



MRS. FLETCHER'S BARN USED AS A CHAPEL BY WESLEY
Drawn from old print by P. Ballard by Mr. J. E. Douglas

PROCEEDINGS.

MRS. FLETCHER OF MADELEY AND
THE OLD TYTHE BARN.

The Rev. William Tranter, who died in 1879 at the age of one hundred and one years, stated in 1837, that the Madeley Vicarage Kitchen becoming too small for the Methodist meetings a barn on the premises was neatly fitted up for a preaching room. In this place the Methodist travelling preachers and the curate of the parish regularly preached. Here also Mrs. Fletcher, after the death of her husband, held her meetings for expositions of the Scriptures, religious experience, and prayer. On Sundays the people from a distance received hospitalities of which interesting accounts are given by Mr. Tranter.

“On the ringing of a bell at one o’clock, all assembled for the afternoon at Mrs. Fletcher’s meeting, when she often read the life of some eminently holy man, and commented on it. Then they adjourned to the church for the afternoon service and sermon.”

Joseph Entwistle (President, 1812) records in his Journal (May 18,) 1817,

“On Monday afternoon we went to Madeley, the parish of the venerable Fletcher. At seven I preached in the Tythe Barn, adjoining to the vicarage, which was furnished with benches and a desk, with a gallery at one end. . . . The Tythe-barn seems to have been built two hundred years; it is open to the roof, thatched with straw, and all the windows except one are made of oiled paper. My soul was filled with a sense of the divine presence, and the recollection of the blessed couple (though I never saw their faces) helped me while I spoke . . . the apparent seriousness, earnestness and zeal of the people were delightful . . . Tues. 20 I preached at the chapel at Colebrooke Dale; some hundreds were assembled, Mr Fletcher provided this chapel for his parishioners. I was informed that with his own hands he hewed out of the solid rock the first stone.”

Dr. James Dixon (President, 1841) in a letter to Dr. Abel Stevens says he also visited Madeley at a later date, and wrote

“The old church in which Fletcher preached has been

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

pulled down and a new one built in its place ; the Barn in which Fletcher, and afterwards his wife, used to hold meetings for exposition and prayer, has been removed, and the site on which it stood added to a garden."

Tyerman, in his useful book on *Wesley's Designated Successor*, (1873) tells us of many mementoes of the Fletchers that have been preserved by succeeding vicars. The old church in which Fletcher preached would hold five hundred, the present one, built in 1794, will seat about a thousand. The old barn-chapel no longer exists, but its pulpit, brass lamps, prayer-book and small oaken communion table at which Fletcher celebrated his last sacrament are carefully preserved, and in a small vestry may be found the registers of all the baptisms, marriages and deaths during his incumbency.

We have a wood-cut published in 1859 of the older church, (without a tower or steeple) and a steel engraving which only gives a corner of the 'Barn,' but an excellent view of it has been sent to us by Mr. J. E. Douglas who has succeeded in drawing from early wood-cuts an artistic view of it as it stood by the narrow roadway leading to the 'entrance gate' of the vicarage and church.

T.E.B.

EARLY METHODISM IN EDINBURGH.

The following notes on Wesley's visits to Edinburgh, and early Methodism in the Scottish Capital, may be of interest as supplementing the footnotes which appear in the *Standard Journal*.

THE HIGH SCHOOL YARD. This was the scene of Wesley's open-air preaching on five occasions. The High School of Edinburgh stood at the east side of the head of High School Wynd, which led off the south side of Cowgate. It stood midway between that thoroughfare and the present Drummond Street. The School was built in 1578, under the patronage of James VI, at a cost of £250 Scots (about £40 stg.), on land originally belonging to the Blackfriars Monastery. In the present High School on Calton Hill is preserved a carved stone which was over the entrance of the first school from 1578 to 1777. It bears the city arms, the royal cypher, and the motto "MVSIS. RES PUBLICA. FLORET. 1578."

THE WEST KIRK. Here Wesley attended the Sacrament on June 16, 1764. A view taken in 1772 represents it as a curious assortment of four barn-like masses of building, having a square

PROCEEDINGS.

spire of five storeys in height in the centre, and the western end an open ruin. Owing to its dangerous condition, it was demolished in 1772, and on the site was erected the present Parish Church of St. Cuthbert's. It is stated on very reliable authority, that prior to the erection of the new Church, the congregation of the West Kirk assembled for worship in the Methodist Chapel, in Low Calton, presumably at hours when it was not required for Methodist use.

THE TOLBOOTH KIRK, where Wesley worshipped on May 23, 1784, was part of St. Giles Cathedral, which at that time was divided into several sections. The S.W. portion of the Cathedral was first named the "Tolbooth Kirk" by the Reformers of 1689. Dr. Webster, the spiritual adviser of Lady Maxwell, who attended her on Sunday evenings when she worshipped at the Methodist Chapel in the Low Calton, was the minister of the Tolbooth Kirk, and it was probably he whom Wesley heard preach. The present Tolbooth Church, on Castle Hill, the meeting place of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, was not built until 1844.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, the sessions of which Whitefield visited in 1757, and Wesley in 1764 and 1766, met in that part of St. Giles Cathedral then styled the "Old Kirk." The Lord High Commissioner to the Assembly in 1757 was Lord Cathcart, and in 1764 and 1766 the Earl of Glasgow.

THE OLD EPISCOPAL CHAPEL (also May 23, 1784), was probably that founded in 1722 by the Lord Chief Baron Smith of the Exchequer Court, for a clergyman qualified to take oaths to Government. It was situated at the south-west corner of Blackfriars Wynd, off High Street, within a stone's throw of the first Chapel taken by Lady Glenorchy in Niddry's Wynd (see below). It was the most fashionable Church in the city, and was demolished in 1822. It was probably this Church also to which Wesley went on Good Friday, 1772.

