to me Christ died for

sinner and I knew I was a sinner and then all my doubt did vanish at Christmas
1740 I was earnestly desiring the witness of the spirit when I came to the room
you was praying and earnestly contending for the same which I believ^d I then receivd
for that comfort was sweeter than the other I then could rejoice if I heard the arch
Angel sounding the trumpet I hardly knew where I was how could I praise God who
had been so merciful to me an helpless worm before that time I saw our blessed Lord
on the cross all ways Looking upon me for 2 days and 2 nights but I could never Walk
by sight without I felt it in my heart I thought I would often pray that I might not be
tempted for in the beginning I was afraid of temptations for I all ways found the devil
could never stand before earnest prayer one time I felt such a heft upon me that no
tongue is able to express and I could not tell what was the meaning of it but I could
then say that if God had cast me into hell he was merciful it Lasted for 3 or 4 hours -

after I had receivd the witness of the Spirit I had sometime fears and doubts but I
found the witness grew stronger till I found that all my doubts were gone the Large
manifestations I had in my Last sickness I am not able to express I was no More afraid
of Death then I was to go to my bed for I had a strong witness that the Lord would
finish his work before he would take me hence about a fortnight after I sat up I had
such a cry in my heart for holiness I wanted to be far from all company that I might
cry aloud unto the Lord for holiness that cry Lasted about three days I find my
burthen is greatly lightened for it seems to me that my burthen is Laid upon Christ I
find I have nothing to do but to look to him for I greatly see my own helplessness that
I am no more then a Leaf that flies before the Wind I see all my thoughts and actions
very imperfect I see that I am now kept every moment by Looking to the Lord but I
have never no doubt I do so much believe that I shall be deliver^d from all sin as I do
that I shall one day die Dear sir pray that the seed may be sowed deep in my heart and
the Lord grant that you that sow and we that reap may rejoice together in that day and
hear that comfortable Sentence come yee Blessed children of my father inherit the
kingdom prepared for you so I remain one of your weak children in Christ
Joan Webb

Reference: EMV/501/137

Date: 21 June 1755

Correspondent: Enoch Williams

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To The Revd Mr Charles Wesley at the New Room in The Horsefair,
Bristol"

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "June 21. 1755 Enoch Williams
complaining of N.'s roughness"

Rev,^d & D^r Sir,
1755.

London June 21.

I hope my coming to London will prove a great blessing to my own soul, for I have
found more freedom in preaching here than ever I did before; and I often enjoy a
comfortable feeling sense of y^e presence of God. Glory be to his Great name for it. I
am still sensible of my own weakness and of my littleness and foolishness and am

often Ready to Say, Lord what am I? y^t thou sho^{dest} bestow such favours upon me, who am y^e unworthiest of all y^e folloers of Christ. Dr S.^r, y^e cause of my trubeling you att this time with my Lett,^r is this; I have just [...] a lett^r from Br Norton wherein he lays heavy [...] To my char[g?]e, if I had been Guilty of Some very gr[...] crime he cou,^d not have writ to me in much Stronger Terms, y^e fault was this, about a fortnight since, a poor child was to be buried at Whappen,³⁷² and y^e parants thereof desire^d me to sing a few verses and go to prayer, and being before informed y^t y^e lay preachers had often don the same thing before when there was no minster present So I did Sing a verse or to and Spake a few minutes and went to prayer with y^e people. now if you or y^r B.^r Sho,^d advise me to do So no more, I am quite willing To obey you herein, and do it no more.

[page break]

As soon as I had Read & considerd B^r Nortons Lett^r I Caried it to y^r B.^r³⁷³ and he did not in y^e Least blame me, but Said he desired any to do it when ever there sho,^d be a nesesity. Dr S.^r, you know my sentiments conserning those things, when you was at London I tould you my sincere thoughts. In simplisity y^e which I think to this moment y^t it is not my duty to perform any of those sacred offices which are peculiar to you, and those who are Established minsters. Except preaching. whether I Shall Ever think otherwise God only knows. it is not Improbabell but m^r Norton may have Informed you befor this time of my “prophane wickedness” as he calls it in his Lett,^r___ But Dr Sir I hope you can Sattisfy him herein, and I Sho^d be much oblig,^d to you if you please to desire him not to Report it any farther as he Seems to have begun his hard thoughts of me Do not Lessen y^e Esteem & love I have for him. So Dr S.^r If you think I am wrong in any thing herein I hope you will favour me with a few lines and let me know it. I hope y^e work prospers here for there has Som Souls Stept in, and are made whole Since you left us, I beg an Interest in y^r prayers, and Remain y^r obedient Son & servant In y^e Gosple of Christ

Enoch Williams

Reference: EMV/501/138

Date: 15 April 1785

Correspondent: Robert Windsor³⁷⁴

³⁷² London – Wapping Chapel: Site - Great Hermitage Street?: The Wesleys were active in the riverfront district of Wapping from as early as October 1738 when John Wesley was expounding to a society there. A chapel was opened by the Wesleyans on 6 February 1764. The chapel is listed as a regular preaching place throughout the rest of the 18th century. Little about the building is known, although it may be associated with a former French Huguenot church in Great Hermitage Street. (Principal Sources: Sugden and Stevenson)

³⁷³ John Wesley was in London 19-30 June 1755 (JWJ)

³⁷⁴ Robert Windsor (d. 1790). One of the earliest members of the Foundery Society and the first member of a family that was to be intimately connected with London Methodism for over a century. John Wesley refers to Windsor’s death in the entry in his journal for 7 February 1790. (Principal source: George John Stevenson, *City Road*)

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "The Revd Mr Charl Wesley No 2 Chesterfield Street, Mary[le]bone"³⁷⁵

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "No 30 Minories Mary Windsor taken up April 13 1785"

Most Honour'd Reverend Friend & Sir

I am persuaded youll excuse my troubling you with this – on Tuesday last Death summonsd away my Dear Partner to appear amongst the Glorified Spirits made Perfect in Love in the upper House in the eighty fourth year of her age__I would not say anything of her Pedigree if it were not to introduce a more Pleasing & circumstantial account that she was a Methodist as we say by Prescription

Her ancestors the family of the Boriels came into England with William the Conqueror, settled in Warwickshire & have liv'd there ever since _ Her Great-Great uncle m^r Robert Glover (on the mothers side) Gentleman of Mancetter in the above county sufferd martyrdom under Queen Mary,³⁷⁶ a full account of which is wrote by him in the fift vol of the xtion Library__ It may be said that m^r Glover, tho' undesignedly

[page break]

snatch'd the abdicated crown of martyrdom from his elder Brothers head ____ thus far it may be allow'd she had some what to Glory in ancestors ____ In her self she had nothing to Glory of but of being a sinner sav'd by Purchas'd Blood Divine But I have som what to Glory of her _ God Bless'd us to gether for upwards of eight & forty years, in all that time I never saw her unwoman'd. She was of a most amiable Temper & an exelent aconomist – I think it is now no vanity to say that she answerd to that Beautiful description by the Holy Ghost in the first of Timothy 2nd Chapter & 9 verse³⁷⁷ she was shamefacedness with out a Blush. So Liv'd & so Died Mary Windsor. But tho' Dead she still speaks _____

I have wrote this very bad indeed but I can't helpt it – but I know you have excusd it already I am Dear Sir as in duty bound your ever oblig'd servant

Chapel, London, and its Associations, Historical, Biographical and Memorial
(London: George John Stevenson, 1872), 507–8.)

³⁷⁵ London – Charles Wesley's House: Chesterfield Street

In 1771 Charles Wesley and his family was given the remaining lease on a fully furnished recently built terraced house at 1 Chesterfield Street, in Marylebone by his friend Mrs Gumley. He was resident at this address until his death in 1788. The house was demolished during the 19th century.

