

Charles Wesley In-Correspondence and Related Items (1751–55)

Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition, Duke Divinity School

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1751

From Sarah Perrin

Bristol
February 21 [1751]

Dear and Honoured Friend,

I truly sympathize with you in your trial,¹ but I trust all shall work together for good. We see as yet but little into the providence of God. He by his wisdom often brings great good out of what we fear most above all things.

I desire the prosperity of Sion and peace of Jerusalem, and I am very sensible the Lord is with his people. He careth for his Israel and will still watch over us for good. I now think the time is coming [when] we all shall join heart and hand together and be able, notwithstanding our adversaries, to go up and possess the land. Let all old things now be forgot. Let us begin to live anew and give our whole heart to God, and nothing shall be able to withstand us.

I never felt more love both to thee and thy brother than at this time. I find in my heart the tenderest affection for Mrs. Wesley and I also love the friend thy brother has made choice of.² And seeing he judged it not right to remain as he was, I don't know where he could have done better.

I rejoice to hear thou art still labouring in the vineyard. I trust thou will be more valiant for the truth than ever. My hope revives. I believe we shall rejoice together. O my dear friend, one thing would cause all your friends greatly to rejoice on your behalf. Nothing is impossible with God. I know God willeth it. A pleasant thing it is in his sight [that] brethren should dwell in unity. I rejoice in hope of the precious ointment that ran down upon Aaron's beard.³ I believe we shall see it reach to the shirts of your garments and be as the dew of Hermon, as the dew that descended on the mountains of Zion. For surely the Lord will command blessings and life evermore.

I have the more hope of this blessing on thy partner's account. I know she delights in peace. I hope thy brother's friend is like-minded. The cloud seems now to disperse and surely we shall see the light shine unto the perfect day. Who is like unto our God? We will praise him and put our trust in him, for he will deliver. He beareth with our manners and doth not forsake us. He saves his people and will save to the uttermost. And I do believe we shall see more of his salvation than ever.

Pray remember me to your brother and sister Waller and sister Peggy.⁴ With duty and unfeigned love to thee and thy dear partner, I conclude,

Your unworthy friend,

S. P.

Mrs. Jones sends her duty.⁵

¹CW had clearly written Perrin (in a letter not known to survive) of his negative foreboding about JW's marriage on Feb. 18, 1751 to Mary (Goldhawk) Vazeille. See CW, MS Journal, Feb. 2, 1751; and the two despondent hymns that CW almost certainly wrote on this occasion in MS Richmond, 142–45.

²SGW and Mary (Goldhawk / Vazeille) Wesley.

³See Ps. 133:1–2.

⁴James and Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller, and Margaret ("Peggy") Waller.

⁵Mary (Forrest) Jones, currently in Bristol.

My sister's maid Sary is safe landed.⁶ She signified just before her death [that] great trouble was coming on the nation.

I hope the wine will prove good; the Magliocco⁷ was very fine.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr Charles Wesley / in / London."

Endorsement: by CW, "S Perrin Feb 21. 1751 / Congratulatory on the Mar[riag]e" and "[[Sarah Perrin congratulatory]]/ Feb. 21."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/56.

⁶The maid of Mary (Perrin) Southall.

⁷A red-wine grape; orig., "Maligoco."

From Marmaduke Gwynne Sr.

Ludlow
February 23 [1751]

Reverend and Dear Son,

By the favour of yours,¹ I find you and dear Sally are at Mrs. Colvil's,² and glad I am to hear your wife is much better. I understand the gentlewoman you are with is exceedingly kind to my daughter and yourself. I thank God to hear that dear Sally makes you so happy a partner. My wife and I bless God for sending you to our family. I trust God will make you instrumental of doing greater good than all the riches this world can give.

The account you send me of your brother's being married to Mrs. Vazeille surprised me much. I had Mr. Vaughan Lloyd with us lately,³ and he talked of Mr. John Wesley going to be married to a great fortune. I replied I could not believe it, and that if I was disposed to lay wagers I might venture any money that Mr. John would never enter into that holy and honourable state. I wish his declarations of not altering his state may not make the enemies of religion take an opportunity of writing bitterer things than ever against the man.

He and my friend Howell Harris have given the world room to make plausible harangues,⁴ which I fear may prejudice weak minds. But I believe Howell is innocent of the heavy charge laid against him. And the marrying of the clergy in our church is no sin. And yet both these faithful laborers in our Lord's vineyard being left to themselves have shown they are no more infallible than the popes of Rome. Your brother's marriage is in the public papers, and Mr. [Abel] Ketelbey sent his man Coloe to wish us joy on the occasion.

My wife and both daughters join with me in our love and respect to you and dear Sally, and the rest of our relations in Prince's street. You will give our due respects to your brother and his wife, wishing them all the joy they can desire on the occasion. I am, dear son

Your most affectionate father and humble servant,

MDuke Gwynne

Endorsement: by CW, "Feb. 23. 1751 / [[Mr. Gwynne on brother's marriage]]."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/69.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Martha (Meighen) Colvill (1711–87) was a daughter (by birth or adoption) of Francis Meighen (1674–1742) and Catherine (Lander) Meighen (d. 1753). She married Robert Colvill (1702–49) around 1748 and was soon left his (wealthy) widow. On Sept. 10, 1751 Martha would remarry, to Samuel Gumley. See *WHS* 59 (2013): 3–11. She owned a home in Chertsey to which CW had taken SGW on Feb. 18, 1751, to escape the unsettledness in London over JW's pending marriage; see CW, MS Journal.

³Apparently Vaughan Lloyd (1722–63), of Tan-Yr-Allt and London.

⁴JW's marriage was controversial due to his prior advocacy for the single state; Howell Harris had gained recent notoriety over his close connection to Mrs. Sidney Griffith; cf. David Ceri Jones, et al. *The Elect Methodists: Calvinistic Methodism in England and Wales, 1735–1811* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012), 84–87.

John Bennet to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

March 20, 1750/1

Dear Mrs. Wesley,

Having an opportunity to enclose a few lines, I cannot omit telling you I long to be familiarly acquainted with you, not doubting but a line or two from you would be profitable.

I hope your dear soul is washed in precious blood, even in the blood of the Lamb. May the Holy Spirit of God (who condescends to make perfect the elect of God) renew, confirm, and perfect you according to the holy covenant. May he be in you the witness of your Lord, the author of your prayers, the seal of God, and the earnest of your inheritances. May the love of God be so shed abroad in your heart as to keep you in a continual life of love.

The work of the Lord prospers in this part of our Lord's vineyard.

How blessed are they who do abide
Close shelter'd in Christ's bleeding side!¹

I have learned much of late. O dear Mrs. Wesley, what is man? Let us trust more in him who changeth not. If we expect anything here but pain, shame, loss, disgrace, we shall be disappointed.

I long to see you ever since I heard of your character. I am ready to think you are an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. Such I love. May the Lord make us all such! My companion² talks much of you and wishes to see you. She joins in duty to you and Mr. Charles Wesley. I am, in haste,

Your ever affectionate brother in Christ,

John Bennet

Address: "To / Mrs C Wesley."