LADY GLENORCHY'S CHAPEL, *which stands at a great distance from ours*, where Wesley preached on May 13, 1770, was St. Mary's Chapel in Niddry's Wynd (the present Niddry Street). The original building had been a Roman Catholic Chapel, dedicated in 1505, but in 1618 it was purchased by the Corporations of Wrights and Masons, known by the name of the United Incorporations of St. Mary's Chapel. A new building was later erected on the site, and it was apparently this which Lady Glenorchy hired for her services, which were "regulated by a plan laid down by Lady Glenorchy and Lady Maxwell, with the assistance of Dr. Webster; and divine service was intended to be performed by

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and one day in the week by Mr. Wesley's preachers."¹

Wesley's remarks regarding the distance of this Chapel from "our own" are scarcely apposite, the distance being considerably less than a mile, but perhaps the very stiff climb up from the Low Calton, in the days before the North Bridge was built, may have made the journey seem longer than it actually was.

THE NEW KIRK, where on June 1, 1766, Wesley heard a "thundering sermon occasioned by Mr. Jardin, a Minister, dropping down dead in the Assembly a day or two before," was presumably the eastern and largest section of St. Giles Cathedral. The "New Kirk" was its old name; its later name prior to the restorations of 1878 was the "High Kirk."

THE METHODIST CHAPEL, opened 1765-6, was built in Wesley's favourite octagonal style, and was situated in the Low Calton. This was the area now bounded by Leith Street, the Calton Hill, and the L.N.E.R. Waverley Station. The Chapel stood at the head of Leith Wynd, which connected with the Canongate, in a humble block of buildings commonly known as the "Salt Backet." The exact situation of the Chapel was, I think, on the sloping ground between the present General Post Office and the Regent Bridge. It was when the latter was being constructed in 1815 that the Methodist Octagon was sold to the City authorities for £1887, and the new Chapel in Nicolson Square was built. The Rev. Valentine Ward, who built the new Chapel, in his *Strictures on Methodism* writes of the old Octagon, "In Edinburgh, the most elegant city in the United Kingdom, we had a dirty, damp, dark, dangerous hole, which would seat 600 people. The approach to it, and everything about it, reflected dishonour upon the whole connexion."

Through the kindness of Mr. C. T. Nightingale, S.S.C., of Edinburgh, I have obtained copies of the original deed of the old Chapel, and also of the correspondence which passed when the Chapel was sold. The land was feued from "Alexander Nisbet wrighter in Edinburgh with consent of Elizabeth McKilfreish his spouse" by "the Reverend Messrs Christopher Hopper, James Kershaw, and Thomas Lee, ministers of the Gospel" on January 7, 1765, of an annual feu duty of £8 14s., payable at Whitsun and Martinmass. The ground is described as "all and whole these parts and portions of their Garden lying in St. Ninians Row or Beggar Row Caltoun within the parich of St. Cuthberts

1. See Dr. Jones: *Life of Lady Glenorchy*, pp. 131-3, 146-7, for further particulars regarding this Chapel.

PROCEEDINGS.

Commonly called West Kirk and Sherriffdom of Edinburgh Consisting of Ninety feet from East to West Sixty Six feet from South to North for the space of Sixty Six feet on the north side and Sixty Two feet in Breadth for the remainder down to the East End."

On September 24, 1765, the three preachers mentioned above appointed seven trustees for the ground and "also the preaching house presently erecting upon the said ground." The trustees so appointed were:—Thomas Hanby and Joseph Cownley, Preachers of the Gospel, Robert Miller, merchant in Edinburgh, Charles Johnstone, staymaker in Edinburgh, John Stevenson, merchant in Edinburgh, Christopher Hopper and James Kershaw.

The terms of the Disposition are interesting:—

" in Trust always for the uses intents and purposes after mentioned to Witt To the end that the said preaching house may be Completed and thereafter used as a house for performing divine Service by the Methodists and to the end that John Wesley late of Lincoln Colledge oxfoord Clerk and such other ministers and preachers as he shall during his natural life from time to time nominate and appoint with the Consent and approbation of those assistants who shall be duely Chosen and elected at the yearly conference by the rest of the Ministers or preachers of the Methodists persuasion in Connection with him may officiate as ministers and preachers therein for preaching and Expounding the holy word of God and after the decease of the said John Wesley To the ans that Charles Wesley late of Christs Church Colledge Oxford Clerk and such other Ministers or preachers as he during his natural life shall appoint with the Consent and Approbation aforesaid may afficial as Ministers and Preachers in the said Preaching House for the purpose aforesaid and after the Decease of both the John and Charles Wesley's then to the end that such person or persons as shall be appointed from time to time by the Ministers or preachers of the people called Methodists or the Major part of these Ministers at the Yearly Conference In London Bristol or Leeds or any other place may officiate in the said preaching house as Ministers and Preachers for the purposes aforesaid such Ministers and Preachers appointed or to be appointed for serving the care of the said house being obliged to preach and maintain the Doctrine contained in the Holy Scriptures or the written word of God and to officiate in the Evenings of every day of the Week and at five o'clock in every morning in the said preaching house. . . ."

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

By the terms of the Deed the number of the Trustees was to be kept up to seven. Accordingly, on November 27, 1801, Christopher Hopper, the only surviving trustee, made over the property to Duncan McAllum and John Kershaw, preachers of the Gospel, William Murray, tailor, William Bain, tailor, George Elphingstone, haberdasher, and David Dawson, shoemaker, to act with himself as a new body of trustees. On April 29, 1815, the Trust again had to be renewed, only Duncan McAllum, John Kershaw and William Murray being left. The vacant places were filled by John Thomas, Brass founder, Young Street, Robert Drummond, tailor, Nicolson Street, Robert Anderson, printer, Lawnmarket, and George Hall, writer, Eldin Street.

In 1785 the ground on which the Chapel stood had been purchased from Miss Margaret Nisbet, daughter of the original owners, by "Richard Watkinson, Preacher of the Gospel, James Clark, Glazier in Canongate, and Alexander Grant, writer in Edinburgh."

In the year 1815 a scheme of re-construction in the city of Edinburgh was projected, which involved the demolishing of a considerable proportion of the district known as the Low Calton. In this connection the following letter was addressed to "The Lords Commissioners for the New Bridge" by the Methodist trustees :—

May it please your Lordships.

In a conversation which some of us had lately with the Right Honourable Baron Clerk, we were advised to prepare and give in an estimate of the value of our Chapel and ground in the Lower Calton.