The site is marked by a plaque attached to the King's Head public house, 13 Westmoreland St, London, W1G 8PJ. (Principal source: Wesley family papers, MARC)

³⁷⁶ Robert Glover (d.1555): English Protestant martyr burned at the stake in Coventry

³⁷⁷ "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array"

Robert Windsor

my best respects wait on Dear m^{rs} Wesley
15 Ap. 1785
No 30 Minories³⁷⁸

Reference: EMV/501/139

Date: 15 April 1745

Correspondent: Elizabeth Winter

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To ~~The~~ Revd Mr Charles Wesley"

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley: "Apr .15 1745 Amy Winter's death"

S:r

A Short account of the Death of Amy Winter a girl of 15 years & a half Friday April ye 5th, Being at work, She was taken with a Violent pain in her arm, which continued till Tuesday April ye 9th, The family going to ye room³⁷⁹ to take their Leaves of the Rever:d m.^r Cha.s Westley,³⁸⁰ Returning home Found her under great Conflict of Soul, the enemy Thrust Sore at her that She might fall, But ye Lord was her helper: Wensday April ye 10th She found great Comfort in meeting ye Class, Thursday April ye 11th She found That she was Seized for Death; her Soul being in great Grief: So She continued till two a clock a friday morning Continuing in prayer Begging of ye Lord to Blott out her Sins, She Desir:d ye Lord to give her ease to Declare what She had to Say to ye family, The Lord granted her petition: She pray:d for all ye Clergy that ye Lord would – Enlighten their understanding and open their eyes: Then She Desir:d ye nurse to Call her father and ye rest of the famaly to exhort them to repentance and a godly life and to follow the Lamb whether so ever he goeth: She Said She was Just Going, for She Saw a Chariot waiting for her to Carry her over a fine green into paradise, She Saw heavens gate open for her: Her mother asked her if She was afraid of Death, She replied No: for She would not change her State for Bristoll London Nor yet for all ye world, She continued one whole hour praising God: Crying Come Lord Jesus – Come quickly: She continued in great anguish of body till five a clock Saturday morning when She broke out in prayer in these words: that it may please Thee to give to all thy people increase of grace, To hear meekly thy word, to receive it with pure affection and to bring forth ye fruits of ye Spirit She Saw ye Angell Comming for her and So departed Blessed are ye dead that Die in ye Lord Even so saith ye Spirit for they rest from their Labour.³⁸¹

Your Unworthy Servant in the Lord
Eliz.^h Winter

³⁷⁸ Street running north from the Tower of London to Whitechapel Street (Rocques map of London 1746)

³⁷⁹ New Room Chapel Bristol

³⁸⁰ Charles Wesley was certainly in Bristol on 5 April 1745, but left for London a few days later (CWJ, 5-9 April 1745)

³⁸¹ Revelation 14:13

Reference: EMV/501/140

Date: 8 May 1741

Correspondent: Rebecca Wrench

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Bristol

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:

1. "Reb. Wrench May 1741"
2. "Reb Wrench [found Christ in Sacrament – shorthand] May 1741 Found Xt [Christ] at Sac[amen]t"

Revd. Sir

I desire to return thanks for great blesings receiv^d att the Sacrament last Sunday going to the colledge and a friend with me with a design to go to the lords table I found my self so very empty and void of all good even of god himself and all things to him belonging that I was att a stand whether I did dare to receive or not but believeing it to be an illusion of the devill of which I have had many for sometime past god gave me att last a firm resolution to do it in despite of the Devill: for as much as I knew in my own soul that I went with a desire to meet Jesus. and in obedience to him with a trembling aw considering my own great unworthyness and beging that christs merit might enrich my poverty I aproached the allter with much reverence and humility beging and beseeching of Jesus christ that he would then and there meet with me and shew me whether I was an accepted guest att his table or not

but O when I receive^d the bread into my mouth how was I overflowed with his heavenly presence my head my heart my soull my every vein my eyes overflowing with tears of love and Joy unspeakable which cannot be uttered (as it is now at the writing of it) when the wine came as soon as ever it entred into my mouth I was again filled full full with the same blesed spirit and my mouth with a new song even a song of thanks giving to our god when I arose from the alter and going into the coire [choir] and not having the convenience to kneel I stood on my feet my soull overflowing with Joy and praise I beged that Jesus would wash me clean in his blood when immediatly I had a whole flood presented to me as I had severall times more both of the Spirit and the blood before I came out of the church

and that portion of scripture asked shall he not with him freely give thee all things I have often drank deep of the cup of salvation but never so deep as at this time in the evening I went to Baptist Mills and from thence returned to the room³⁸² and still found that god was there I continued in this great Joy with thanks and praise till monday evening and was in much hope that I was delivered from my enemie but coming to the room I found him still with me on and in me now he would choak me for telling of him he was so much disturbed at the reading the book of serious considerations that he threw me into doubt of the truths of the blesings I had received and to question if I did not deceive my self and allmost to question if I was Justified att all so that: has hitherto hindred me to return thank for all the great benefits that I have rec^d he still buffeting and tormenting me my Request is that you will pray for me that my faith fail not and that god will in his good time defeat the devill in me and

³⁸² New Room, Bristol

deliver me out of the paw of the lion that hunteth after my soull to devour it so with
due respects I rest

may the 8th 1741

the unworthiest of all your sisters in Christ

Rebecah Wrench

Reference: EMV/501/141

Date: April 1771

Correspondent: Unknown

Document: Description of a public execution

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "To the Rev'd Mr Charles Wesley"

Location: London

Annotation: In the hand of Charles Wesley:
"Malefactors April 1771"

The first time I visited the Prisoners was, before the dead War:^{nt383} came down. they were all very serious and exceeding willing to be instructed: and as I spoke to them one by one, it appear'd to me from the account they gave of themselves, that they were all in some measure convinced of Sin. I saw them no more till the day on which they were to die.³⁸⁴ After they had receiv'd the Sacr:^{mt} in the Chapel they were brought down into a Room near the press-yard, they seem'd exceeding chearfull, and upon speaking to them found, that they were all delivered from the fear of Death. Peake told me that the Lord spoke peace to him the Night before, and Burch said that he had found that blessing two days ago. we sung an Hymn and pray'd with them. their Irons were then taken off, and I heard several of them bless God as soon as this was done, saying, "the Lord be praised I have got rid of my Irons, and I shall soon be delivered from all my troubles." Burch, Peake and Siday were put into the first Cart, they went out of the Prison with great chearfulness, and as soon as they were set down, Burch said, "let us Sing the Passion Hymn, I love that Hymn exceedingly." and told me the Page where I might find it, and added, "what a vast concourse of People is here, this is the happiest Day I ever saw in my life". we Sung that Hymn and several others, and join'd in prayer two or three times while on the Road, the rest of the time was spent in conversation suteable to the occation, so far as I can Judge these three were exceeding happy to the very last, and Burch and Peake, were rather more chearfull then one would have wish'd them to have been, this gave occation to many of the spectators to think that they were quite hardned. upon their being told of it, they said, "that they were so happy that they could not help it." When we had got about half way to the place of Execution I went into the other Cart, where Cannon and Mortis were. upon speaking freely to the former I thought he seem'd to be in a very comfortable state indeed, yet very serious. the other who was a very Ignorant Man seem'd something, sorrowfull and Cannon endeavour'd to encourage him as well as he could. we sung and

³⁸³ Execution warrant

³⁸⁴ Richard Mortis, Thomas Peake, John Siday, Luke Canon and George Burch were hanged at Tyburn on 27 March 1771

pray'd with these also several times while on the Road. When we came to Tyborn, while the Executioner was tying up the first three, these two kneel'd down in the Cart and we Sung an Hymn and Pray'd kneeling.

[page break]

Cannon seeing several Boys that he was acquainted with said, "take care that you do not come this way also, take warning by me," and to a Man that was standing by. "do you not see how near we are to the blessed Tree" adding, "the Executioner is a long while, I long for my time to come." When they were all tyed up, the Ordnery pray'd with them, they all seem'd to join in with him in a very devout and solemn manner, and then very chearfully sung an Hymn. Just before they were turn'd off, they shak'd hands with, and most affectionately kiss'd each other, and in a very – affecting manner commended one another and their own Souls to God, saying "fear not, we shall all meet above in a few Minutes', where we shall be happy forever." Cannon spoke to this effect, "Some time since, one Cheek a Carpinter swore an Assault against me, which God knows I was never guilty off. finding that his Oath would not do, he hired another Person that I had never seen in my life before, (for had I seen him I must have known him, as he was blind of one Eye) to swear the same thing. upon which I was cast into Bridewell in Tuttlefields for three Months, and it was there that I became acquainted with those unfortunate Men who led me to commit the crime for which I now suffer". when his Cap was pul'd over his face he said. "but I would not have any of you think that I do not forgive the said Cheek, God knows that I forgive the Man from the ground of my heart, may God bless him, but I would have all Men to beware of such Persons as he is.

Reference: EMV/501/142
Date: 11 November 1738
Correspondent: Unknown
Document: Description of a public execution
Addressee: Charles Wesley
Location: London
Annotation: Shorthand in the hand of Charles Wesley:

The following Relations will I trust be matter of Rejoicing to you. GOD has lately made bare his Arm before us. For some weeks past my Brother had attended ye malefactors in Newgate, some of ym. hardened, some deeply penitent. I did not visit them till Tuesday last, It pleased GOD to melt me into something of Simpathy at ye Sight of ym: After Prayers I spoke to ym. from Mat. 5” 25” 26.³⁸⁵ & set ye Terrors of ye Lord in Array agst ym.. They were so much affected, & showed such signs of true Compunction (declaring audibly that They did deserve Damnation) that I soon hasted from ye: Law to ye. Gospell. It wod: have delighted you to have heard & seen their Sighs & Groans & Tears, at hearing of X.^l given for us. At my mentioning a saying of Arndts. That if all the sins of ye: whole World were laid upon one Man, The Blood of Xt. was suffic.^l to cleanse even Him from all Sin. And asking, Which of You believes this, one of ym. cried out wth: ye. utmost vehemence, I Do, I Do believe it from my Heart I proceeded be it unto Thee according to thy Faith, & he repeated a most Comfortable, Amen.