Source: holograph; Pitts Library (Emory), Charles Wesley Family Papers (MSS 159), 1/3.

¹Cf. JW's translation of a hymn by Zinzendorf, "From the German," st. 3, *HSP* (1740), 75: "How blest are they, who still abide / Close shelter'd in thy bleeding side!"

²Grace (Murray) Bennet.

Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[Bristol]
April 17 [1751¹]

I was unwilling to let the frank go without returning my dear Mrs. Wesley hearty thanks for her welcome account of your safe arrival in London, and your love in wishing me with you. But indeed you would have found me a troublesome companion, for it is seldom a day that I have not so violent a headache that I can scarcely keep it off the pillow. And when I have some ease from extreme pain, it falls on my nerves, which takes away my strength. I feel a general decay. Sometimes I seem to think whether I shall soon be taken from the evil to come. O pray that I may be fitly prepared for such an awful season that, whenever it shall please God to call me hence, it may be a happy release from the troubles of life to the joys of a blessed eternity.

I have too long entertained you with my complaints, but hope you will think it a sufficient reason if I am sometimes remiss in writing. Yet let my dear friends be assured that, whether I write or am silent, you are daily on my heart, with sincere desires for your prosperity. In much love I salute you and your dear partner, begging and <desir>ing your constant prayers, I remain,

Your affectionate friend,

E. V.

Hope you will excuse and burn this, for I am ashamed to send it. Likewise for the scantiness of the paper, lest there should not be room in the frank. I beg Mr. [Charles] Wesley would give me credit a little longer. [My] sisters join in love to you and all enquiring friends. Mary and Sarah give their duty.²

Address: "To / Mrs. Charles Wesley / London."

Endorsement: by SGW, "Ans[were]d Apl. 30th."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/502/2/31.

¹The year is confirmed by SGW's trip to London.

²Likely Mary (Perrin) Southall and Sarah Perrin.

Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley to Samuel Lloyd¹

Bristol
June 6 [1751]

Dear Sir,

I should have wrote long ago to acknowledge your very kind and friendly offices, but the strong will make allowance for the weak. I seem made up of fear and indolence. You are made without them, and call nothing pain or trouble while serving a friend. Would to God we were both as diligent and courageous in his service, which is perfect freedom. By prayer we serve both him and each other. Prayer (as an old practitioner observes) is the greatest kindness one creature could show to another. Herein I shall be glad to help and ⟨...²⟩ all my fellow-travellers, till we arrive at our heavenly ⟨destiny?⟩

After all we must give up our hopes of seeing you this summer, being obliged to set out a fortnight hence for the north. We will very often miss you on the road, but our comfort is you are travelling the same narrow way which will lead us all to life eternal.

I am, dear sir,

Your obliged friend and humble servant,

Sa. Wesley

Pray present my respect to your brother.

Source: holograph; Bridwell Library (SMU), same sheet with letter by CW.

¹Samuel Lloyd (c. 1705–75) was born into a family of silk throwers in the London area who worked for Thomas Lombe (1685–1739). While he entered the family trade, 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. Lloyd returned to England about 1740, setting up his own business as a silk merchant in London. He was drawn into the Methodist revival in 1749, becoming particularly close to CW, but assisting both Wesley brothers in business matters over the next two decades. In August 1766 Lloyd listed his Devonshire Square property for sale and retired from the silk trade. 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.

²A small portion is torn away by the wax seal, affecting two lines.

From the Rev. John Wesley

“Hints for Conversation, out of my Brother’s Letters”

July 17, 1751

“I fear for Charles Skelton and Joseph Cownley¹ more and more; I have heard they frequently and bitterly rail against the Church.”

Q[uey]? What assurance *can* we have that they will not forsake it, at least when we are dead? Ought we to admit any man for a preacher *till we* can trust his invariable attachment to the Church?

Source: CW manuscript record; MARC, DDCW 8/5, p. 7.²

July 20, 1751

“The church, that is the societies, both *must* and *shall* maintain the preachers *we send* among them; or I will preach among them no more. The least I can say to any of those preachers is, ‘Give yourself wholly to the work, and you shall have food to eat, and raiment to put on.’ And I cannot see that any preacher is *called* to any people who will not thus far assist him.”

[Query]? How far do, or ought we to, send men to preach? How does this differ from ordaining?

If we take them from their trades and send them, ought we not to maintain them too?

Almost everything depends on you and me. Let nothing damp or hinder us. Only let us be alive, and put forth all our strength.

How is it that John Bennet cherishes all our malcontents?

Source: CW manuscript record; MARC, DDCW 8/5, pp. 7–8.³

July 24 [1751]

“As to preachers, my counsel is not to check the young ones, without strong necessity. If we lay some aside, we *must* have a supply, and of the two I prefer grace before gifts.”

[Query]? Are not both indispensably necessary? Has not the cause suffered in Ireland especially through that insouciance, as well as gracelessness, of the preachers?

Should we not first regulate, reform, and bring into discipline, the preachers we *have*, *before* we look for more? Should we not also watch and labour to prevent the mischiefs which the discarded preachers may occasion?

“Let these things drive us two close together, and it is worth all the cost.”

Amen, with all my heart, in the name of God! But *can* we unite unless it be given us from above? And must we not obtain the blessing through prayer?

Source: CW manuscript record; MARC, DDCW 8/5, pp. 8–9.⁴

¹Joseph Cownley (1723–92) was spiritually awakened under JW’s preaching in Bath in 1743, and on returning to his native Leominster joined the Methodist society there and began to preach. By the 1746 Conference he was an Assistant. He traveled widely in Ireland and the north of England.

²Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:470.

³Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:471.

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:472.

July 27 [1751]

“What is it has eaten out the heart of half our preachers, particularly those in Ireland? Absolutely idleness—their not being constantly employed. *I see it plainer and plainer.* Therefore I beg you would inquire of each, ‘How do you spend your time from morning to evening?’ And give him his choice, ‘Either follow your trade, or resolve before God to spend the same hours in *reading* which you used to spend in working.’”

Q[uey]: Has not God showed us both the disease and the remedy?

Source: CW manuscript record; MARC, DDCW 8/5, p. 9.⁵

August 3 [1751]

“I heartily concur with you in dealing with all (not only disorderly walkers, but also) triflers, μαλακούς,⁶ πολυπράγμονας,⁷ as with Michael Fenwick.⁸ I spoke to one this evening, so that I was even amazed at myself.”

Source: CW manuscript record; MARC, DDCW 8/5, p. 9.⁹

August 8 [1751]

“*We must* have forty itinerant preachers, or drop some of our societies. ... You cannot so well judge of this, without seeing the letters I receive from all parts. ...”

Source: CW manuscript record; MARC, DDCW 8/5, p. 9.¹⁰

August 15 [1751]

“If our preachers do not or will not spend *all* their time in study and saving souls, they *must* be employed close in other work, or perish.”