After a careful examination of the property asking the opinion of some persons of Judgement and mature deliberation amongst ourselves we cannot think it consistent with our duty to ourselves and to the people for whom we act, to ask less than Two Thousand Guineas—a price far below what some have advised us to seek.

We presume ourselves your Lordships will think this estimate moderate, if you only take into consideration a few facts.

FIRST. The ground is as you will find by the Plan which accompanies this Ninety feet from east to west and on an average Sixty five feet from north to south. The Chapel will seat at present upwards of Six hundred persons and we have room enough to erect more than Two hundred additional sittings. The ground is completely free from all Feu-duty and we have a servitude of an entrance of seven feet wide from Calton Street.

SECONDLY. Were the Bridge not to be built we could by purchasing an old house or two in the front build a very large and convenient place of worship.

THIRDLY. Since our late interview with the Right Honourable Baron Clerk we have lost those hopes which were before cherished of obtaining a situation on the side of the New Bridge or on the Calton Hill.

PROCEEDINGS.

FOURTHLY. Our people residing in different parts of the city a central situation is of vast importance to us and from the enquiries we have been led to make we fear we shall not be able to procure one without a very heavy expence.

We have no doubt but your Lordships will pay due attention to these particulars.

Waiting your Lordships' answer.

We are with respect

Your Lordships most humble Servants,

SAML. KITTLE.

Methodist Minister.

in behalf of the Trustees.

Edinburgh.

February 5th, 1815.

Five days later the Chapel had been sold for £1,900. (The Trustees' Cash Book records the nett price received as £1887 10s. 10d.) The following document records the transaction:—

At Edinburgh tenth day of February One thousand eight Hundred and Fifteen Baron Clerk on the part of the Commissioners for the new Road and Bridge to the Calton, agrees to purchase from the Trustees of the Methodist Chapel, the said Chapel and ground belonging to them with its whole pertinents lying in the parish of St. Cuthberts, and entering from the lower Calton, for the price of nineteen hundred pounds sterling, payable at Whitsunday next, and the entry to the premises at same term.

The sellers to retain the pulpit, seating and whole wood work as also the windows and roof

The sellers to give a valid disposition previously completed by infifement and to furnish a search of encumbrances.

These terms are accepted and agreed to, by the Reverend Saml. Kittle and the Reverend Valentine Ward, on the part of the Trustees of the Methodist Chapel.

SAML. KITTLE

VALENTINE WARD

} Methodist Ministers.

JAMES CLERK, Baron of Exchange.

Written by the said Saml. Kittle.

A ground plan of the Octagon Chapel shows that each side of the interior of the Chapel measured about 25 feet. The pulpit was of the "pill-box" type. The centre of the Chapel was occupied by two blocks of seats with ten rows in each, with a centre aisle. There were also ten rows of side seats on the left hand side of the Chapel only, as well as galleries at the sides and in front of the preacher.

The Octagon was closed in April, 1815, and from that time the congregation worshipped in the Freemasons Hall, at the foot of Niddry Street. The new Chapel in Nicolson Square was

opened on May 26, 1816. The morning and evening services were conducted by the Rev. Charles Atmore, of Manchester, and an afternoon service was conducted by the Rev. John Lancaster, of Glasgow. The collections at the opening services were £43 10s. 3½d. The *Edinburgh Courant* gives no report of the opening services, but records that Dr. Chalmers preached in the High Church that morning before the Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, with a huge congregation. We are left to wonder if the attendance at Nicolson Square was materially affected.

The new Chapel in Edinburgh was hampered from its very opening, as were so many of the enterprises of Valentine Ward, by the burden of debt. As late as 1831 the amount of unpaid borrowed money was £4,563, and at the Conference of 1835 "thanks were voted to the Town Council of Edinburgh, which had voted £3000 towards the debt on our Chapel in that city."² The Methodist preachers resided first in Douglass' Court, off Leith Wynd, then in Macdowall Street, and eventually at the Manse in Nicolson Square.

I cannot identify "our Room," "lately an Episcopal meeting-house," (*Journal*, April 28 and May 10, 1761), in which the early Methodists met. In this connection, an error in the *Standard Journal* needs to be corrected. In vol. vii. 165 (footnote) under the year 1786 (!), the Barber's Hall is given as the Methodist preaching-house at this date. This obviously refers to Glasgow. (Compare *Journal*, vi. 600, footnote).

Not many yards to the west of the Methodist Octagon, but on lower ground, Lady Glenorchy's second Chapel was built in 1774, on land belonging to the Orphan Hospital, which, together with the Trinity College Church, stood on the very ground now occupied by the Waverley station. They were all demolished in connection with railway operations in 1845. It was on this spot, the Orphan Hospital Park, that George Whitefield held open-air services during his visits to Edinburgh. The Waverley station at Edinburgh should be holy ground to Methodist travellers!

The earliest extant Society book of the Edinburgh Society commences in 1806, and gives a list of the members of Society in the Circuit for that year. Edinburgh, with eight classes, has 176 members, and the following very interesting note is appended:—"Lady Maxwell is met by the minister every Thursday at 2

2. Gregory's *Sidelights on the Conflicts of Methodism*, p. 213.

PROCEEDINGS.

o'clock."³ Leith has 17 members, Dunbar 23, Dalkeith 24, Melrose 18, Kelso 3, Duns 7, making a total for the Circuit of 268. The following note appears, as interesting as it is pathetic to all who know something of the tragic fate of Methodism in so many of these small towns and villages in Scotland:—

Kelso and Duns disappear from the Society book after 1806, and Melrose after 1808. It is known that Joseph Cole was in Melrose in 1790, and Myles in his *Chronological Account of Methodism* indicates that a Chapel was erected at Melrose in that year. In 1790 also, Robert Dall was appointed to Kelso, and at the following Conference 31 members were reported. In the *Minutes of Conference* for 1792 Berwick and Kelso are directed to change with each other, and in 1794-5 we find the "Berwick, Kelso and Melrose Circuit."