After sermon I spoke a few words to ym. exhorting ym. to spend every moment that stood betwixt ym. & Eternity in Crying to Jesus for Repentance & Faith.____ Adding that I nothing doubted, but some of ym wo^d: know before their Execution (which was to be ye. next Day) that their sins were forgiven ym: I hope, S.^{rs}, some of us know it already (said Barcock,³⁸⁶ who made ye. Confession above:) but may we not, Continued He expect to know it more & more, ye: nearer we draw to Eternity? The rest seemed full of Comfort & Trust in ye: Blood of Jesus, expressed a strong Desire of receiving ye. H. Sacram.^l & much Affection to me for promising to come again in the Afternoon. From them I went to the old condemn’d Hole, where four more were confin’d for attempting to break Goal ye Night before. I found them staked down to the Floor. & Their Ringleader Thomas,³⁸⁷ (a hardend Villain tho’ once a Gentleman) cried out most audaciously “Ay here am I the Author of the Rebellion; I am the Primum Mobile!” I askd’ him whether he had considered his Rebellion ag^{nst} GOD & how to make his Peace with Him. He answerd more composedly “Twas all his Thought.” The others behav’d better. We went to Prayer; & GOD gave me Power to pray in Faith. I claim’d the Promise of a Saviour for whomsoever he saw willing to receive Him – After Prayer[s] they appeared much humbled. Thomas:’ Countenance

³⁸⁵ “[25]: Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. [26] Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.”

³⁸⁶ Edward Barcock, hanged at Tyburn on 8 November 1738 for the crime of highway robbery

³⁸⁷ Jonathan Thomas, hanged at Tyburn on 8 November 1738 for the crime of coining

was fallen, & they rejoiced to hear I wd see them again__ Accordingly in the Afternoon I pray'd by them & preachd the Gospel from the 2 Crucified Malefactors. They rec'd it as might be expected from Those who had nothing but the Blood of Xt to trust to. One now declar'd He had Forgiveness of Sin, Peace with GOD & Joy in the H. Ghost. And so says He, I hope this my Companion has, tho' he is afraid to profess it. Upon my saying to his Companion "GOD loves you" He reply'd with great Earnestness & Joy "does he indeed?" Can you doubt of that says the other. Suppose one of them yt are passing by should offer to die in your Place tomorrow W:^d not He love you. But Xt has done this for You? – I cd not mend wt He said but endeavour'd to enforce it, & left them in a most delightful Frame, broken-hearted, believing & ready to receive the Bridegroom__ The next Morning between 6 & 7 my Brother & I with Mr Sparks & Bray went to see them. The Keeper was letting them out of their Cells. The first Word we heard was Glory be to GOD. This is the most blessed Day I ever saw. Glory be to Xt! Glory be to Xt! We said Amen & went in. Barcock the man that spoke, askd who is there? We answerd the Messengers of Xt" He knew

[page break]

our Voice & reply'd: O are you come! You are GOD's Embassadors, You are his Instruments in saving my Soul. We went into Him. He fell on our Necks, & kissed us, then knelt down to thank us, & blest GOD with so much Transport that we could not refrain from Tears. Dear Gent weep not for me I was never so happy in my Life. This is the most Joyful Morning I ever knew. I am innocent of the Fact for w.^{ch} I am to die but I deserve a Thousd Deaths for my Sins: & bless & praise GOD for suffering This. He has so orderd it, that he might save my Soul. I adore his Goodness for it, & shall do so to all Eternity. I am perfectly at Ease & have not the least Doubt, the least Fear of Death: for to Day I shall be with him in Paradise. You may imagine how this affected us. We entred one of the cells, where we found 6 more Children appointed unto Death. There is no describing their Love & Joy at the Sight of us. They were much alterd since our last seeing them: all full of Peace & Comfort, some of Joy & Exaltation, & one (Innocent) young man only not so Triumphant as Barcock. We sang & rejoiced together; & they bless'd & pray'd for us most heartily. Thence we went to the Chapel & joind in Prayer & the Holy S: Their earnestness (especially Barcocks) was inexpressible. toward Nine they were carried down to have their Irons taken off & to be tied for Execution. I askd them first w.^{ch} of you knows his Sins are forgiven? Sr says B. I speak it with Humility, I am sure of it. To the Goaler he said as surely as you knock off these Fetters, so surely has Xt knockt off the Fetters of Sin from my Soul. Many like words he spoke full of Joy & Confidence & love to us, the Spectators & Officers While they were tying them like Sheep for the Slaughter my Brother & I went before in the Ordinary's coach. They followed us soon after; (Thomas on a Sledge) At Tyburn Barcock spied us in the coach, & made signs of his Joy & Satisfaction; moving his Head & Hands, & looking up to Heaven with a smiling countenance. Others of them saluted us in like Manner. It was a joyful Meeting when we came upon the Cart. We were all animated at the Sight of one another. To prevent the Ordinary's troubling them I Immediately began singing. "Behold the Sav. of Mankind _Naild to the Shameful Tree"³⁸⁸ & They joind with one Heart & Voice exprest their full Reliance on the Death of Xt & marvellously shewd forth the Power of his Resurrection. Barcock was full of the most triumphant Confidence. He had

³⁸⁸ Hymn by Samuel Wesley (1662-1735)

Heaven in his look. Observing the Sun he said, GOD has answerd my Prayer I ask'd for such a Day & as this Sun shines upon my Body, so the Mercy of GOD shines upon my Soul. Three besides Him avowd their Innocence, & I will believe the Testimony of GOD's Spirit most plainly visible in them before a World of human Witnesses. GOD preserve us from the miserable Justice of our Fellow worms!

We pray'd & sang alternately from 11 to near 12 Never did I see so much of the Power of Faith. One of our poor brethren lay at the Bottom of the Cart half dead having been distracted ever since Sentence was pass'd. Another had a good Hope. The other 9³⁸⁹ (2 of them Murderers³⁹⁰ were strong in the Faith giving Glory to GOD. Thomas I was particularly pleas'd with. The Evening before upon my asking on what He grounded his Hope He answerd "the alone Merits of Xt" I now observ'd his Countenance changed & ask'd whether he had found Peace? Yes said he perfect Peace; such as I'd not have

[page break]

conceived, It is the Peace of GOD y:¹ passes all Understanding.³⁹¹ Why then (I replied) you must have experienced a mighty Change since I last saw you." I have so, said He, tho I had no Thoughts of Dying a few Hours ago. "But You now die in the Lord" _ I do: in full Assurance Faith, & an assur'd confident Hope." Some of the others (& I think the 4 Innocent Men) had the full Assurance of Faith. They were greatly delighted with singing particularly Watt's Triumph over Death "& those verses in the Collection

Upon thy Gracious Promise Lord
My humbled Soul is cast
O bear me thro' this shameful Death
And raise me up at last

Low as this Mortal Frame must lie
This mortal Frame Shall sing
Where is thy Victory, O Grave
And where, O Death thy Sting

The last Verse we sang was

A guilty weak & helpless Worm
Into thy Arms I fall
Be thou my Life my Righteousness
My Jesus & my All

Thomas did not join audibly, but I saw his Lips move; & there appeard in his Face & whole Behaviour a calm Composure & settled Tranquillity. Upon my looking at my

³⁸⁹ The 11 men hanged at Tyburn on 8 November were Joseph Upton, Charles Goulding, George Whalley, Jonathan Thomas, Henry Fluellin, Thomas Raby, Edward Barcock, Dean Bryant, John Machill, John Fosset and William Sylvester

³⁹⁰ Bryant and Whalley

³⁹¹ Phil. 4: 7

Watch, he enquir'd with great Unconcern What a clock it was. I told him just the time when our Lord Jesus said It is finishd We took our Leave of them for a little Time, & desir'd them to pray & wait for us in Paradice. Thomas's last words (wch he spoke with great Steadiness) were "Farewell: We shall quickly meet again". All the Stories of Roman Magnanimity fall short of his Contempt of Death. Indeed they all seem'd to forget themselves thro' their Regard & Affection for us. They thanked & bless'd & pray'd for us, kissing our Hands (for we could not hinder them) & seeming full of Love, the Genuine Fruit of Faith

While they were dying & for half an Hour after we spoke to the Spectators, several of whom seem'd much affected & came in the Evening to hear my Brother Preach__ I must break off abruptly: ___May we tread in the Steps of their Faith; confess we have just as much merit as they, & no more; that trusting (like them) Entirely on the Merits of Xt, we may, tho' condemned Malefactors receive a Free Pardon Nov^r 11. 1738

Reference: EMV/501/143

Date: 22 April 1760

Correspondent: Michael Fenwick³⁹²

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Location: Kington near Thornbury, Gloucestershire

Additional: The manuscript appears incomplete

³⁹² Michael Fenwick (d. 1797). Fenwick entered the itinerancy in 1749 and served an active circuit ministry for forty-seven years. He remained within Methodism despite a serious personality clash with Charles Wesley. (Principal sources: Kenneth Garlick, *An Alphabetical Arrangement of Wesleyan Methodist Preachers and Missionaries, and the Stations to which they were Appointed 1739–1818*; Lenton.)

