

MS Death of Thomas Waller¹

(drafts 1 & 2)

Thomas Waller (1751–81), was the son of James and Elizabeth Waller. James Waller (1735–1802) was a lace merchant who became active among the Methodists in the mid-1740s. Through the second half of this decade he frequently traveled with Charles Wesley on his preaching tours. In the process Waller became acquainted with Elizabeth Gwynne (b. 1730), the younger sister of Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley. They were married on 4 December 1750, with Charles Wesley performing the ceremony (recounted in his *Manuscript Journal*). Thomas was their first child, and Charles Wesley's nephew.

There are two looseleaf drafts of the hymn that Charles Wesley wrote on the death of Thomas Waller, as well as the copy in *MS Funeral Hymns*. The transcription below of both drafts is provided with permission of the Librarian and Director, The John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester.

(The drafts are presented in consecutive order—draft 2 beginning on overall page 4).

¹This document was produced by the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition under the editorial direction of Randy L. Maddox, with the diligent assistance of Aileen F. Maddox. Last updated: August 1, 2010.

[Draft One, Untitled.]¹

- [1.] Th' eternal mind at last is known,
The will omnipotent obey'd,
The Father hath call'd home His son,
And number'd with th' Immortal Dead!
Redeem'd from earth, th' unspotted youth
Hath join'd the Virgin-Quire above,
And SEES unveil'd the God of truth,
And triumphs in his Saviour's Love.
2. Not *of* the world, while here he liv'd,
A stranger to its hopes and fears,
With reverence he rejoiced or grieved,
Compos'd throughout his thirty years:
From vice and every great offence
By grace miraculous secur'd,
He kept his childish innocence,
And faithful unto death endur'd.
3. A daily death thro' life he died,
In weakness, weariness, and pain,
By many a sharp affliction tried,
His faith did every cross sustain:

¹MARC: MA 1977/594/12. Appears also in draft 2 (below) and MS Funeral Hymns, 94–97.
Published posthumously in *Poetical Works*, 6:345–46.

What but the' Invisible display'd
 Could bear him thro' the fiery Test,
While still he look'd to God for aid,
 And God in all his ways confest?

4. So modest, diffident, and meek,
 So small and mean in his own eyes,
Did not his life and actions speak
 An humble soul, without disguise?
Let others of their virtue *tell*,
 Their knowledge, or superior grace,
His good he studied to conceal,
 And only sought his Maker's praise.

5. Religion undefiled and true
 In works of charity is shown:²
Twas thus his feeling heart we knew,
 Who made the sufferer's griefs his own;
So swift³ to succour the distress,
 So wise and tender to reprove!
He clasp'd a sister to his breast
 With more than a fraternal Love.

6. His soul in pure affection flow'd
 To all by nature's ties endear'd;
Freely he paid the debt he owed,
 The Friend in every act appear'd;
The warmth of Piety unfeign'd,
 The flame of Love unquenchable,
That in his duteous bosom reign'd,
 Let an indulgent⁴ mother tell.

7. For her a suffering life he lived,
 For her a daily death he died,
With all her pains and sorrows grieved,
 On⁵ all her crosses crucified;
Willing for her on earth to stay,
 To want his place above prepared —
But call'd at last — he drops his clay,
 And mounts, and gains a full Reward.

²Ori., "known."

³Ori., "glad."

⁴"Afflicted" is suggested in the margin as an alternative to "indulgent."

⁵Ori. "With."

**On the Death of Mr Tho[mas] Waller,
in his thirtieth Year—May 11, 1781.¹**

[draft two]

- [1.] Th' Eternal mind at last is known,
The will Omnipotent obey'd,
The Father hath call'd home his Son
And numbred with th' Immortal Dead!
Redeem'd from earth, th' unspotted Youth
Hath join'd the Virgin-quire above,
And SEES unveil'd the God of truth,
And triumphs in his Saviour's love.

2. Not of the world, while here he liv'd,
A stranger to its hopes and fears,
With reverence he rejoic'd, and griev'd,
Resign'd throughout his thirty years.

¹MARC: MA 1977/583/23b. Appears also in draft 1 (above) and MS Funeral Hymns, 94–97.
Published posthumously in *Poetical Works*, 6:345–46.

From vice, and every great offence
By grace miraculous secur'd,
He kept his childish innocence,
And faithful unto death endur'd.

3. A daily death thro' life he died
In weakness, weariness, and pain,
By many a sharp affliction tried
His faith did every cross sustain:
What but th' Invisible display'd
Coud bear him thro' the fiery test,²
While still he look'd to God for aid,
And God in all his ways confest?
4. So modest, diffident, and meek,
So small and mean in his own eyes,
Did not his life and actions speak
An humble soul without disguise?
Let Others of their virtue *tell*,
Their knowledge, or superior grace,
His good he studied to conceal,
And only sought his Maker's praise.
5. Religion undefil'd and true
In works of charity is shown:
'Twas thus his feeling heart we knew,
Who made the sufferer's griefs his own,

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²Ori., "hour."