To return to the Edinburgh Society Book. In 1808 we first find "Soldiers' Class in Haddington, 9," the beginning of a flourishing cause in that county town. Prestonpans with 14 members and the same number at Penicuik, appear in 1813. This is the only reference to the latter, but the former persists until 1841, when the records to which I have reference come to an end. Dunfermline, which had been with Perth in 1813 (the Society being founded by Valentine Ward); a separate Circuit from 1815-8, with a membership in 1815 of 106; appears in the Edinburgh Circuit 1815-27, with a membership in the later years of only 13! Burntisland, in Fife, appears for the two years 1829-30, whilst Musselburgh and Portobello are first mentioned in 1833, with 24 and 16 members respectively. Both Societies continued for many years. It was at Musselburgh that Wesley

3. For a good account of Lady Maxwell's association with Wesley and Edinburgh Methodism, see Butler's *Wesley and Whitefield in Scotland*, pp. 139-144. In the above list Lady Maxwell is not counted as a member. Contrast Butler's statement, common to all her biographers, that "she became a member of the Wesleyan Society in Edinburgh, and continued a member of it till the close of her life."

"Melrose, Dunce⁴ & Kelso, 5 Who meet the Superintendent 2 or three times in the year (as it may be convenient) to receive the Sacrament of our Lord. And as they are as sheep without a Shepherd at any other time, tis a real charity to visit them. And they will gladly meet him at Melrose, if he gives them, by letter, one fortnight or 3 week's notice."

4. Duns, then, and probably now, the most important town in Berwickshire.

5. Methodism was introduced into Kelso about 1782 by William Hunter, whom a Mrs. Planche had heard preach at Hartley-Pans. Wesley was entertained at Kelso by Mrs. Planche's brother. It was at Kelso that Sir Walter Scott, when a boy, heard Wesley preach.

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

preached his first sermon in Scotland, and in 1787 it appeared in the *Minutes* as a separate Circuit, for the one year only, with Zechariah Yewdall as the preacher. He had small success there ; to quote his own words in a letter to Robert Dall :—" I had my time of it, and many an aching heart ! " Apparently the cause soon decayed, until its resuscitation about 1833.

As early as 1767 the Edinburgh Circuit included Leith, Dalkeith, Linlithgow, and Borrowstounness (the modern Bo'ness). Thereafter its boundaries were constantly changing. At one period it included Berwick, at another, Dunfermline, and at yet another, Kelso and Melrose. Sometimes both Dunbar and Haddington were part of the Circuit, at other times only Haddington. It is sad to reflect that in the Edinburgh Circuit alone, at Melrose, Kelso, Duns, Dunfermline, Bo'ness, Linlithgow, Burntisland, Prestonpans, Haddington, Musselburgh, Portobello, Dalkeith and Penicuik, Methodism once had promising Societies, and in some cases Chapels, all of which have long since disappeared.

In the account and minute books we read of the purchase of Communion tokens, and a new gown for the minister ; of a gracious revival in 1827 under Edmund Grindrod, afterwards President of the Conference ; of the expulsion of members for attending an agitation meeting conducted in Edinburgh in 1850 by the expelled ministers, Messrs. Everett, Dunn and Griffith, and of the letting of the Chapel for two years after the Disruption of 1843 to a Dissenting congregation at an annual rental of £150.

But this article has already exceeded its lawful bounds and one may close on an intimate and particularly happy note. From 1874-6 the office of Lord Provost of Edinburgh was held by Sir James Falshaw (a good friend to Scottish Methodism), who had the double distinction of being the first Englishman to hold that office, as well as the first Methodist. In the Trustees' Cash Book, under date July 28, 1871, there appears this entry :—

To Carpenter work in connection with marriage ceremony in Chapel (Jas Falshaw, Esq.)	£7 10s.
---	---------

Probably the first time,—but not the last, we hope—that a future Lord Provost of Edinburgh has been married in the Methodist Chapel. But this is only one of the many honours that cling to the name of Methodism in what some would call—dare we say it—the fairest city in the land, "Auld Reekie."

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

References to Methodism in Edinburgh will be found in *Proceedings*, vii. 165 ; viii. 157 ; x. 137-8, 148, 188, 193 ; xi. 49.

THREE WESLEY LETTERS.

The following letters were recently offered for sale by Messrs. Sotheby.

1. Lewisham, 23 December, 1753, to Samuel Lloyd: If the goods in Mr Larwood's hands are his own, I suppose you cannot attack [attach] them. . . . The Comfort is that God is able to turn all these crosses likewise into blessings.
2. Bristol, 20 March, 1755, to the same: The bearer has behaved extremely well from the very time that he left London. I do not perceive that he is addicted to Drinking or any other vice. I am apt to think he would make a Good Servant.
3. Richmond, 9 May, 1786, to a Peer, saying he proposes to call at Melville House on Friday at two.

NOTES.—So far as I know these letters have not hitherto been transcribed or noted.

The dates and places agree with the record of Wesley's movements as described in the *Standard Journals*.

1. Mention is made in 1741 of "Bro. Larwood" at Windsor. Mr. Lloyd, London is mentioned in *Journals* (iv. 489) as a legal gentleman consulted by Wesley.
2. Richmond, Yorks. There is no record in the *Journal* of the visit to a Peer being actually paid on the Friday following the date of the letter. But the *Standard Journal* records such visits in May, 1784, and May, 1790. In vol. vi. p. 509 particulars are given relating to Melville House, the seat of Lord Leven.

With these letters is one from Charles Wesley, Kingswood, 17 March, (1754) to Samuel Lloyd.

My brother's work swallows me up from 4 in the morning till 9 at night. . . .

There is also one from Sarah Wesley, 1754.

EARLY VISITS OF THE FOUNDERS OF METHODISM TO HEREFORDSHIRE

1743-1750.¹

1. The Centenary of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Bridge Street, Hereford, has recently been celebrated. An excellent Historical Souvenir has been published by Mr. William Parlby, who has often furnished material for the *Proceedings*. The booklet is entitled *A brief sketch of the rise of Methodism in the County and City of Hereford*. We are pleased to publish the first chapter, slightly abridged.

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In what is known as the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century, in which John Wesley, Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield were the three chief instruments, Herefordshire appears to have participated, only slightly, in their extraordinary and abounding labours for the Kingdom of God. This may, perhaps, be explained when it is remembered that the County was thinly populated, and that it did not lie in the line of their journeys. The first of the three who visited the County was George Whitefield.