Rev^d Sir

After our interview in London I spoke to M^r Jones³⁹³ & signified to him of my mind was not at all satisfied however before we parted M^r Jones hinted in y^t of writing my mind at y^e time he mov'd me to y.^t I did not think fit nevertheless upon cool reflection I have at least taken up a Cross. Therefore S^r y.^t which follows will I hope appear to be wrote late not thro' a Spirit of Contention Now S^r in y.^s letter I mean to tell y^e all my mind fully & freely. It is now about nine years ago since I was inform'd y.^t y.^o were dissatisfied (but not a little) at my travelling with M^r Wesley: & that you was heard to say in a Gentlemans house at Shoreham³⁹⁴ y.^t there was one M^r Fenick in Ireland with my B[rother] who rain[...]³⁹⁵ over the the preachers but y.^o added y.^t y.^a sh.^d ye^t live namely to cut his Comb. at the first light of Michael. here it was y.^o made choice in Giving him the first Blow you did not fail to cut his Comb by instantly taking him off his fine horse & fixing him in a publick Barbershop. Here Fenick rem^d for a while But after he had labour'd with his hands in making wiggs & preach.^s he was Order'd upto London there y.^a supposed it to be imposable for him to preach . never. & I labour'd again w.th my own hands & again wise providence open'd away for my preach^s.

³⁹³ John Jones (1721–85). Born in Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, Jones was educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Oxford, and qualified as a doctor of medicine in 1745. Initially under the influence of Howell Harris and the Countess of Huntingdon, he began to preach at the Foundery in 1746 and almost immediately occupied an important in John Wesley's plans. From 1748 to 1758 Jones was the first headmaster of the newly established Kingswood School and later took charge of Methodist Societies in Bristol and Cornwall before moving to London as Wesley's chief assistant in the capital. Jones left the itinerancy in 1768, was ordained into the Anglican ministry, and ended his days as Vicar of Harwich. Jones's wife Sarah, the former Miss Perrin, was an early female exhorter and a close friend of Charles Wesley. (Principal source: Lewis. *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*)

³⁹⁴ Charles Wesley's close friend the Anglican evangelical Vincent Perronet lived in Shoreham

³⁹⁵ Missing text

How.^r after a while I went for Glasgow where I rem.^d for near Eight weeks labour.^g w.th my own hands & teach.^g the people to sing our hymns until a Gentleman of y.^e City entreated for my make.^g his house my home. & having now full liberty I was called to visit both high & low Teach.^g & exhort.^g from house to house Here M^r W. met me during my stay no reproach was Bro.^t on the adorable Gosple of God our Sav.^r after leav.^g Glasgow Michael again commenced an Itinerant preacher & w.th M^r Hopper³⁹⁶ labour'd night & day while M^r W. wrote for me add.^g y.^t he did not see how he could do any longer w.^{thout} me. when we met we had another four^{ty} round Ing^{land}. the year following we sail'd for Ireland travelling round the nation But in trav.^g here I had no little trouble w.th your B. hav.^g been at times extremely ill. How^r at our return for England I promist myself no small comfort. But on the reviewing of things I quickly marked my mistake for y^o had so order'd & fixd things in such a manner so as to have Fenick again discharged. this was the same[?] M^r J^s Horton³⁹⁷ broke open my letters in Dublin Directed to S[ister] Clay in London. and after he had done y^t wrote notes on my letters & instantly sent them to Master C. W.³⁹⁸ on the reception of the letters. M. F.³⁹⁹ was absolutely cast off again. But S.^r permit me to note here & with lowliness or with rev.^{ce} to ask wether was J.^s Horton or C. Wesley the Greatest Highwaymen and for the following reasons. for first you did expose those letters y^t I wrote one for the house keeper in London the other for S. Crosby⁴⁰⁰ relat.^g to Poor M^r

³⁹⁶ Christopher Hopper (1722-1802) was born in County Durham and worked as a school teacher before entering the Wesleyan itinerancy in 1750. He accompanied John Wesley during the tour of Scotland in 1751, which introduced Methodism to that country and Wesley later placed him in charge of Northern Methodism. In 1780 Hopper was appointed to preside over the Conference in Wesley's absence. He retired from the itinerancy in 1790 but continued to preach and remained one of the most respected figures in the Connexion. Principal sources: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860*, edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995)

³⁹⁷ John Horton (d.1802): Wealthy London merchant active in both civic affairs and Methodism as a member of the influential London committee of prominent laymen. Horton was a good friend of the Wesleys and acted as one of the executors of John Wesley's will. (Principal source: *Methodist Magazine* 1803, 211.

³⁹⁸ Charles Wesley

³⁹⁹ Michael Fenwick

⁴⁰⁰ Sarah Crosby (1729-1804). Born in Leeds, Yorkshire. Little is known of Crosby's early life before her conversion to Methodism in October 1749. Initially inclined towards Calvinism, she changed her doctrinal position after hearing John Wesley preach. In 1750, at about the time of her marriage, she joined the Foundery society in London and was a class leader by 1752.

Crosby appears to have been deserted by her husband in about 1757 although details are vague. After the failure of the relationship, she shared accommodation with other female Methodists in the vicinity of the Foundery.

In January 1761 Crosby moved to Derby and commenced a preaching ministry, one of the earliest Methodist women to do so (see also under Mary Bosanquet). She returned to London in April 1761 and by the middle of the decade, had joined the Methodist community established by Mary Bosanquet and Sarah Ryan. In 1768 she moved with

J. Welsh⁴⁰¹ but let it here again be noted y^t God him^{sf} markes y.^r Behaviour & from y^r of G^r unparrarel.^d Heathenish act of Injustice, I say from y^e consideration of it he enterr'd into a controversy wth y^e

[the manuscript breaks off at this point]

Reference: EMV/501/144

Date: 31 May 1740

Correspondent: Anonymous

Addressee: "To the ministers called Methodists"

Address: "To Mr Charles Wesley"

Annotation: In the handwriting of Charles Wesley:

1. "Anon. May 31. 1740"
2. "May 30 1740 of the cryings out"
3. At the bottom of the manuscript:
"May 31 1740
(I judge nothing before the time.
I know nothing yet as I ought to know
I am not God's Counsellor

Feb. 6 1751 He now seems to have much reason on his side"

To the ministers cald Methodists.

Sirs, for the glory of god, which, I think, is here deeply concerned, & at the earnest request of several Christian friends, who I am persuaded, love the lord Jesus in sincerity, I have been Induced to write these following lines: whether they will meet with a favourable acceptance or not, I do not know, but sure I am, the honour & interest of my master the Lord Jesus's cause not only constrains me to speak, but also to cry aloud against those lying dreamers, who cause his people to err, & thereby to pervert their ways; those false dissembling hypocrites, who by falling into divers strange postures, & their frightfull shrieks & groans, & other ridiculous gestures, would make the world sensible, that the work of conversion is manifestly wrought upon their souls; whereas it is greatly to be Question'd whether they are not Intire strangers even to the least real or effectual impression of god's holy spirit. Indeed m^f Harris,⁴⁰² on wednesday the ²¹ of may, to Justifie these strange methods, was pleased to

the community to Morley near Leeds, where she exercised an extensive and varied ministry that including preaching and acting as a spiritual mentor for both men and women. In 1777 for example, she recalled riding nearly a thousand miles to speak at 220 public meetings and 600 private meetings.

After Bosanquet moved from Yorkshire in 1781, Crosby relocated to Leeds, where she shared lodgings with the Methodist Ann Tripp. She continued her ministry until a week before her death in October 1804. (Principal source: DNB; Lewis, *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography*)

⁴⁰¹ Possibly John Walsh

⁴⁰² Howel Harris (1714–73). Born at Trevecca in Brecknockshire, the son of a carpenter, Harris was educated locally and worked as a schoolmaster. He was

alledge the example of the three thousand converted at the preaching of Peter: the conviction & conversion of the trembling Jaylor: But we must observe, that the latter of those, (as that of S.t. Paul, & of a few others,) was preceded by some miraculous circumstances, & those too of an extraordinary kind: But as to the former of which, as also of all others, we only read this bare affirmation, viz, that they believed: which plainly shows that the dew of the holy Ghost falls in mild & gentle showers on the hearts of the unconverted; & not in storms of sundry violent passions, & other foolish & wild extravagances. I do not indeed deny, or disbelieve, but that there are some serious &

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converted in 1735 and almost immediately embarked on an open-air itinerant ministry, which was attended with remarkable success in his native country.