Source: CW manuscript record; MARC, DDCW 8/5, p. 10.¹¹

August 17 [1751]

“C[harles] S[kelton] pleads for a kind of aristocracy, and says you and I should do nothing without the consent of all the preachers, otherwise we govern arbitrarily, to which they cannot submit. Whence is this?”

I am told from Bristol you “rule the preachers with a rod of iron; they complain of it all over England,” etc., etc. This must be considered. We want a general solemn fast.¹²

⁵Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:473.

⁶Weak, effeminate, or infirm men.

⁷Busybodies.

⁸See CW, MS Journal, Aug. 5, 1751.

⁹Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:473.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²This paragraph is inset because it is CW’s response, not a quotation from JW’s letter.

Source: CW manuscript record; MARC, DDCW 8/5, p. 10.¹³

August 24 [1751]

“O that you and I may arise and stand upright!¹⁴ I quite agree with you. Let us have but six, so we are all one. I have sent one more, J. Loveybond,¹⁵ home to his work. We may trust God to send forth more labourers.¹⁶ [[Only be not unwilling to receive them, when there is reasonable proof that he has sent them.]]”

Source: CW manuscript record; MARC, DDCW 8/5, p. 10.¹⁷

¹³Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:475–76.

¹⁴See Ps. 20:8 (BCP).

¹⁵See CW, MS Journal, Apr. 15, 1751: “I heard Lovybond preach, most miserably. By how many degrees are such preachers worse than none!”

¹⁶See Matt. 9:38.

¹⁷Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:476.

Rebecca Gwynne to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[Ludlow]
Sunday, September 22, 1751

Dearest Sister Wesley,

I return you a great many thanks for your letter, which I received last Monday, and am glad to find you and brother Wesley are in good health. I am very sorry to hear that you and brother Wesley don't intend coming to Ludlow in your way to Bristol. Pray remember me to all that ask for me there.

The little ones are well. I should be very glad if I should have leave to come <with?> you to Birmingham.

I beg you will excuse the shortness of this, for it is late. All here join with me in love and service to you and brother Wesley.

I am

Dearest sister Wesley's affectionate sister,

R. G.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/8a.

From John Hutchinson¹

Baildon
September 29, 1751

My Most Dear and Best Beloved Friend,

I received yours. With much fatigue I got safe on Monday night about seven o'clock to this place, where I yet carry the burden of a sorrowful mind. On my journey I endured the most exquisite grief and still remain inconsolable for the loss of so dear, so valuable, and 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 [I am] no more worthy of that friendship which is dearer to me than life. Were your tender regard and friendly admonitions from this moment to cease, [I] own [it] would justly be my desert. My uneasiness at present requires me to ask you ten thousand pardons, and once more look over the folly and indiscreetness of a thoughtless, heedless, ungrateful youth, and 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 ensure my place above these 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 and die with you. If you don't visit Yorkshire soon I can never be at rest. If you confine yourself in the south for so many years, as of late you have done, and forget you have a sincere unalterable 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 bestowed I hope will not be in vain. 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 and 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 and love me more. Let no new convert be my rival. Continue your loving kindness unto me and admit no one to have a greater share in your affection than your poor, unworthy, ungrateful young man.

I have been broken hearted ever since your departure.² What yielded me most ease was the thought of hearing from you, which I impatiently waited for. Upon first sight of your letter,³ my heart leaped for joy. I have read it over times without number, but cannot find your accustomed manner of writing—which was: Dear Johnny, Dear youth, etc., etc. I remember in your three letters to Mr. Shent,⁴ you begun 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, and you shall never want anything I can do for you. Only continue to travel and I will wait for your support.

¹John Hutchinson (1722–54) was the son of Timothy (1693–1747) and Mary (b. 1695) Hutchinson of Leeds, where Mary was a member of the Methodist society. CW met John during his 1751 tour of northern England, and the fatherless John quickly became attached. Hutchinson suffered from ill-health, and CW soon arraigned to host him in Bristol, where he might benefit from treatment at Hotwells. Caring for Hutchinson proved a strain over the next couple of years, but CW remained devoted, and wrote three mournful hymns on the occasion of Hutchinson's death in July 23, 1754; see *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 6–12.

²CW had stayed at the Hutchinson home in Leeds in mid-July 1751.

³This may be the letter CW mentions writing on July 24, 1751 in MS Journal. It is not known to survive.

⁴The only letter of CW to William Shent around this time that survives is Sept. 21, 1751.

I continue in health much the same as when at Manchester. I got much better [at] home than could 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's. Yes, it is he whom I most love! Whom I shall never forget until I 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 visit 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 dear, dear friend. I fear you will be wearied in reading my long scribble. Believe me, it is the real language of my heart. And now [I] conclude with my kind love to Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, returning her ten thousand thanks for all her tender, but undeserved courtesies to me. And [I] shall, if possible, accept her agreeable invitation. My love when you write to that most inimitable composition of body and mind (I mean Mrs. [Sarah] Perrin)

I observe your appointment at twelve o'clock. I have little hopes for myself. [I] delight in your commands and in doing you the little service I am capable of at present.

I remain, with all the tender ties of love and friendship, My dear, dear sir,
Your ever affectionate real friend and brother,

John Hutchinson

P.S. Write to me at Leeds. I shall expect to receive a letter from you, the thoughts of which give me pleasure.⁵

Endorsements: by CW, "[[Loving James Hutchinson September]] 29. 1751"; "J.H. / *Uno avulso non deficit alter!*";⁶ and "Sept. 29. 1751 / J. Hutchinson – what James Hutton was!"

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/75.⁷

⁵The shorthand that appears following Hutchinson's postscript is CW's copy for his records of his letter to Sarah Perrin, Oct. 5, 1751.

⁶Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, vi.143; "when one is torn away, another will not be lacking."

⁷For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From John Bennet¹

Chinley
October 4, 1751

Dear Brother,

By your letter to John Cross of Boothbank,² which was delivered to me at the quarterly meeting; and by the unchristian behaviour brother Webb³ met with from the brethren when he was last at Manchester, who signified unto him that what they did and said was at your request; together with some proceedings you stand chargeable with; I think I have reason not only to suspect your sincerity, but that you as well as your brother use guile, impose unscriptural things, and assume arbitrary power. Therefore, unless these things are done away from amongst us, and every man left at liberty to think and let think, I cannot in conscience give you the right hand of fellowship. You know my sentiments. I have no reserves. The church is now militant; ere long she shall be triumphant. Till then, as the *elect* of God, let us put on meekness, long-suffering, and humbleness of mind.

I think the preaching sinless perfection at all, and professing even holiness in general in a legal way, has done a great deal of hurt. Our business is to show believers their completeness in Christ, and point them to him for strength for every good word and work, and all to be done out of gratitude and love for what he hath done and suffered for us (read Luke 9:49).⁴

October 12

The former part of the letter I wrote out of the fullness of my heart, without the least reserve, which had been sent as soon as wrote, had not brother Colbeck desired me to stop my hand a season.⁵ I cannot in conscience be silent any longer. The cause of Christ constrains me to speak. Oh what deceit! Good God deliver me from all guile!