The date of his visit to Leominster was in April, 1743. In a letter dated April 29 of that year, when referring to his labours in connection with a preaching tour in Wales, he observes :—

“ After I wrote my last from a gentlewoman’s near the Hay, I went towards Builth, and got into my lodgings about one, and into bed about two o’clock in the morning. The next day, I preached at Builth with much of the Redeemer’s presence. Then I rode to the Gore, the last place I preached at in Wales, and indeed our Saviour kept the good wine until last. He made our cup to overflow. Between eight and nine at night we set out for Leominster, and reached there between two and three in the morning. At eleven and three I preached. It was quite fallow ground. The Lord broke it up, and gave me a blessed entrance into Herefordshire. All glory to His great name! The same night I lay at Hereford. Even there some of our Lord’s disciples were to be found, as also at Ross, where we baited yesterday. In both places, I might have preached, would time have permitted; but I was hastening to Gloucester, where the good Shepherd of Israel brought us in peace and safety, after having in about three weeks, travelled about four hundred English miles, spent three days in attending two associations, preached about forty times, visited about thirteen towns, and passed through seven counties.”

No mention is made by Whitefield with whom he stayed at Leominster, and no published account exists of the messages this earnest and devoted servant of Christ delivered to the people there, neither does the letter state whether he preached out of doors, or in the parish church; probably it would be in the Corn Market.

It is to be regretted that the visit of this great preacher to Leominster could not be immediately followed up, encouraging

PROCEEDINGS.

as was the prospect as it appeared to Whitefield. A beginning, however, was soon after made, for we find that a little Society was formed, favourable to the Evangelical Revival.

It appears that a Welsh preacher of Whitefield's sentiments was invited to Leominster, whose name was James Beaumont, who, when in London, became acquainted with the Moravians, and ultimately adopted their doctrinal views, as well as their mode of presenting the truth. His ministry at Leominster proved acceptable, and the little company of adherents rented a room, which became the meeting place of the followers of Whitefield at that time. Subsequently the Society was recognised as distinctly Moravian, and formed the nucleus of the *Unitas Fratrum* Church at Leominster.

The next to visit the County was John Wesley. At this time there was a Baptist Minister residing at Leominster whose name was the Rev. John Oulton, who was evidently in sympathy with the Evangelical Revival, for the writer of this sketch has read a copy of one of his letters to John Wesley, dated July 13, 1739, in which he observes :—

“You well know that tall Cedars are far more exposed in a storm than low shrubs. The more successful you are against Satan's Kingdom, the more likely you are to be the butt of his rage and malice ; and this old serpent, who beguiled Eve, through his subtlety, will make the utmost use of his policy and power against you.”

He concludes his letter by expressing “concern” and “regard” for John Wesley, and for “the glorious cause” in which he was engaged, and asks for “some further account of its success.”

The correspondence between John Wesley and John Oulton, if it has been preserved in any of the Methodist or Baptist archives, would be of interest. It may be mentioned here that there was also correspondence between John Oulton, George Whitefield, and William Seward (the first Methodist Martyr) as would appear from the commencement of his letter, dated July 13, 1739, addressed to John Wesley, in which Mr. Oulton says :—

“Yesterday, I came off on journey and met with your kind letter, in conjunction with Mr. Whitefield's and Mr. Seward's : my soul was much refreshed and encouraged in reading of them.”

John Wesley did not visit the County of Hereford, however, until 1746, and it is to that visit attention will be directed.

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The Conference of 1746 was held at Bristol on May 12 : afterwards John Wesley made a journey into Wales, and on August 13, 1746, he wrote in his *Journal* :

“At three in the afternoon, I preached at Builth, designing to go from thence to Carmarthen, but notice having been given by mistake of my preaching at Leominster in Herefordshire, I altered my design, and going to Llansaintffraid that night, the next day rode to Leominster.”

What happened at Leominster cannot be described more graphically than in John Wesley's own words :

“At six in the evening, I began preaching on a tombstone, close to the south-side of the church. The multitude roared on every side ; but my voice soon prevailed, and more and more of the people were melted down, till they began ringing the bells ; but neither thus did they gain their point, for my voice prevailed still. Then the organs began to play amain. Mr. C., the Curate, went into the church and endeavoured to stop it, but in vain. So I thought it best to remove into the Corn Market. The whole congregation followed, to whom many more were joined, who would not have come to the churchyard. Here we had a quiet time ; and I showed what that sect is which is “everywhere spoken against.” I walked with a large train to our inn ; but none that I heard, gave us an ill word. A Quaker followed me in, and told me, “I was much displeased with thee, because of thy last *Appeal* ; but my displeasure is gone. I heard thee speak, and my heart clave to thee.”

The next day, August 15, there is the following entry in his *Journal* :

“I preached at five to a large company of willing hearers. We breakfasted with a lovely old woman, worn out with sickness and pain, but full of faith and love, breathing nothing but prayer and thanksgiving.”

We gather from Mr. Wesley's account of what took place, that his visit to Leominster aroused considerable interest, and at first there seemed to be some opposition, but it was not violent in type.

Having heard George Whitefield preach in their midst, doubtless, many would wish to hear the great Evangelist John Wesley, with whom he was associated in the great revival of religion.

PROCEEDINGS.

By John Wesley preaching from a tomb-stone, in the Church-yard, it may be inferred that the parish church was closed against him. Curiosity would fain lead us to inquire the name of the good Quaker, who followed John Wesley to the inn, and whose "heart clave to him," and the name of the "lovely old woman" with whom he took breakfast the following morning, but they cannot be traced.

The visit of John Wesley to Leominster at this early period of the Evangelical Revival, following that of George Whitefield, would doubtless encourage the little band of Christians, who were then in sympathy with the movement. He does not mention them specially, but they would come in contact with him.

At the time John Wesley visited Leominster in 1746 there was resident there, a Mr. Joseph Cownley² a native of the place, who was born on June 26, 1723. For some time prior to his return to Leominster Mr. Cownley had been in the service of a Justice of the Peace.

It appears that when at Bath, he had heard John Wesley preach, and under his Ministry, he was enlightened by the Holy Spirit, "darkness vanished away from his soul, and the sun of righteousness arose with healing in his wings."