Harris met Daniel Rowland and George Whitefield bringing him into contact with the wider evangelical movement. He established rules for the regulation of his societies, and in 1742 convened the first meeting of what became known as the Methodist Association.

In the second half of the decade, tensions crept into Harris's relations with other revival leaders. In 1750 he retired from the itinerancy and established a community at his house in Trevecca.

Harris emerged from seclusion in 1759 to join the Breconshire Militia. He started to evangelize again in 1762 but did not enjoy the same success as previously. (Principal sources: *DNB*; Lewis.)

welmeaning souls, who are troubled with great spiritual conflicts, & inward struggles of the mind; but not to those excesses neither: & besides, those, who are sincere, are always careful to conceal those things from the world, lest they should be thought guilty of hypocrisy & Affectation.

O then my dear brethren in the Lord J. C^{ht}. suffer not your selves to be thus deceived. Indulge not your hearts in the belief of those things, because they may seem as seals to your ministry. Consider that evn the hereticks of all ages found some followers, who pretended to experience those things in their souls, which they falsely & blasphemously taught. a little while ago the fields seemed white unto harvest; but now are in great danger to be blasted by the spreading Infection of those false brethren. Already the Atheist & Libertine begin to rejoice & triumph in that disgrace, which, by those means, is brought upon the Glorious Gospel of our God: The Deist continues still more rooted & confirm'd; in his obstinate notions, viz, that Christianity is all a cheat & you will find in the end, by encouraging & countenancing such practices, you will lose the good seed, which is the sincere people; & retain the chaff only, which are the hypocrites. O my brethren! I believe you are harmless as doves, but be ye also wise as serpents. you may perhaps think me uncharitable, because I speak so freely of these things, but consider, they are not according to scripture: & God himsel Declares, that the heart of man is deceitful above all things, & desperately wicked, who can know it?

Reference: EMV/501/145

Date: 2 March 1762

Correspondent: Unknown sailor

Addressee: Charles Wesley

Address: "For the Revd Mr. C. Wesley"

Location: Basque Road⁴⁰³

Annotation: In the handwriting of Charles Wesley:
"Xt in the Fleet March 2. 1762"

Dear brother & Sister.

There being a Paquet⁴⁰⁴ here about sailing for England, I take this opportunity of letting you know how the work of GOD increas's. I bless the Lord who has indeed given us to see that it is only for the sake of Jesus Christ that salvation ever came on Earth: and that as of old, so now, He sendeth by whom He will send. The Lord is

⁴⁰³ Basque Roads, sometimes referred to as *Aix Roads*, is a sheltered bay on the Biscay shore of the Charente-Maritime département of France, bounded by the Île d'Oléron to the west and the Île de Ré to the north. The port of La Rochelle stands at the northeast corner of the roads, and the town of Rochefort is near the mouth of the Charente River to the south.

⁴⁰⁴ Packets were medium-sized vessels designed for domestic mail, passenger, and freight transportation. They were used extensively during the 18th and 19th centuries and featured regularly scheduled service.

arisen to work, none can let it! Before we left Passage,⁴⁰⁵ a Town near Cork very profane, we had been there some Time before we could see one that had the fear of GOD before Their Eyes; but now blessed be GOD, through the Instrumentality of Cap Taylor, They have a Society formed, and many are seeking to be saved on Christ's Terms. We expected to have went to Bellile,⁴⁰⁶ so we provided ourselves with several litle Books, intituled a Word of Advice to a Soldier,⁴⁰⁷ notwithstanding we gave them to the Sailors, when we arrived here. And the good They have done is very great indeed under GOD. Two or Three Days after we arrived here, having disposed of a few of them among the common Men that came on board us, it reach'd the Officers Ears, and the purser of one Man of War sent a Billet⁴⁰⁸ to Cap Taylor with Sir Thomas's compliments (the Commodore)⁴⁰⁹ and hearing Cap Taylor had some usefull Sermons to dispose of, beg'd the favour of one or two for his perusal. We sent Mr. Charles's Awake thou that sleepeth,⁴¹⁰ and other such as we had.

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I think the next Day another. Then the Officers came themselves & invited Cap Taylor to Dine with Them. All the Men are exceeding eager for reading them; have several Times offer'd Money for Them. Our Second Mate having Business on board some of Them, generally carried some with Him. And He says the People are ready to Jump overboard for Them, into the Boat, shiving[?] who shall get Them first. Many I trust have left off outward Profanity as well Officers as Men, and some I humbly hope have gone farther. I never heard, or read, or saw such Work before. Surely the Day of the Lord is at hand. One of our Brothers a Shoemaker came over in a Transport carrying upwards of 40 Hands. He asked the Capⁿ who had no fear of GOD before his Eyes if he might pray with Them. He left the Cabin and gave Him liberty. He (our B.!) told the Boatswain and call'd them together. He pray'd & intended to conclude, but They stood still as if wanting something, to be said to Them. He then Exhorted them to Repentance, told them the Misery of Dying without Christ, and the happiness of a Christian [Life] here, and hereafter. They eat the Word, and some of them are under strong Convictions He says. The Lord end it in a sound [conviction?]. He has been on board most of the Men of War, and the condesention of the Officers is amazing. They are Desirous to be taught by any Body, as are the Men in general. O what is the Lord doing! Our People seem very earnest at present.

Reference: [EMV/501/146](#)

⁴⁰⁵ Passage West (informally called "Passage") is a port town in County Cork, Ireland, situated on the west bank of Cork Harbour.

⁴⁰⁶ Belle-Île, Belle-Île-en-Mer, or Belle Isle is an island off the coast of Brittany. During the Seven Years War (1756-63), the island was captured by British troops and occupied from 1761 to 1763, when it was returned to France.

⁴⁰⁷ Probably, *A Word in Season: or, Advice to a Soldier* by John Wesley (Bristol, 1748)

⁴⁰⁸ Letter

⁴⁰⁹ Thomas Stanhope: Royal Naval officer in command of the squadron at Basque Road

⁴¹⁰ *Awake, thou that sleepest! A sermon preached on Sunday, April 4, 1742, before the University of Oxford. From Ephesians V. 14* by Charles Wesley (London, 1742)

Date: 22 May 1772
Correspondent: Unnamed
Addressee: [Charles Wesley]
Locations: Broadway, Worcestershire
Additional: Incomplete manuscript

Broadway. 22.^d May
1772.

Dear, and Rev.^d Sir.

I should not presume to write to you again, after so long silence; did I not believe that what I have to communicate, will give you pleasure. I know you will rejoice to hear of the Blessed change God has wrought in my soul. O the amazing Love He bears to sinners! that I, even I, after so long resistance, and despite done to His Holy Spirit; should be brot to experience the Riches of His Mercies in Christ Jesus! I find indeed, that “nothing is too hard for the Lord,” He is still mighty to save,⁴¹¹ and strong to deliver. I am astonished when I reflect on the goodness of God in thus softening my hard, rebellious heart; and bringing me to a sight and sense of my sin, and misery! how was I still drawn on by the Spirit of Grace (notwithstanding my many oppositions) to the fountain opened for sin, and uncleanness! O what joy flow’d at that Instant into my soul, when I cou’d say by the Holy Ghost, “my Lord, and my God!”⁴¹²

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I know that Thou not only died upon the Cross for the sins of the whole world,⁴¹³ but for me in particular: and that I feel by the application of thy atoning Blood, the heavy Burden of my sins remov’d: and that I am thro’ Faith in thee, freely justified in the sight of God; restored to His favour, and adopted into His Family. This clear evidence of my being releas’d from the bondage of sin, and restor’d to the glorious Liberty of the Children of God; fill’d me with joy unspeakable, and full of Glory! my soul was full of divine consolation, and Holy transport; which lasted all that night, & part of the next morning; when the enemy threw a cloud over me, by suggesting, I was deluding my self with false happiness; but glory be to God, I had light given me, to see the temptation, and power to resist it. “The Son of Righteousness” arose on my heart with redoubled Lustre; by which I was timely deliver’d from the snare laid against me.

