

MS Hymn for King George 1769¹

This manuscript hymn was written by Charles Wesley in the context of John Wilkes being put out of House of Commons and the organization of “supporters of the Bill of Rights” in Wilkes’ behalf . The original manuscript, written on two looseleaf pages of paper, was part of the Special Collections of Wesley College, Bristol, England (now MARC, WCB, D6/1/168a).

This manuscript hymn was not published by Charles Wesley or in any previous posthumous setting. The transcript provided here, with permission of Wesley College and the assistance of Michael Brealey, Librarian, is its first publication.

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**Hymns for King George [III]
1769.**

1. O God, the Help of righteous kings,
Cover beneath thy mercy's wings
The Prince to Brittain given,
Surround with an angelic guard,
And late remove to his reward
A glorious crown in heaven.
2. A thorny crown on earth he wears,
And burthend with a nation's cares
Submits to thy decree;
King of a restless murmuring race,
The foes of peace and righteousness,
The sons of anarchy.
3. The Great — in wickedness and vice
Their own ambitious ends disguise
As pillars of the Throne
For riches, pomp, and power contend
The kingdom into parties rend
And seek themselves alone.
4. With fair pretence of public weal
Others their dark designs conceal,
And seek the nation's good

By Liberty's enchanting name
With untold fury they inflame
The frantic multitude.

5. See when the Beast of many heads
Riot, dismay, distraction spreads
In revisions to the laws!
Hark, how the drunken patriots roar,
And swear our freedom to restore,
Or perish in the cause.
6. Fierce as the beast with iron teeth,
They menace Cesar's friends with death
Beneath their feet they tread.
And rush as ministers of fate
Presenting at the palace gate
The royal Martyr's head.
7. Tir'd of a mild pacific Prince,
They want, to scourge them for their sins,
A monarch stern and proud,
A tyrant their blind zeal demands,
A Nero to imbue his hands
In his old tutor's blood.
8. Yet, O thou God of patient grace,
Still let a vile rebellious race
Thy sparing mercy prove
Give us not up in righteous ire,
Nor, as our ripend crimes require,
Our gracious King remove.

9. Cloth all his enemies with shame,
But for the honour of thy Name,
Thy Minister defend:
Peace to the world unknown impart,
Strengthen his hands and chear his heart
And bless² him to the end.

10. Thine Image let the people see,
And terrible in majesty
Thy great Vicegerent own
Arm him with³ wisdom from above
While justice, truth, and loyal love
Support his awful throne.

11. Keep as the apple of thine eye,
Till late translated to the sky,
He takes his destin'd seat,
Drinks the full streams of heavenly bliss,
Or sinks in silent ecstasies,
And worships at thy feet.

²In the margin “keep” is written as an alternative for “bless.”

³Ori., “Arm with thy.”