When Mr. Cownley returned to Leominster in 1743, he found there the little Society formed by Mr. James Beaumont, previously mentioned. He joined this company of earnest Christians, and in 1744 began to preach the Gospel.

It is recorded that as a preacher, Mr. Cownley won the esteem of the people at Leominster, and that several were brought to the knowledge of Salvation by his instrumentality. To what extent the work was shared for a time by Mr. Beaumont and Mr. Cownley there is nothing left to show.

As is well known, about this time many of the Religious Societies, which were then coming into existence, became agitated by unprofitable disputes about doctrine. Some believed the doctrines of Calvin and others opposed them, holding Arminian views.

An agitation of this character was stirred up at Leominster, and led to disputes, so that the harmony and peace of the little Society were disturbed. Mr. Cownley tried in every way (being of a most amiable disposition) to extinguish the violent animosity of party, but his efforts were unsuccessful. Later in the year

2. For a good account of Cownley see Atmore's *Methodist Memorial*. Also Hall's *Memorials of W.M. Ministers (1777-1840)*. There are ten references to him in Wesley's *Journal*. T.E.B.

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

1746, he wrote a letter to John Wesley, asking for his advice in these critical circumstances. Mr. Wesley's reply is dated September 20, 1749. The letter was doubtless read to the little Society. He says :

“Avoid all disputes as you would avoid fire, so shall ye continue kindly affectioned one to another.”

The disputes continuing, Mr. Cownley again communicated with John Wesley, who requested his attendance at Bristol. On arriving in Bristol they talked together, and Mr. Wesley at once appointed Mr. Cownley an Itinerant Methodist preacher. This is what actually occurred: “Mr. Cownley kneeled down and Mr. Wesley, putting the New Testament into his hand, said, “Take thou authority to preach the gospel.” He then gave him his benediction. His first appointment was for Bristol, where his labours were attended with considerable success.

It is somewhat remarkable that the same year when Mr. Wesley visited Leominster, he found there his son in the gospel, Mr. Cownley, who for some time had been preaching in that town “the unsearchable riches of Christ.”

The disputes in this little Society could not but prove a hindrance to the spread of the gospel, and Mr. Cownley was no doubt guided aright when he joined the Methodist Itinerancy. For many years he laboured with success in many parts of England, and it was said of him by Mr. Wesley himself: “He is one of the best preachers in England.”

Leaving this local reference to Mr. Cownley and his association with Mr. Wesley, the writer now returns to what is contained in Mr. Wesley's *Journal* of August 15, 1746. Evidently he was ready to rise with the lark, for he says: I preached at five o'clock to a large company of willing hearers.”

As soon as breakfast was over, he sets out for Kington.

“About ten” he says, “we came to Kington, three hours ride (which they call eight miles) from Leominster.” Doubtless, he would be accompanied by not a few of those who had listened to him at Leominster. Then he adds :

“I preached at one end of the town. The congregation divided itself into two parts, one half stood near, the other half remained a little way off, and loured defiance; but the bridle from above was in their mouth so they made no disturbance at all.”

A statement was made to the writer some years ago by a person whose family were associated with Methodists at Kington during the early part of last century that on the occasion of Mr.

PROCEEDINGS.

Wesley's visit, one of the early Methodists at Kington, a William Cooper, a maltster in the town who carried on business in Duke Street, stood by Mr. Wesley's side, when he preached to the people in this town in the northern part of the County. This was the only occasion when John Wesley preached at Kington. In fact, Leominster and Kington were the only towns in the County where he preached. Why he did not, at some period of his life, arrange to visit Hereford in one of his preaching tours, and to preach in the City, is somewhat remarkable. Ross is mentioned twice in his *Journals*, and Ledbury once, but he did not preach in either place.

On February 16, 1749, he visited Ross on his way from Oxford, his brother Charles accompanying him; and on the following day they proceeded together to Garth, the residence of Marmaduke Gwynne, Esq., J.P., whose daughter Sarah Gwynne, Charles Wesley was about to marry.

The marriage took place that year, on April 8, at Llanlleonfel Church, the marriage service being conducted by John Wesley, who records in his *Journal*: "It was a Solemn day, such as became a Christian Marriage." The father of the bride (as mentioned above) gave his daughter away, or as Charles Wesley observes in his *Journal* "gave her to me (under God), my brother joined our hands."

It is interesting to find that Squire Gwynne was converted under the ministry of Howell Harris, the great Welsh preacher. Of the auspicious wedding day, Charles Wesley says :

"Not a cloud was to be seen from morning till night." Then he adds: "Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright, the bridal of the earth and sky."

Sixteen years after the date of his visit to Leominster and Kington, the great Evangelist passes through Herefordshire again. The entry in his *Journal* on March 29, 1762, is the following:—

"I came to the New Passage a little before nine. The rain and wind increased much, while we were on the water. However, we were safe on shore at ten. I preached about twelve in the new room at Chepstow. One of the congregation was a neighbouring clergyman, who lived in the same stair case with me at Christ Church, and was then far more serious than me. Blessed be God, who has looked upon me at last! Now let me redeem the time. In the afternoon we had such a storm of hail as I scarce ever saw in my life. The roads likewise were so extremely bad that we did not reach Hereford till past eight. Having been well

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

battered both by hail, rain and wind, I got to bed as soon as I could, but was waked many times by the clattering of the curtains. In the morning, I found the casement wide open, but I was never the worse. I took horse at six, with William Crane and Francis Walker. The wind was piercing cold, and we had many showers of snow and rain, but the worst was, part of the road was scarce passable; so that at Church Stretton, one of our horses lay down and would go no farther. However, William Crane and I pushed on, and before seven reached Shrewsbury. A large company quickly gathered together. Many of them were wild enough, but the far greater part were calm and attentive, and came again at five in the morning."

Where John Wesley stayed in Hereford is not stated in his *Journal*, but it is believed to have been at the Swan and Falcon. He does not again mention any visit to Hereford in his *Journals*.