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Since this Glorious Manifestation of Gods pardoning Love to my soul, I have experienc’d many outward trials, in inward temptations: but Blessed be God, I am not left to my own strength, His Everlasting Arms is still beneath me,⁴¹⁴ whereby I am supported in every time of need. I found it a great trial indeed, and difficult to overcome; when I was told, I shou’d bring a Disgrace upon the Gospel, by having preaching at my House; but from this also hath the Lord deliver’d me. He knows that my intentions in it, was singly with a view to His Glory, and the good of my poor

⁴¹¹ Isaiah 63:1

⁴¹² John 20:28

⁴¹³ 1 John 2:2

⁴¹⁴ Deuteronomy 33:27

neighbours: whom I was desirous of seeing brought to a sense of their danger, by the same means, that I was; and I have Faith to believe, that many will be converted and live. They are very attentive to M.^r Murlin's⁴¹⁵ and M.^r Pawson's⁴¹⁶ doctrine; and express in general, great concern, at their leaving them so soon.⁴¹⁷ O that you would permit me to make a Request in their behalf! that in compassion to their weakness, you will intercede with your

[page break]

Brother for the above gentlemen to stay another year on this round: as I have great reason to hope, their Labours in this place "would not be in vain in the Lord."⁴¹⁸ If this request can be granted, it will lay us all under great obligations to you. There is one stumbling block in our way here, which I must intreat your advice about, the removal of: being fearful if it remains, it will be of much hindrance to the Work. after Josiah Grigory had preach'd here two Sundays following, he sent his Brother Jeremiah; & they have ever since preach'd here once a fortnight alternately. but the people can by no means receive Jeremiah, they declare, they will come to hear him no more. I am tender how I say any thing against any person, but he seems to be, wholly unacquainted with that Humble mind, that was in Christ, and without which we cannot be His Disciples, both his preaching & conversation, is full of his own wisdom; not the Wisdom of God. indeed he makes such an affectation of Learning, and brings in so many hard words, that his sermons are quite unintelligible. You will have the⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁵ John Murlin (1722-99) was born in St Stephen near Brannel in Cornwall, the son of a farmer. After serving an apprenticeship as a carpenter, he was converted in 1749 by the preacher John Downes. He began to preach locally and in 1754 left his prosperous business to join the itinerancy. His circuit ministry was exercised in England and Ireland. Upon his superannuation in 1787, he and his wife settled in Oxford. Murlin was one of the preachers at the centre of the Norwich sacramental dispute in 1760. An exceptionally gifted preacher, his emotional style earned him the nickname 'The weeping prophet'. Principal sources: *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974) and *Dictionary of Evangelical Biography 1739-1860*, edited by Donald M. Lewis (1995)

⁴¹⁶ John Pawson (1737-1806). Born at Thorner in Yorkshire, Pawson was the son of a prosperous tradesman. He received a good education and trained as a builder. Pawson was converted under Methodist influence in 1760 and became a class leader and local preacher before entering the itinerancy in 1762. Pawson served mainly in the North and acquired a reputation as a capable preacher and talented administrator.

In 1785, Pawson was ordained for the work in Scotland and emerged after Wesley's death as a voice for moderation and the gradual progression of Methodism as a separate Church. He twice served as President of Conference. (Principal source: DNB)

⁴¹⁷ Pawson and Murlin were stationed together in the Bristol circuit from 1771-72

⁴¹⁸ I Corinthians 15:58

⁴¹⁹ The manuscript finishes at this point indicating that not all of the letter is extant

Reference: EMV/501/147

Date: 28 May 1827

Correspondent: Mr Rathall

Addressee: "Mr W[illia]m Rathall, Tuley Street. London"

Location: Ripon

Ripon May 26-27

I showld hav been verey glad to hav seen you wen you was so near wear I was

My Dear Son,

I Received yours of the 16th and was verey glad to hear that my dear Chield Is got reddy for hor Glores Chang wich is the best thing in the world to be reddy prepared and [feted] hear by perfected holeness ness to apear befor that [glores] thon It rejoices my sowl wen I see sowls fall asleep In Jesus harms I do not [Col] It Dyind wen daved had sofered and don the will of god he fell asleep hall Crestins fols asleep and the best of all we shall aris and with thos Eys howr saved see and we hav a joifull hop of meeting agan at the morning of the reserection, to sing of redeming lov for Ever and for Ever and nor honor thean will recompens has for all howr sofrings near my d Child hes hos sofrings In this lif bot not from a hon dutefull hosbond for [I ham safe] convensed that She has wanted for nothing that you as a dear hosbend Cowld do for and I Trost that god that I serve and lov with all my hart will recompens you and soport you onder your sofrings will giv you Sofring gras for your sofring day It will be a gret Consolation to you that wen She departs this lif She rests from hor labers and hor works folowes

[page break]

my dear son I ham verey sorey that It Is not In my power at this tim to com hop to London at this tim but I return you cind thanks for your cind ofer for hofring means of bringing me to London for at this tim I hav not won Shilling in my poket for you well now I Canot keep aney money the last week thear was a Crestion man Cam from amereCey and thought to hav got work In this Contrey but [trad been bad] and could not get work he was abliged to return hom to his parants and I gaved him and [begged] as much as wowld [...] hom bot I well now wen I Enform my frends they will soply my needs If I have letell In my poket I bles the lord I hav his perfect lov In my hart and It soports me In Every tim of need I ham foley convensed I ham In the way of provedens and the lord hes promesed I will keep me In all hes ways I ham [nere perfect] in my sowl and I Enjoy a good stat of helth I hav peas joy and lov for my porshon and I hav godd frends and plentey of work that I so dearley lov and the best of all I do not spend my strenth for nowt nor labor In van sins I hav been a hom meshener I hav had the plisher of seeing meney honderds of my felow men broughtd owt of darkness In to Crist marveles light and meney sowls santefied and ameney bak sliders feched hom to thar fathers hows and got thar bak slidins healed and I trost this work will be cared on till all shall now the lord from the least to the greatest and all the heath shall be filled with Is glorey lord hasten the blesed pered wen the wecednes of the weled Shall Com to a hend amen amen

[page break]

as I hav Entred Into my work of mishener work [howr] dear brother and sester mr and mrs taft's of repen hes Engaged me to tak thar labers till they com hom as they are gon in to the west wear She Cam from for thar helth and to hav a letell rest and to Carey a nees that Dyed with them to berey hor amonst hor frends but the best of all she fell asleep In Jesus harms I took her [hop] owt of her bed and Set hor In a Char after praying and singing with hor She brost owt In singing and then fell asleep with owt other [si or garon] may howr last End be lik hors
the last sabath I was apointed to preach at repen and [howld] a lov feast and we had a long Congregation and the best of all god was with hos and we had a verey good day and and the lord blesed meney souls I hop my dear ann will giv hor holl hart hop to god and I hop that her dear sister been Coled a [...] from the hevell to Com will bem [...] to you I will asur you It Is not honet of [...] howt of mind for wen I go to my god In seacret to powr owt my [sowl] to god that hears me I do not forget my hown flesh and blood and I now that god hes promesed me all my Children Children to the 3 and four [+] generation I hop you will send me a lon leter wen the Chang taks plas drect for me at m^r tafts at Ripen and It will find me may the god of [greas] and lov santefi this aflecton to hos all amen I Entend to go hom If the lord spars me till howr brother taft coms hom I lov my dear wif and my hom and I trost If we never meet hear we shall all meet in heven to pras redeming lov for Ever and for Ever amen amen

MY 30
1827

Reference: EMV/501/148

Date: Undated

Correspondent: Unknown

Addressee: [Charles Wesley]

Additional: Possibly unfinished or incomplete manuscript

Rev.d and Dear Sr

I am indeed oblig'd & honour'd by your condescending proposal of a correspondence, for I truly honour you and your excellent Brother as two burning and shining lights, flaming ministers, & messengers of love, appointed of God in a dark night of the Church, to call Souls out of the horrid apostacy, & to lead them to that Jesus who is the way the truth and the life;⁴²⁰ and your abundant labours & success in the Gospel in turning many from unrighteousness & self righteousness to the righteousness wch is of God by faith, ev'n the anointed Thing who is alone made unto us of the Father wisdom & righteousness. This has long been with me an evidence that God is with you of a truth, and I desire to give him due praise & glory for the gifts and great Grace which he has manifested in his eminently usefull ministers, in comparison of whom I am little indeed, & not worthy to be called a minister, not being fitted for much usefullness in the church, thro' manifold

[page break]

⁴²⁰ John 14: 6

-fold infirmitys both of body & mind thro' want of profitable gifts, & perhaps most of all thro' great unfaithfullness & sin in times past when my life and conversation were according to the course of this world: This, together with the remains of indwelling corruption, is constant & abundant matter of humiliation to me both before God. & man, and gives me to see & feel that I am the least & lowest of my Lord's servants. But as I am led at this time freely & faithfully to acknowledge my great unworthyness, so I must not thro' a false humility conceal the goodness of the Lord towards me in giving me some openings of light & love as to his ways & people, something of a discerning spirit both with regard to persons & doctrines, & this in a way wch is not common to many tho' much higher in grace than myself: and hereby I have been enabled to form a judgment concerning that great work of God wch of late years has been carry'd on amongst us, and in which, Dear Sr, you have had so large a share as an instrument highly honour'd, as touching some particulars