What is your design? Speak plain—did you send William Shent amongst us because you thought he would be most able to corrupt the minds of the simple?⁶ He acted very indiscretely, or rather,

¹This letter marks John Bennet's move toward more Calvinist views, which would lead him to separate from JW's connexion in 1752. Bennet received congregational ordination in 1754 and took charge of an Independent chapel at Warburton, Cheshire, where he served until his death.

²John Cross was currently a gardener for the Earl of Warrington, and his wife Alice an early Methodist evangelist. Their home in Rostherne parish was the local site for Methodist worship. See JW, *Journal*, Mar. 31, 1753, *Works*, 20:449–50. CW heard from John Cross that Thomas Webb and David Trathen were preaching predestination at Booth Bank. While his letter of response is not known to survive, CW describes in a journal letter (MARC, DDCW 6/27, for Sept. 21, 1751) that he instructed Cross to tell the stewards not to let either man preach there anymore.

³Thomas Webb was accepted as a probationary itinerant in 1750, but also laid aside in Nov. 1751, in large part for promoting predestination (see JW, *Works*, 10:237, 246). This is not the Capt. Thomas Webb who played a significant role in early American Methodism.

⁴Bennet wrote an initial draft of this opening reply on the back of CW's letter to him dated Sept. 25, 1751 (MARC, DDCW 4/66).

⁵Thomas Colbeck (1723–79), a highly respected grocer and mercer, was steward of the Keighley Methodist society from 1746 until his death, and steward also of the Keighley or Haworth circuit. In 1748 JW accepted him as an Assistant among his traveling preachers, though in fact he was never stationed away from the West Riding of Yorkshire. He served (and attended Conference occasionally) as one of JW's major local preachers. See Vickers, *Dictionary*, 73.

⁶William Shent (1714–88) was a barber and wigmaker in Leeds. Shent's shop in Briggate became the initial home of the Leeds society, and he became its leader. He also served for a few years as a

impudently at our quarterly meeting, insinuating into the minds of some his design of coming thither, and during the whole meeting strove to strengthen the hands of them that (in my opinion) should have been weakened. At Chester, I am informed by a messenger who came hither last night, that Mr. Shent told them: “That Mr. [Jonathan] Reeves would come to take Mr. [John] Bennet’s place in these parts and to act as superintendent. That they must wink at Mr. [Robert] Swindells, come a few times, because in a little time he would be gone into Ireland. As also, that if Mr. Swindells stayed any time and did not preach *your* doctrine, he would be silenced.” From there he marched on to Bolton, and so to Manchester, I suppose with the same message. I shall follow him in a few days, and then hear the truth.

John Nelson I hear is at Manchester and Bolton, but hath not been in these parts as yet—but disappointed several congregations. William Shent gave orders for a house to be rented at Chester for preaching. Thus you have openly declared war, and *first* began a separation. Now I know how to proceed. Why will you bring a staff upon your own head? I am not willing to expose you. I have your letter to John Cross.

Source: Bennet’s copy for his records; Letterbook (MARC, MA 1977/130), 92–94.

Added from Grace (Norman / Murray) Bennet

[Chinley]
[October. 12, 1751]

What have *you* done? William Shent has made a separation.
You know his [i.e., John Bennet’s] honesty.
O sir, you have declared war.
For your *own* sake I advise you to be free with brother [Thomas] Webb.

Source: CW excerpts in his response of October 26, 1751; Drew, Methodist Archives.

regional itinerant, until business failure and problems with alcohol led to his removal from these roles. See Vickers, *Dictionary*, 316.

From the Rev. James Hervey

Tottenham
October 19, 1751

My Very Dear Friend,

I have just now received your affectionate letter.¹ Mr. [William] Lunell, the worthy bearer, is scarcely gone over the threshold and the voice of his agreeable conversation is still sounding in my ears.² O that we may meet in glory and, having washed our robes in the blood of the Lamb, stand together before the throne.

I am a debtor to you for a former favour and have nothing to pay but thanks. I have lately been on the borders of eternity—extremely ill indeed, and only not dead. God has snatched me from the grave. But I am scarcely released from my confinement in the house. O that I may not be restored, only to be a cumberer of the ground! I rejoice in the continuance of your health and often put up my best prayers to our heavenly Father for the abundant success of your labours. Who is it that says, “The righteous shall run to and fro, as sparks among the stubble, and by their means shall knowledge be increased?”³ I know not where it is written, but in you, my dear friend, I hope it will be exemplified.

I am very much obliged to Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley. May the character and the blessing of Zachariah and Elizabeth be hers and yours! My intended work is still in the cradle. For eight weeks, instead of using my pen I have been obliged to keep a nurse, and even now am constrained hours in bed. So that no great things can be expected from such an invalid. But, though weak in my body, I am warm in my affection to yourself and spouse, and desire nothing more than to be in deed as well as in word,

Your brother in Christ,

James Hervey

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley / at the Foundery.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[October] 19. 1751 [[James Hervey]]” and “Loving James Hervey.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/20.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²William Lunell (1699–1774), son of a Huguenot refugee, became a wealthy cloth merchant (and sometimes banker) in Dublin. He lived in a large house at 15 Francis Street. He was apparently won for Methodism by Thomas Williams in early 1747. His second wife Anne (Gratton) Lunell died Aug. 6, 1748 (see CW’s epitaph in his letter to Lunell of Aug. 21, 1748). In early 1753 Lunell married a third time, to Rebecca Taylor (1726–1807). The two of them retired to Bristol in 1766. See *WHS* 22.4 (1939): 73–76.

³Cf. Wisdom of Solomon, 3:7–9.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
October 26, 1751

Dear Sir,

You have great reason to charge me with ingratitude, did you judge by appearances and not truly righteous judgment. My illness has prevented me in part, but I hope when I see Mrs. Wesley and you at Bath I shall explain all disparities(?). I hope to know when you make that in your way to Bristol, and that either dinner or supper you will both, with Mrs. [Sarah] Perrin, not fail taking with me. I thank and bless you and your kind companions for their precious prayers. They have availed much and though [I am] yet in a suffering state, it will but make what is to come, whether in time of for eternity, far more weighty and glorious. I am longing and wishing for a fresh pouring forth of the Spirit of light, love, and wisdom, that the glorious church may be without spot or wrinkle and that all base metal that glitters like gold may be proved and tried in the balance and cast out as wanting. *Humility* and simplicity I want, and my only comfort [is] that he who only can give it will *have patience* with me till I have it and pity my poverty. In this confidence I now live.

Your most obliged and faithful friend,

S. H.

Do assure Mrs Wesley how most kindly I feel myself hers and Mrs. Perrin's. Do not forget your prayers for a mouth and wisdom for me, for it is much wanted for the adversaries are many and mighty that are against the poor disciples of the Lord.

Address: "To / The Rev'd Mr. / Charles Wessley at / the Foundery in / Upper Moorfields / London."

Postmark: "28/OC."