He does not seem to have chosen Cathedral Cities, as a rule, as places in which to exercise his gifts. He visited a few regularly, and amongst them may be mentioned Worcester, where he preached several times, but there were special circumstances which drew him there, or, they were on the line of his journeys. John Wesley, who, as a scholar and a gentleman was able to take his place amongst the Dons of Colleges, and the learned of the land, seems, not only not to have courted their company, but even to have avoided it. He gives in more than one place expression to the greater pleasure he had in preaching to the common people.

We will now proceed to notice the visits of Charles Wesley, the Poet of Methodism.

After his happy marriage with Miss Sarah Gwynne, of Garth, in April, 1749, he remained about a fortnight at Garth, frequently preaching, not only in the mansion of his father-in-law, but in the neighbouring villages.

On April 23, he set out for Bristol to resume his Master's work, and early in May he travelled to London.

In June, 1749, he comes down to Hereford to join Mrs. Wesley and other members of the Gwynne family. The party met at the Falcon, as stated in Charles Wesley's *Journal*. The Falcon, without doubt, was the Swan and Falcon, which formerly existed, it is said, on the site now known as the City Arms.

Some years ago the writer was informed by a well-known local antiquarian, then upwards of 85 years old, that the present inn was

PROCEEDINGS.

built by a person known in Hereford as "Boney Lewis," nicknamed "Boney" because of his striking resemblance to Napoleon Bonaparte, the money for the building, it was said, being provided by the Duke of Norfolk, who resided at Holme Lacey.

Charles Wesley tells us that he arrived in Hereford at one o'clock, and then goes on to state :—

"At half past three, my beloved Sally, with Mrs. Gwynne and her sister Peggy, found me at the Falcon."

"We sang, rejoiced, and gave thanks, till Mr. and Mrs. Hervey came. After dinner we drank tea at their house and went to see the Cathedral. I wanted work : but there was no door opened."

From the last sentence, it seems clear that if an opportunity had offered, Charles Wesley would gladly have preached in the noble edifice or in any of the churches in the City.

The following day Mr. and Mrs. Wesley leave for Ludlow, in the Diocese of Hereford, where the family from Garth had gone to stay. On Sunday, June 4, he probably hoped to preach in the Parish Church at Ludlow, but he says : "the pulpit was refused me, but not the Sacrament."

In the afternoon Charles Wesley held a service in the town, preaching in the open air from the text "Repent and believe the Gospel." A disturbance was created by some of those who gathered round, and he was pelted with "eggs and stones." But the intervention of Mr. Gwynne speedily restored order, as he "sent for the bailiff, who himself fetched the refractory constable and seized the ringleader of the mob. This quieted the increasing riot."

On Thursday, June 8, Charles Wesley records in his *Journal* : "I preached in the Market Place at Leominster." His text was : "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" On this, the occasion of his first visit, he says : "All appeared quite eager to hear."

He returned to Ludlow the same night, and the next day, he re-visits Leominster, bringing Mrs. Wesley with him. He says : "The minister was there again, all serious, some visibly affected."

On August 7, he is on his way again to Ludlow, on which date he says, "My brother and Grace Murray overtook us before we reached the Passage," and then he adds : "Near nine we took up with a sorry lodging two miles short of Hereford."

The next day they arrive at Ludlow, and on the following day he says, "Several of the gentry listened to my brother to-night."

The following year, 1750, Charles Wesley again visits Ludlow. His next entry in his *Journal* relating to Herefordshire is July 31, 1750: "The word I preached this day at Leominster was accompanied with the power and blessing of God." The final entry relating to Herefordshire is dated August 7, 1750: "At seven I set out with Sally for Bristol, It rained small rain till we came to Leominster and so most of the way to Ross."

In closing these references to the visits of George Whitefield, John Wesley, and Charles Wesley to the County of Hereford, it is to be regretted that their visits were so few. Yet the work has continued to grow, and to-day there are to be found flourishing churches, the outcome of the Evangelical Revival, of which George Whitefield, John Wesley and Charles Wesley were the honoured instruments.

HALL'S CIRCUITS AND MINISTERS

1765-1912.

In the *Proceedings*, iv. 20, the Rev. Richard Green called attention to a serious defect in the above very useful volume. Many of the old Circuits are not to be found under their own names in the Alphabetical List, but are given under the names which they assume at a later period. Thus Salop appears under Chester, and Shetland Isles under Lerwick. This renders the tracing of information concerning these old Circuits a very difficult matter. Mr. Green expressed a wish that someone would draw up an Index of all the names which are mentioned only in this way. Nevertheless, such a list has never been published, and I hope that the Index below will serve to make "Hall's Arrangement" a more serviceable volume for students of early Methodist history.

The Index contains (a) Old Circuits, such as those mentioned above; (b) Circuits formed under a temporary name, which was afterwards changed, such as Husband's Bosworth Mission; (c) Places described as "Head of Circuit" for a short period, such as Bovey Tracey.

I have also given a short list of Circuits not mentioned in "Hall's Arrangement." This list is no doubt very incomplete.

WESLEY F. SWIFT.

PROCEEDINGS.

I. Old Circuits, Temporary Circuits, and Places described as
 "Head of Circuit," with the pages on which they are
 to be found.

Addingham 245	Horsham 449
Appleby 261	Huntingdon 474
Axminster 117	Huntingdon & St. Ives 474
Bangor (English) 113	Husband's Bosworth Mission 365
Barnet 383	Isle of Man 160, 581
Barrowford 381	Isle of Wight 391
Barrow-on-Humber 32, 187	Iver 559
Birmingham & Northampton	Kent 106
Bovey Tracey 379 [137	Lancashire 349
Bradford-on-Avon 552	Lancashire North 289
Brixham 143	Lancashire South 349
Broseley 345	Lane End 333
Brough 261	Lincolnshire East 201
Caerphilly 110	Lincolnshire West 178, 187
Cardigan 263	Littleport 177
Cheshire 122	London (Paddington) 530
Cheshire North 122	Lyme Regis 117
Cheshire South 342	Minehead 169
Cobham 591	New Buckenham 19
Collumpton 180	Newent 267
Cornwall East 468	North Meols Mission 414
Cornwall West 449, 473	North Wales 76
Crickhowell 77, 91	North Wales Coast Mission
Cromford 39, 368	North Wilts 552 [135
Dales 11, 28, 222	Oxfordshire 417
Delph 466	Patrinton 589
Derbyshire 149, 406	Peasenhall & Framlingham
Dorking 449	Pembrokeshire 422 [605
Downend 544	Plymouth Dock 152
Ebbw Vale 92	Prescot 471
Essex 132	Ringwood 127
Essex Mission 504	Salford 351
Framlingham 605	Salop 122
Glamorgan 532	Saltash 102
Glamorganshire 532	Salterton 93
Gloucestershire 195	Sandhurst 515
Hampton Court 539	
Holderness 589	

WESLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

Sarum 478	Wales 532
Shetland Isles 284	Wales East 532
Shields 400	Wales West 422
Somerset 537	Ware & Bishop's Stortford
Somerton 193	Wells 340 [56]
South Devon Mission 257	Wensley Dale 37
Staffordshire 46	Wetherby 262
Sticklepath 411	Wiltshire 478
Stratton 228	Wiltshire South 478
Sussex 465	Wilts & Somerset Mission
Tanfield 37	Winterbourne 545 [585]
Treherbert 552	Yarm 519
Vale of Clwyd 377	Yell 399

II. Circuits Omitted.

Campbelton	Musselburgh
Dalkeith	Orkney & Wick
Dunfermline	Orkney Isles
Kelso	Tuckingmill

Most of these Circuits had but a short existence. Perhaps other members can add to the list.

THE MORAVIAN SOCIETY. FETTER LANE, LONDON.

Students of the history of Moravianism and Methodism will be very grateful to the Rev. W. M. Trousdale, B.A., B.D., for transcribing the Herrnhut copy of the Minutes of the Fetter Lane Society of May 1, 1738. (*W.H.S. Proc.*, XVII, pp. 30 f.f.). But may I be allowed to demur to the *title* under which this valuable document appeared?

Surely it is now established beyond question that this 'little society' of May 1, 1738, was not a Moravian society, as Whitehead, Tyerman and a host of others have believed, nor yet an ordinary Religious Society, as Dr. Wauer contended, but *an ANGLICAN counterpart of the Moravian band-society.*

Böhler's Diary said distinctly that the new institution was a band, and he should have known.¹ Supporting evidence is to be found in William Holland's MS. *Account*, which I consulted in the Fetter Lane Archives, and also in Spangenberg's official Diary.²

PROCEEDINGS.

However, both Herr Gottfried Schmidt and the Rev. J. E. Hutton, to whom we owe so much, the one for elucidating, and the other for expounding, this point, seem to have overlooked one of Wesley's own footnotes to his 'Answer to the Rev. Mr. Church's Remarks' (1745), which gives the most explicit confirmation of their case. It reads 'The Band Society in London began May 1, some time before I set out for Germany.'

The rules differed from those of an ordinary Religious Society in the non-exclusion of Dissenters, and the provision for personal testimony and confession. But, although the constitution of the society was Moravian in type, its membership was primarily Anglican. Thus, when 1739 was ushered in with a most impressive love-feast, (*J.W. Journal*, ii, 121-5), there were present no Moravian pastors, but seven Anglican ministers,—all of them Oxford Methodists. George Whitefield had an entry in his *Journal* saying 'Went with our Brethren of the Fetter Lane Society to St. Paul's and received the Holy Sacrament, as testimony that we adhered to the Church of England.'³ Charles Wesley gave the reason for the expulsion of two troublesome members as 'because they disowned themselves members of the Church of England.'⁴ And John Wesley said emphatically that the 'reasoning and disputing,' and the 'biting and devouring one another' of which he complained, was not at first to be found among 'the Moravians, but the English brethren of Fetter Lane before their union with the Moravians.'⁵

It follows that the heading "Moravian Society" cannot accurately be given to a list of the 1738 rules. When, then, did union come? The answer is, after the Wesleys had gone. Their secession, on July 20, 1740, made possible the settlement of the Fetter Lane Society as a congregation of the *Unitas Fratrum*. The Moravians showed their usual reluctance to assume new responsibilities over-hastily. At length, Töltzschig conveyed the tactful message: 'The Moravian Brethren do not desire to be your leaders, but they will be glad to be your servants,'⁶ and the affiliation took place by stages in the years 1741-2.

LESLIE T. DAW, M.A.

NOTES.

1. *Zeitschrift für Brüdergeschichte*, Jahrgang III, Heft ii, p. 184; *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, 1911, p. 197.
2. Quoted by A. C. Hassé in "The Moravians in England."
3. Entry for May 10, 1739.
4. C.W.'s 'Journals,' I. 153.
5. 'Letter to the Rev. Mr. Church.'
6. G. A. Wauer, "The Beginnings of the Brethren's Church in England," p. 76.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

686. In Vol. VI of our *Proceedings*, (N. and Q. 360), the late Mr. Foster asked if any one could describe *Chinese Paling*, reprobated in the *Minutes of Conference* 1779 and 1789.

Mr. George Brownson sends an illustration of three kinds of this paling, which accompanied an article contributed to the *Gentleman and Builder* (1760) by F. Hopper.

This is not of sufficiently general interest to warrant reproduction in our *Proceedings*, but the Secretary will be pleased to allow any one who may apply, to see it.—*F.F.B.*

687. We receive regularly the *Journal of the Friends' Historical Society*, and have pleasure in acknowledging the gift of the first part pp. 120 of an important publication by the Society, entitled *Pen Pictures of London Yearly Meetings (1789-1853)*. It is embellished on the cover by a portrait, in characteristic Quaker headgear, of Richard Cockin, from whose notes the bulk of the information is derived.—*F.F.B.*

688. THE STORY OF A HUNDRED YEARS.—Handbook of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, Stourbridge Circuit.

This handsome booklet of 148 pages, well illustrated, has recently been issued by one of our members, Mr. James H. Mees. It is a very thorough piece of work, sure to be useful and welcome in the locality with which it deals. The general reader who has any interest in Methodist history will find a great deal of profit in it.

Though the Black Country, on the edge of which Stourbridge is situated, enjoyed much service from Wesley, the place is only mentioned once in his *Journal*. Mr. Mees gives a capital illustration of the old Dungeon Head at Cradley, where Wesley preached.—*F.F.B.*