[page break]

lars of wch my judgment is as follows:

viz. That tho' the foundation was rightly laid, yet the superstructure has not in all things been answerable thereto, & that thro' some errors in the principal workmen, by wch it has happen'd that the work in general has been less perfect than might have been hop'd for, & this I apprehend to be occasion'd in part by an over hasty zeal outrunning the leadings of the Divine Spirit; by too great forwardness in undertaking the direction of all sorts of cases witht understanding them or their differences, & so ranking them improperly in bands & classes: by laying too much stress on certain points both of Doctrine & experience, which all are not fitted for; and some of wch are only opinions: by following too closely the common acceptation of scripture terms without fundamentally understanding the ground of the doctrine by wch it may be variously apply'd to different persons & cases: by overexercising & so burthening themselves & their people with rules, practices & discipline, by wch the animal powers & mental facultys are impair'd, and the spirit kept in too great agitation, by which means Religion becomes a task, &

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& wearisome service, whereas by waiting on God in silence & stillness at times, the Soul is not only more subject to the operations & comforting influences of his spirit, but better fitted thereby for the active part. To this our people I am persuaded, should be call'd more to than they generally are, & for want of it they are apt to begin all in self activity & so to spend their strength in vain: and may not I say that very excellent ministers err too much on this hand, whilst they judge of their usefullness rather by the abundance of their own words & works than by such as are given to them & first wrought in them: sure I think that some who now shine as the stars would have shin'd as the sun had they been more truly instruments, & less the principals in the main of their work: But I have, I know not how, wanderd from the path I meant to pursue, & perhaps from something of a liberty of Spirit that I find in myself under this writing, which is the effect of love; and if you can bear with my weakness & shortness, & well meant freedoms in all things, I think that you will find me

[the manuscript finishes at this point]

Reference: EMV/501/149

Date: 1760

Document: Extract from the diary of Mary Wesley⁴²¹

Addressee: Unknown

Additional: This document is probably a page from the diary of John Wesley's wife Mary. It almost certainly survived by accident, as the identity of the author is not immediately apparent on first reading. John Wesley's tempestuous marriage, which resulted in eventual separation, was and remains a controversial subject in Methodist studies, as does the wider subject of John Wesley's relationships with the opposite sex. Virtually no manuscripts written by Mary Wesley have survived and it is likely that papers reflecting her position on the marriage were destroyed.

This manuscript was published with a commentary under the title "*Running after Strange Women*": *An insight into John Wesley's troubled marriage ...* by Gareth Lloyd (Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society, LIII, part 5, p.173)

Nov^r [...] 3 left Bristol and Sunday y^e 9, I recived the sacarament after being Expell that ordnance by My Husband & his B^r C. Wesley between 3 & 4 years – But as this was don only to make the people think My Husband & I whare united, when there was no such thing. I was Convinced this was Trifling with God & my own Soul, So I recived but 3 times in

December y^e 11 & 12 M^r W is roming after strang^e women He Did not Stay to meet y^e inter-scion, but went away with Betty [Deloine] to Dine at y^e oth End of y^e town, but was Seen Soon to get into a Coach to gather y^e 13 at. 11 o clock. He Came home I beig in ggreat grife Seeing He had no regard to Truth? nor His Caractor, I cod not help Speaking to him in a Loving manner to desist from running after Strange women for your Caractor is at Stake y^e he resented Hily

Feb 12. 1760 My Daughter Jane Matthwes was Deliv^d of a Daughter, & was Bap the 20 I stod Godmother & M^{rs} Richards & M^r Greenwood⁴²² Godfather. M^r J^o Wesley Baptiz^d her by y^e [House] of Jane.

⁴²¹ Mary Wesley (1710–81) was born with the maiden name of Goldhawk and married Anthony Vazeille, a London merchant of Huguenot extraction, by whom she had four children. He died in 1747 leaving his widow with a fortune of £3,000. In February 1751, after a short courtship, she married John Wesley. The union proved tempestuous and fragmented within a few years. Following a series of temporary separations, the couple parted irrevocably in 1776. Mary died in London on 8 October 1781. (Principal sources: *DNB* under John Wesley; Henry D. Rack, *Reasonable Enthusiast* (London: Epworth Press, 1989).)

⁴²² Possibly Paul Greenwood (1723–67), who born near Keighley, Yorkshire, and associated with Jonathan Maskew in the important Haworth circuit during the 1740s, Greenwood entered the itinerancy in 1747. He spent a year in Dublin in 1752 before returning to England, where he itinerated mainly in the north. Greenwood died in Manchester. (Principal sources: MARC; John Lenton's list of Wesley's preachers, GCAH website)

Reference: EMV/501/150

Date: Undated [18th century]

Correspondent: Anonymous

Note: Incomplete manuscript?

Ye light & Satisfaction then I ever did before & my Soul Seem,d to be in Such a Sweet fram that I Seemd to be Swolow,^d up in love to God which continued all that day & part of the nex but monday in the afternoon I lost that happyness but by what means I can not recolect but was very Sorry I was [bereav'd] of Such a comfort but after Some time Satisfy,^d my Self with the thought that at the nex oppertunity of receiving the comunion it would return again but I was disapointed in this for when I had another oppertunity I was as barran as ever & so remain^d for years: afterward yet I continued to be very diligent at publick & privite devotion I had before this time come to a resolution not to marry till I was 23 years of age nor give my company to any woman till I was 20 years of age yet I oftimes form^d temptations to the Latter before I was 20 which gave me Some uneasiness yet I kept it all to my Self but when I was in my 20th year there was a young woman in the parish who was a provarb for her pride in a par[...] & I had a great aversion to her on that account but as She was a good needlewoman my mother hier,^d her to work, which when I hear,d of I was very uneasey becauss She was So proud but I could not prevent her comeing my mother being obstinate in that point So She came to our house for a month & as I had heard Several things of her which was Scandalous I was the more perticuler in observing her behaviour /

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& after Some time I found as I belived She was Slandor,d & that She Seem,d to be a Sober person only much adicted to the vanity of dress therefore I toke upon me to talk to her on that head & I endavour to Shew her the vanity & Sin therof which She Seem,^d to take well & pretended to be convince,^d of her error whereby She gaind in me a good opinion & after She was gon haveing done her work, She frequently came to my mother on one acount or another my mother haveing a likeing to her I took those oppertunitys to talk with her on religious Subjects to which She Seem,^d to give her asent & pretended to be reformd in many thing & to be very religious which draw,d my affections toward her much & on the Sabbath day I have Sent for her [...] some times & use to read the Scripture to her & expound it according to my capacity & this She Seem,d to like very well & as I found my afections toward her I thought hers might be toward me I took an oppertunity to tell her of my resolution concerning marrage & aded that when that time was expired if She walk Soberly & religiously in the mean time I intended to marry her but if not[rubbed out] She did not behave as became a Xtian I would not have anything to do with her & he Said She would

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could not Succeed in my atempt I then went to Bro^{ll} to get there place in order but his mother who was proprieter of it refused to let him preach there I endeavour,d to perswaid her to it but in vain So about 9 o Clock I was oblided to inform the preacher he could not preach but as it was so late he consented to tarry all night with [us] & the nex day went for Portsmouth I was Sorry for this disapointment &

determin'd to get a place for them to preach in as Soon as I could I being at Ports^m soon after I found out the person that receivd the preachers & consulted him about geting them to winton he advised me to it as Soon as I could about 6 weeks after the Same preacher Rode through our town & cald on me & Stop,d about an hour we conversed about there preaching but could not find a place Suitable a fortnight after came two men on horseback to our house & ask,^d for me but I was not within the went to a publick house & put up there horses & orderd a dinner Soon after I came home one of them came in who was the man that receivd the preachers in Portsmut & he informd me that he ha a preacher with him I

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[i]nvited them to dinner He Said the[y] had orderd a dinner but would call often the did So & my wifes mother being with [out] heard what past & after they were gon She Said if the preacher woul,^d have Stop,d he Should have preachd in the Summer house the House that Mr [George] Whitefield's preachers used I was glad to hear this & Said I would Soon get them to come in all this time I had many clear manifestations of the love of God but was ignorant of Justification as to the theory but by considering of the expression I thought it was what I Experiencid 3 or 4 month before I therefore ask,^d one of the preachers & found it was the Same thing with regard to haveing the preachers here I mett with great opposition from all my wifes Bro^r exeptad who was desirous at hearing them but did not Seem willing to be at any expence towards there Support but notwithstanding I was determin,^d to have them & haveing the above affer I sent to them & Soon after met one, at Rumsey who promised to come in a week, he did so & preach,^d to about 20 people to there Satisfaction & inform,^d us there would be another that day fortnight I found the expence of haveing them would be about 2 Shilling a time which I determin,^d to bear for one year unless any others would assist me before

Reference: EMV/501/151
Date: 13 October 1828
Correspondent: James Montgomery
Addressee: Anonymous
Location: Sheffield