Annotations: by CW, "L. H. Oct. 26. 1751 / [[renewing her profession]]." "[[Lady Huntingdon October]] 26 1751."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/18.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

October [30], 1751

Dear Sir,

I cannot describe the comfort and pleasure your letter gave me. But above all, that your charity ceases not to pray for me, though I am weak indeed. Your letters will be comforts to me. Do not fear of sending me many. I fear as if one we highly blame *has had a good report* sent of him to the societies.¹ I answered for you as I had witnessed how you had ached, and that you would never bear to write a letter of commendation either of him or for him. My love to Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley and Mrs. [Sarah] Perrin. Do forgive my sad words, but I have been forced to write so much today that I am quite spent. But [I] every find myself

Your most unalterable and affectionate friend,

[S. H.]

Address: "To / the Rev'd Mr Charles / Wesley at the / Foundery / Upper Moorfields / London."

Postmark: "4/NO."

Annotation: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon October]] 1751" and "L. H. Oct. 1751 / [[returned]]."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/19.

¹Likely referring to James Wheatley.

From John Bennet

[Chinley?]
October 31, 1751

Dear Reverend Brother,

In answer to yours of the 26th instant,¹ I cannot be positive touching the time when I shall be at Kingswood, since my wife is very weak and feeble through a miscarry. However I hope in a little time I shall have the pleasure to see you, either there or elsewhere. I have read your last letter more than once, wherein you speak your whole mind. I must needs say you have a deal of patience and answered me with words of love and peace. You know my weakness, and wherein you see I am tempted you must still bear with me and advise me. What is upon my mind, I trust, will be done away when I see you, to open my whole heart. I shall ever be glad to hear of your welfare.

We must all fall low in deep humiliation before the Lord. It is good news you tell us of James Murray.² May the Lord Jesus carry on and perfect the good work in his soul. My wife joins in love and duty to you and Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, and am,
etc.

Jonathan Reeves is in these parts. Although I have been but little in his company, yet I doubt not but he is a peacemaker.

Source: Bennet's copy for his records; Letterbook (MARC, MA 1977/130), 95.

¹CW to John and Grace Bennet, Oct. 26, 1751.

²The son of Grace (Norman/Murray) Bennet by her previous marriage.

From Sarah Perrin

Bradford[-on-Avon]
November 4[-6, 1751]

Dear and Honoured Friend,

My reason for not writing any account of what passed between your brother and me was because I thought Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley would tell you the particulars. I spoke my thoughts freely and told him the danger the work was in of being destroyed unless an immediate stop was put to those preachers who do not live the gospel. I likewise told him you could not labour in the work in faith unless we would agree by written articles between you to let none labour with you but such as both consented to. He told me if you would agree to take one third of the travelling work upon you, he would agree to that. Otherwise he could not, because it would be impossible for you to have any knowledge of the preachers.

I came from Bristol last Wednesday. Brother [Joseph] Cownley was there and I believe profits the people, but is a very poor state of health. A good preacher is very much wanted in this round. I was at Bearfield last night and it was lame work indeed to a large congregation.¹ Many stumbling blocks have been laid in the way of these people. I almost wonder how they stand. I hear your brother [JW], through brother Warhon's(?) persuasion, consented to Jo. Hewish preaching again.² It seems he was drunk the night before. Brother [John] Jones was here. He did what he could to prevent him, but they tell me he still goes about in other places as one of Mr. Wesley's preachers. Likewise I hear complaints of Edmond Wells.³ But I heard at Bristol your brother had been told enough of him to have stopped his mouth before he was sent here. He is now I find at Salisbury, a fine builder up for that place indeed.

My heart is pained for these things, and I am ready to cry out "Who is on the Lord's side? Who, who in Israel are valiant for the truth, that abhor sin and strive with all their might to put away iniquity from amongst us?"

I intend to go to Melksham tomorrow. I am well in health and my heart is in the work, and my desires are alive to God.

I still have that affair under consideration.⁴ Frequently after fervent prayer I believe it will be, and be for both our good. At other times I reason against it. But I find in me such a constant desire to do the will of God that I steadfastly believe if it is not for the best it will be prevented.

I should be glad to hear when you intend to be in Bristol. My kind love to Mrs. Wesley. With duty and love I remain,

Thy unworthy friend,

S. P.

November 6

Since I writ my letter I have been to Melksham. They complain for want of a preacher. I had a good time with them. Farewell.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at the Foundry / Upper Moorfields / in / London."

Postmark: "8/NO."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Sarah Perrin / Nov]] 4. 1751" and "S Perrin of [[the newest preachers, of articles, etc.]] / Nov. 4. 1751."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/57.

¹Bearfield was a northern area of Bradford-on-Avon.

²Apparently Joel Hewish (1723–93), a local preacher (John Hewish had died in 1740).

³Another local preacher; never appears among travelling preachers.

⁴Perrin was pondering marriage to John Jones (1721–85); which took place on May 20, 1752.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

December 4, 1751

On some points it is easier to write than to speak, especially where there is danger of warmth on either side.

In what respect do you judge it needful to “break my power,” and “to reduce my authority within due bounds”? I am quite ready to part with the whole or any part of it. It is no pleasure to me, nor ever was.

There is another tender point which I would just touch on. The quarterly contribution of the classes (something more than two hundred a year) is to keep the preachers, and to defray all the expenses of the house. But for this it did never yet suffice. For you, therefore (who have an hundred and fifty pounds a year, to maintain only two persons²), to take any part of this, seems to me utterly unreasonable. *I could not* do it, if it were my own case—I should account it robbery, yea, robbing the spittle.³ I have often wondered how either your conscience or your sense of honour could bear it, especially as you know I am almost continually distressed for money; who am expected to make up the deficiencies of this, as well as all the other funds.

I am willing (if our judgments differ) to refer this or anything else to Mr. [Vincent] Perronet or Mr. [Ebenezer] Blackwell. I desire only to spend and to be spent in the work which God has given me to do.

Adieu!

Source: secondary manuscript copy; MARC, MAM JW 5/50.⁴

¹The letter CW wrote to Lady Huntingdon, dated Oct. 4, 1751, had been intercepted and given to JW. The phrases JW challenges CW about come from that letter.

²On Aug. 9, 1749, JW signed a document settling £100 a year upon CW out of the proceeds of their joint publications—a condition imposed by Sarah Gwynne’s parents’ prior to her marriage to CW. The other £50 would be CW’s allowance for services rendered as one of the married clergy administering the Methodist societies.

³A spital or spittle was a charitable foundation for the care of very poor people, of a lower social grade than the hospital. The phrase ‘rob the spittle’ implied the meanest forms of profiteering.

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:479–80.

Margaret Gwynne to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[Ludlow]
Friday [December 28, 1751¹]

Dearest Sister Wesley,

I hope you will excuse my long silence. I should have wrote before to you, but as I knew sister Beck [i.e., Rebecca] wrote to you every post, I thought you would not take it amiss, as sister [Elizabeth] Waller was lately brought to bed, for I am with her and the little one all day.² He is very well and likely to live. I hope sister Waller will have her health better than she had for some time.