Sheffield, Oct 13. 1828

Rev.^d Dear Sir,

I answer your lettr. immediately, and though briefly, I hope satisfactorily. Please to send the Manuscripts for "the memoirs and Remains of the late Rev.^d John Summerfield",⁴²³ to me, and I will put them into M^r Holland's hands.⁴²⁴ I have just seen him, and he is willing, on my earnest recommendation, to undertake the work. I

⁴²³ John Holland, *Memoirs of the life and ministry of the Rev. John Summerfield, A.M.; late a preacher in connexion with the Methodist Episcopal church in America. With an introductory letter by James Montgomery* (American Tract Society, New York: 1829)

⁴²⁴ John Holland (1794-1872)

have promised him any assistance which he may want, and which I may have in my power. I will revise all the papers which he may send, and all that M^r Holland may compose from them. I do not absolutely pledge my self further at present, but I will say, that if on examination I find the Subject one, on which it may be right for me to come forward in my own name to commend to public attention, as a really valuable accession to religious biography and literature, I will when M^r Hollands' task is completed, address a letter to him, frankly stating my sentiments respecting the character and merits of the deceased, which he may publish in the preface, or as an introduction of the Volume to its future Readers. Of course the burthen of that epistle, if ever written, will be

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M^r Summerfield's claims, as one of the spirits of his time made perfect, to perpetuated remembrance on earth, - not the praises of his Biographer and Editor. In both these capacities, indeed, I cannot doubt that M^r Holland will do justice to the departed, and warrant the confidence with which I have spoken to you of his qualifications. – I trust that your American friends will give me credit for endeavouring to serve them, if this the way which they wished, – in the best way that I could, (circumstancedes I am,) and with a sincere desire as little as possible to disappoint their hopes of what might have been induced to do, had I been otherwise situated. – I must not add more, at present, except that I am pleased to find that in this affair we have to deal with persons of generous dispositions, and not to drive hard bargains. They may be assured that they will not find M^r Holland or myself extortioneus. I ought to also to say, that no time consistent with good speed shall be lost to prepare the work as early as may be for the press. With respectful remembrance to M^r Blackstock and thanks for his goodwill to me, I Remain your friend & Ser^v
truly J Montgomery

Reference: EMV/501/152a

Date: 17 June 1744

Correspondent: George Whitefield

Addressee: Ebenezer Blackwell⁴²⁵

Address: "To Mr Blackwell at Mr Martin's a Banker in Lombard Street, London"

Location: Bideford

Annotation: In the hand of Ebenezer Blackwell[?]:

"The Rev'd Mr Geo: Whitfield from Bideford 19 June 1744"

D.^r M.^r Blackwell

Biddeford Sunday morning

June 17th 1744

⁴²⁵ Ebenezer Blackwell (1711–82). A wealthy banker of Change Alley in London, Blackwell was a distant relative of George Whitefield and assisted Whitefield in handling the money collected for the colliers' school at Kingswood. Blackwell became a close friend and confidant of the Wesleys. He often helped the Methodists financially and was one of the original trustees of City Road Chapel. (Principal source: Harmon.)

How do you do?

Have you yet given our Lord your two mites? He was begging hard for them this day
three-weeks – Ere now I hope you can sing,
 Be gone vain world my heart resign
 For I can be no longer thine:
 A fairer a Diviner Guest
 Now claims possession of my breast_

I need not tell you that you cannot be happy till you can say thus. You have tried the
world & all that is in it, viz –
the lust of the flesh, the lust of the Eye & the pride of life – and how has it deluded
you? A Blessed be the Lamb for open-

[page break]

ing your eyes to discern the cheat – How watchful has our saviour been of you! How
kindly has He imbitter'd your stolen sweets & gently told you my Son these cannot
bring peace to thy soul – say then D.^r M.^r Blackwell, Lord I give thee my heart-

 Take it Dear Lord & let it be
 For ever closed to all but thee –

He will thank you for the present, & keep that safe which you commit unto Him –
Why shrinketh my D.^r Man back! Indeed it is not too late, neither is Your heart too
bad for Jesus to wash in his blood – Take courage then; Come home thou wandering
sheep, & beg our Saviour to tye thee fast that thou mayst not wander any more – Trust
Your own heart no longer – Throw yourself upon the rock of Ages even the
Everlasting righteousness of the Blessed Jesus – Let his people be your people, his
God your God, & forget not to pray for D.^r D.^r M.^r Blackwell

Yours most affectionately in Jesus [Xt]
GW

Reference: EMV/501/152b

Date: 28 June 1744

Correspondent: George Whitefield

Addressee: Ebenezer Blackwell⁴²⁶

Address: "To Mr Blackwell at Mr Martin's a Banker in Lombard Street, London"

Location: Plymouth

Annotation: In the hand of Ebenezer Blackwell:

"The Rev'd Mr Geo: Whitfield from Plymouth 28 June 1744"

⁴²⁶ Ebenezer Blackwell (1711–82). A wealthy banker of Change Alley in London, Blackwell was a distant relative of George Whitefield and assisted Whitefield in handling the money collected for the colliers' school at Kingswood. Blackwell became a close friend and confidant of the Wesleys. He often helped the Methodists financially and was one of the original trustees of City Road Chapel. (Principal source: Harmon.)

Plymouth June 28.th 1744

Dear M.^r Blackwell

I thank you for your kind letter - It bespoke the language of a heart willing to embrace the Lord Jesus, yet afraid to venture on his ever-lasting righteousness. But wherefore do you fear? Wherefore do you doubt? If I who am only an earthly Friend am glad to see your face once more set Zion-wards, how must our Heavenly Friend the Blessed Jesus & his holy Angels rejoice? Oh that You w.^d honour God by believing on his Son! Do you not long to honour Him? Does not his love & forbearance lead you often to say, what shall I render unto the Lord for keeping me out of Hell? Why? Believe on Jesus Xt whom He hath sent_ Take God

[page break]

at his word, & set to your seal that this is a faithful and true saying & worthy of all acceptation that Xt Jesus came into the world to save sinners, even you tho' the chief - This w.^d be honouring God more than ever He you dishonoured Him yet - This w.^d break all your fetters & make you triumph over sin Death & Hell - My prayer therefore for Dear M.^r Blackwell is, Lord evermore give my D.^r Friend faith even that faith which works by love, purifies the heart & overcomes the world - I doubt not but the Lord Jesus will say Amen - Courage therefore my D.^r Friend. It is my parting advice - Venture upon Xt just as you are & I shall hear of your being for ever happy - This I heartily wish & pray for as does my D.^r wife who kindly salutes you - We are waiting for the Convoy which is expected dayly⁴²⁷ - Once more D.^r M.^r Blackwell adieu! I commend you to the Friend of Sinners & am [.]^r [.]^r [.]^r

Your very hearty tho' Unworthy Friend
& willing ser.^{vt} for Jesus' sake

GW

Reference: EMV/501/153
Date: 24 October 1761
Correspondent: George Whitefield
Addressee: [Thomas] Dixon⁴²⁸
Location: Leeds
Note: 19th century transcript

To Mr Dixon

⁴²⁷ In the event, Whitefield's departure from Plymouth to cross the Atlantic was delayed until 7 August 1744

⁴²⁸ Manager of the Bethesda Orphanage and one of the witnesses to George Whitefield's will in 1770 (Tyerman, *Life of George Whitefield*)

My very dear Mr Dixon
24, 1761.

Leeds, Oct

What sudden changes here! O that my great change was come; Happy Polhill;⁴²⁹ Bethesda's⁴³⁰ loss is thy gain "Be ye also ready"⁴³¹ is the call of this awful providence, The Lord furnish survivors with double strength; I thank you for the accounts, I see you are summing in arrears, some way or other I trust they will be discharged But I would have the family reduced as low as can be, I think that the keeping of those who are grown up, hurts them and increases my expense, I have little comfort in many that I have assisted,⁴³² But our reward of grace is with the Lord, Come Lord Jesus come quickly, As you are most conversant in figures, you will be pleased to continue in your usual way, and as you go on in harmony I trust you will do quite well, a sea voyage seems more necessary to me now than ever, I know now what nervous disorders are, Blessed be God that they were contracted in his service, I do not repent my embarking in CHRIST'S cause, He seeth all your disinterested toil in that new world "Well done ye good and faithful servants"⁴³³ shall be the Salvation given to you all, my hearty blessing and love to all. The great may be your happiness on earth and infinitely great your reward in heaven is the earnest prayer of my very dear my very dear Mr Dixon, from [&c &c?]. In our glorious Emmanuel

G- W

⁴²⁹ Probably Polhill near Sevenoaks, Kent

⁴³⁰ Bethesda orphanage was founded in 1740 by George Whitefield on his 500 acre land grant about 10 miles south of Savannah, Georgia. The institution survives today as a private school for boys.

⁴³¹ Matthew 24: 44

⁴³² Reference to the orphans supported at Bethesda.

⁴³³ Matthew 25: 21 and 23