I have but just time to add that my sisters and brother and Lady³ join with me in love to you and brother Wesley.

I am

Dearest sister Wesley's affectionate sister,

M. Gwynne

P.S. Brother Rod[erick] bid me tell you he would write you if you would write to him.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/8b.

¹Date suggested by mention of Thomas Waller.

²Thomas Waller (1751–81), the first child of James and Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller, was baptized in Ludlow on Dec. 31, 1751.

³Howell Gwynne and Lady Rudd.

1752

From James Waller¹

[Ludlow]
January 7, 1752

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I received your kind letter and return you my sincere thanks for the same.² Bless God, I came safe to this place on Saturday night, where I found all our friends in good health except my dear partner [Elizabeth], who is lower in spirits than ever I saw anyone in this life. But still I hope in time she will recover her strength and be better than ever. As to my little son [Thomas], never was there a more hearty child in Ludlow 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 and 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 than to see brethren dwell together in love. It is my one desire that nothing may evermore happen to break into it.

I am much obliged to my dear friend for his prayers for me. I assure you I stand much in need of them. Many are the temptations which beset me. But yet I have a good hope through grace that I shall be more than conqueror through him that have loved me, and washed me in his most precious blood. Dear sir, I am persuaded that notwithstanding all my unbelief and hardness of heart, I shall be in your crown of rejoicing in that glorious day when the Lord shall come with thousands of angels and judge this world. I then trust I shall be admitted with you in the realms of bliss, to sing praises to God and the Lamb forever.

My kind love attends your dear partner. Wishing you all happiness, concludes me, dear sir,
Your son in Christ,

J. Waller

Address: "To / The Revd Mr. C. Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[James Waller January]] 7 1752" and "Jams. Waller Jan. 7 / 1752 / is at peace & / trusting to be my crown."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/133.³

¹James Waller (c. 1723–1802) first appears on the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46), on trial, in March 1743. By 1746 he was travelling on occasion with CW, to drive the carriage and the like. Through these trips Waller met Sarah's sister Elizabeth Gwynne, and in Dec. 1750 CW joined James and Elizabeth in marriage. Waller became a successful lace merchant in London and provided support to SGW after CW's death.

²This letter, likely congratulating Waller on the recent birth of his son Thomas, is not known to survive.

³For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From the Rev. William Grimshaw¹

[Hayworth]
c. January 20, 1752

[...] These intestine divisions, are dreadful. While union is preserved among us we are impregnable, and the attacks of our enemies help rather to cement, than distract us; but being divided, we become an easy prey to the common enemy, and even worry one another. [...]

Source: extract in CW letter to John Bennet; MARC, DDCW 1/43.

¹Rev. William Grimshaw (1708–63) matriculated at Christ's College, Cambridge in 1726, receiving his BA in 1730. He was ordained deacon and priest over the next two years. He held the curacy of St. Mary's Chapel, Todmorden for ten years; and in May 1742 became perpetual curate at Haworth, where he remained until his death. The Methodists also came to Haworth in 1742, and within five years both JW and CW had met Grimshaw. From the outset they were greatly attached, for Grimshaw was deeply religious and a boisterous evangelist. He became JW's right hand man in the midlands and the north, and in Methodist trust deeds was named as the one responsible for the direction of Methodism in the event of the death of both Wesley brothers. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 165–69; *DEB*, 480–82; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 142–43.

From William Barber

[London]
February 1752

The following is a particular account as I can give you concerning my wife Joanna Barber.¹

When she was first awakened it was under your brother's ministry, that very Sabbath-day that he preached at St. Giles-in-the-fields.² And such an awakening I have seldom seen, for the Lord in that hour gave her such a sight of herself, had not the people been very thick, she must a sunk down to the ground. In a few days after the Lord convinced her of unholiness and set her sins in array before her face in such a manner that indeed she could truly say the burden of them was intolerable.

She laboured under the burden of her sins for near two years before she found deliverance, in which time she had many and sore conflicts with the enemy. She could not go along the street about her business but if [she] saw any of the creatures that God made, some evil or blasphemous [thought] would arise in her mind. Many and various were the temptations that she was assaulted with from the enemy while she was under conviction. But when the Lord spoke grace to her soul she rode, as it were, upon the wings of the wind for a season; till the enemy came again with his angel's face and said, "Now thy sins are forgiven, thou hast no more to do." She found this the greatest temptation of all and as often said. She was ready to sink into the earth at the very thought. But the Lord had taught her better things, for she saw the great necessity of being fully renewed in his image, which was her constant prayer and desire.

When the time came that we parted from our bretheren at Fetter Lane, she readily agreed thereto, for she saw that stillness was so agreeable to self and nature that she could in no wise agree therein. And from that time she never went to hear them more.

She was of a fearful and timorous disposition lest she should presume too far upon the mercies of God. She would often put the blessings from her. She was often complaining of her evil heart and her corrupt nature. But her continual prayer to God was for full deliverance.

When the time came that the Lord was about to take her to himself, she was visited with exceeding great pain of body. Her prayer to God was for faith and patience to bear what the Lord was pleased to lay upon her. She saw her end drew near and would often cry out, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." Being asked if she had anything that burdened her mind. She answered, "No." She knew that Christ had taken away all her sins. She said, "I do not find much joy but sweet calmness and serenity of mind." But when the time of departure drew nigh, which was Sunday morning, she said, "I must go home, I must go home to my Father's house," and would often cry out in the intervals, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly." She said, "This is my dear last Sabbath, my dear last Sabbath."

Her last words that she spoke was,

Come shed thy promised love abroad
And make my comforts strong.³

And then she laid herself down and sweetly slept in the Lord.

Endorsement: by CW, "S[ister] Barber's Death / Febr. 1752."
Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/22.

¹Her name is given at the bottom of the account. See William's earlier spiritual account sent to CW in Oct. 1741.

²Feb. 4, 1739; see JW, *Journal, Works*, 19:34.

³Cf. JW's abridged version of an Isaac Watts hymn, "Waiting for the Spirit of Adoption," st. 6, *CPH* (1741), 26.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
February 27, 1752

My Worthy Friend,

I am sure it will be great pleasure to you to hear that Lady Betty was yesterday morning married to a most sensible and worthy man, Lord Rawdon of Ireland.¹ He has a very great fortune, but above all [is] a man disposed to great seriousness, and which from the great respect I have for him, I trust, will end in true and exemplary piety.

Your letter was full of spiritual comfort and instruction.² I trust God will abundantly reward those prayers you offer for me, I value them more than thousands of worlds. By these my youngest daughter is given back to me for a time.³ Oh may I be deeply sensible by being deeply humbled for two such great mercies! My kindest and most enlarged wishes attend Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley. May your heart be filled with prayer and supplication for your poor, unprofitable, dark, and suffering friend, who feels herself unalterably so to you in that unity of Spirit which is by Jesus Christ.

S. H.

Address: “To / The Rev. Mr Charles / Wesley at the / Foundery / upper Moorfields / London.”

Postmarks: “Bath” and “2/MR.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[February] 25 [sic]. 1753 [[Lady Huntingdon]] / [[Informing me of one daughter married, another recovered]].”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/20.⁴

¹John Rawdon (1720–93) was at this point Baron of Moira; in 1761 he was elevated to Earl of Moira. He married Elizabeth Frances Hastings (1731–1808), the oldest daughter of Lady Huntingdon, on Feb. 26, 1752 in Walcot St. Swithin, Somerset.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Selina Hastings (1737–63), Lady Huntingdon’s youngest daughter, had been ill.

⁴Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 76.

Margaret Gwynne to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[Ludlow]
Sunday morning [March 1, 1752¹]

Dearest Sister Wesley,

I return you a great many thanks for your letter. I should have answered sooner, but sister Beck hindered me. She bid me let you know that she would have wrote to you now but that she was obliged for to write to sister Juggy.²

Little Sally is better.³ Doctor Hill has hope for her.⁴ The rest of the little ones are very well. Pray tell brother Rod I think he might write to me. I wish we may come to London a good while before you go from there. Sister [Elizabeth] Waller is but very weak. She has not been down stairs yet. Mr. [Thomas] Baugh has carried his cause;⁵ there has been great rejoicing in Ludlow this last week, and there is to be an ox roasted on Tuesday next in Broad street on the occasion. I beg you will write to me soon. Sister Waller's little boy [Thomas] is as fine a boy as one can see. I believe in a little time I shan't be able to carry him.

My sisters join with me in love and service to you, brother Wesley, and brother Rod. Poor Lady Rudd has got a cold and a sore eye; she desires her love. I am,

Dearest sister Wesley's affectionate sister,

M. Gwynne

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/78.

¹The date is based on the account in *Read's Weekly Journal*, Sat., Feb. 29, 1752, of rejoicing in Ludlow over the past week regarding the decision favouring Thomas Baugh.

²Margaret is using the family names for Rebecca and Joan Gwynne.

³Apparently the daughter of Marmaduke and Jane (Howells) Gwynne, b. 1744.

⁴Caleb Hill, M.D. (1705–62), of Ludlow.

⁵He had overcome challenges to the Stonehouse estate raised on his father's death in 1746.

From Mary (Goldhawk / Vazeille) Wesley¹

Kingswood
May 22, 1752

Sir,

You desired me to write to you.² And I entreat you to deal honestly between God and your own soul. Wheresoever your own heart condemns you, be humble and be ashamed before him who is greater than your heart and knoweth all things, and who will bring every secret thing into judgment. I am rather constrained to speak the more plainly at this time because I see hardly anyone that loves you or the work of God so much as to do it. They rather uphold your pride and excessive laziness by vile flattery and base compliance, making you thereby fit fuel for hellfire—not, as you say, *a minister of Jesus Christ*. Hence then, if the devil give you leave, look inward, reflect seriously on your past conduct, and consider how well it has answered your high calling: *a minister of Jesus Christ*. O learn to be little and vile in your own eyes.

Now to begin with what I was myself a witness to when at London.³ You serve the creature more than the Creator. For her sake who is your *idol*,⁴ how did you then sacrifice the work of God. You said at first you would only stay there a day or two. But how was your weakness imposed upon by those proud wretches and your idol, [detracting] both from your purpose (the work of God) and particular care of your own soul. This you may remember was so glaring that I could not help but speak to you of [it], as well as pray for you. But all was to no purpose. For you would nether rise up, or sit down, nor dress, but to please those worldly-minded wretches.⁵

And is not the case the same to this day? Is not every journey, nay every time and place of preaching, laid out only for her convenience? Was it not on her account you left London? Is it not for her sake that you did not come to Kingswood—or rather lose a good dinner and her sweet pipe? Was it not for her that travelling in the societies you went only to the rich, not the poor; because it was not worth your lady's while to visit those for naught? So it is you neglect the poor societies, because (as some said) "*Their cages were not fine enough for your singing bird.*"⁶ Pray tell me what fine things or ornament does a Methodist preacher's wife want? Why, meekness and lowliness of mind. But I was told "Sally Gwynne wanted a husband in great haste. So she put on the show of religion till she gained her point"—though

¹On Mar. 15, 1752, Mary and her daughter Jeanne set out with JW on his preaching tour to northern England (see JW, *Journal, Works*, 20:411). They reached Newcastle on Apr. 30. While there Mary received word that her sons (staying at Kingswood) were ill. About May 15 she went to Kingswood to check on them (see JW to Ebenezer Blackwell, May 23, 1752, *Works*, 26:494–95). Events during this visit provoked this letter.

²Note that both CW and Mary were in the Bristol area, so CW had apparently requested that Mary put complaints she was making into writing.

³CW and his wife Sarah were in London when (to their shared dismay) JW married Mary (Goldhawk) Vazeille in Feb. 1751; see their initial reactions in CW, MS Journal, Feb. 2 – Mar. 19, 1751. CW and Sarah left London for Bristol in early May 1751, but were there again much of Oct. and Nov. CW was again in London, at least on short trips, during Jan. through March 1752.

⁴I.e., Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley.

⁵CW and Sarah spent their time in early 1751 at the London home of James and Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller, Sarah's sister; or with Martha (Meighen) Colvill and her niece Mary Degge at either their London home or country house near Chertsey.

⁶Sarah was known for her beautiful singing voice.

you was not the aim.⁷ So I do not wonder she makes a tool of you. You sacrifice all to her.

O my brother, is this doing the work of God deceitfully or is it not? But what says our Lord? “Cursed be every such an one.”⁸ In your conscience you know you are not clear as to these matters (whatever be the cause). Is this a *minister of Jesus Christ*? Are you not a bad slave of Satan? Pray what would you say if it were the case of anyone but yourself? O be wise in time. God calls aloud, “Come out from among unclean things.”⁹ Shake off sloth. God is not mocked.” If this is not sowing to the flesh, I know not what is. Your mean and base and inordinate practices you should consider. Are not these things below the character of a man? Much more a *minister of Christ*? You have raised such contempt and aversion to yourself from most of those with whom you have been by trifling conversation, not in religious and serious talk. O my dear brother, be not faithless but believing. Show your faith by your works. Let red-hot passion be seen in your face no more, but go and preach the gospel. Wait no more to be desired. If you are a *minister of Jesus Christ*, it is time to show it.

It is a matter of grief to me to see how many souls you have weakened by the littleness of your faith. And shall not God visit for this? How can you dare tell people they have no faith or grace if they will not hear in the morning?¹⁰ Pray, why do you not always rise as your brother does when in health? And why did not she rise before she was with child—though I cannot see why she might not now.¹¹ You talk mightily of the power of faith. I wish you would show it. What measure of this faith, I pray, have you? Time was, I read, when Christians could trust God with body and soul. I appeal to your own conscience in the sight of God, where is your faith in the affair of the smallpox?¹² It is absolutely none at all. But where shall the fearful and unbelieving appear?

I pass by many things too tedious to relate. But I must remind you of your little vile artifices by which you daily endeavour to enrich yourself and lade yourself with thick clay—which may effectually sink you into eternal perdition. Though I forget, would not even this sacrifice be too little to gain your charmer’s love? Heaven in her love; damnation in her hate. I fear you think very little at this time of any other heaven or hell. Otherwise you would not dare to *rob your brother* and the poor. To sacrifice to her pride and your own sensuality, you must take a house and furnish [it] as for a fine gentleman; not as a Methodist Christian or minister of the lowly Jesus Christ.¹³ And with some things you had no manner of right to. Your brother could not but wonder at your assurance herein. And I must tell you not to be surprised when I send to take away his picture out of your house, which [he] himself gave to me. Indeed, everyone can take notice of you laying your hands on what you like at any place—and very decently too, by offering to buy it, as you did my carpet. The Londoners easily saw through your design when you made a fresh publication of the watch-night hymns, etc.¹⁴ Many at that time were much offended. And

⁷Likely referring to Rev. Edward Phillips (1716–76), rector at Maesmynys, Wales, who had also courted Sarah Gwynne Jr. See CW, MS Journal, Dec. 8–12, 1748.

⁸Cf. Gal. 3:10; etc.

⁹Cf. 2 Cor. 6:17.

¹⁰I.e., attend the morning preaching service.

¹¹Sarah was currently pregnant; their son John would be baptized Aug. 17.

¹²It is possible that it was smallpox afflicting Mary’s sons that brought her to Kingswood; or that CW was avoiding Kingswood due to smallpox there. The smallpox infection that would scar CW’s wife Sarah and take the life of their toddler son John was in Dec. 1753.

¹³After his marriage to Sarah Gwynne on Apr. 8, 1749, CW had rented a house in Bristol, at the corner of Barton and Charles St. (possibly what now is No. 19 Charles Street). They moved into this house on Sept. 1, 1749; see CW, MS Journal.

¹⁴The watch-night was an early Methodist practice that emerged among the coal miners at Kingswood. These were nights when Methodists gathered to devote themselves to prayer, somber

still you are not satisfied. Witness, as you told me your proposal to your brother about the hymn for the girls.¹⁵ Why, if any man is a pickpocket, what are you? As arrant a one as ever lived. And all this for what, pray you? Why to make up the sum of £3,000, beside your base £100 a year, and £50 more when you can catch it, as a fine lady's fortune. Good grounds for suffering! Which is the best now? Settle it in your own heart to suffer, or "Soul take thine ease; eat, drink, and *sing* too."¹⁶ Till a sudden destruction come upon you unawares. O think and be wise, before it be too late.

I hope you have not thought of keeping a man [servant], since your proposal to me. You may remember my objections against it. The Lord teach and convince you! I must tell you, you are not to blame your brother; he is clear in all this matter. But if you blind and bind him up, you shall not me! Nor is [it] your sharp words, nor your threats, shall frighten me from telling you what I seen and think. Remember your obligations to your brother, and blush for shame. You know you eat of his bread, and might probably be exposed to intolerable want and reproach but for him. For I can tell you, most of the civilities and kindnesses you have received have been merely for his sake, not for your diligence in the work, nor *her* good breeding. But I hope she has learned a little by being with her betters.

What I now speak is from myself and my own knowledge. What barbarity was it to suffer your brother to go out at a time when his throat was so bad, and [he had] a great fever?¹⁷ He could neither speak or swallow. You would not then preach when we sent to desire you. You had made a pre-engagement, a visit with your wife, so did not come (so it is you sacrifice your brother, time, God, and all to your own ease and indulgence, your harpsichord, and your siren's destructive voice¹⁸), and soon after sent for him to come and speak with you from Snowfields, when his life was in danger. Sure[ly] this is not as you would be *done* by. When I asked you to go to Ireland,¹⁹ was that becoming in a *minister of Jesus Christ* to fly in such a passion? Be ashamed and consider your many obligations and obey the convictions. But you do not strive to obey God, nor ease your brother in anything. You say you love your wife. I should have you, and every man [do so]. But take care you do not longer make her your idol and your curse.

But I forget, I am not to teach a *minister of Jesus Christ*. But bear with me. Your behaviour to me has been as indecent as malicious. Was it kind to send back of copy of my last letter? And before that, to tell your brother of my coldness towards your wife? If it had been so, you should have spoken to me of it. Was it decent when you saw your brother's wife [come] from a long journey, and you saw me going

reflection, and mutual encouragement to the holy life. The earliest mention we find of the practice in CW's MS Journal is when he attended a meeting at Kingswood on Apr. 24, 1741. CW wrote two hymns following his initial experience of watch-night, that were published under the title of "Midnight Hymn" in *HSP* (1742), 131–34. These were soon sung regularly at watch-night services, encouraging CW to write additional hymns. He collected nineteen of these in *HSP* (1749), vol. 2. Then, in Dec. 1750, Charles had William Strahan print a pamphlet collection of *Hymns for the Watch-night* that contained eleven hymns selected from these earlier publications. Mary is suggesting that CW did so simply to earn more money, not to provide a handy resource for the services.

¹⁵The school at Kingswood, set up primarily for boys, had a separate program for girls. CW apparently wrote and proposed publishing about this time a "Hymn for Girls" for use in this program. There is no evidence of its separate publication, but CW included it in *Hymns for Children* (1763), 60–63.

¹⁶Cf. Luke 12:19.

¹⁷This incident likely took place in Jan.–Mar. 1752, when both brothers were in London. But there is a gap in JW's published *Journal* for this period, making it impossible to be specific.

¹⁸CW's wife Sarah played the harpsichord, accompanying her singing.

¹⁹This was surely after Mary arrived in the Bristol area, worried about her children, and hoping that CW would take JW's place in the planned preaching tour of Ireland. As it turned out, her sons recovered and Mary accompanied JW on his Irish preaching tour July–Oct. 1752.

alone and you mounted on a horse to go to dinner? For once I will venture to teach you a little good manners. I will tell you: out of duty and affection to your brother (if you have any), though you should have no concern for me, you should show a letter respect to *his* wife—who is your pillar and staff, under God your only support; so that if his head be once laid (which God yet forbid), you will find what I say too true. I was often told by word and letters, and from some even of your good friends, when I was newly married to your brother, that all the family besides himself were no better than blood-suckers, who would (if they could help it) leave neither of us the skin of our teeth. I did not then think it. But I find it to be too true—and you to be one of the greatest. But I hope to be aware of you and them. O lay these things to heart. Consider how becoming they are in you, a Methodist minister. Your own conscience can furnish you with much more of the like nature; as I myself could too.

You have been long as one that dreameth; it is now high time to awake. A *minister of Jesus Christ* has no time for concerts or trifling visits. Nay, he has learned to count all thing loss for Christ. Is this your case? No! You do preach for a morsel of bread, which probably alone prevents you from being the greatest persecutor your brother has. These things have been much on my mind, as well as others, and have caused much grief, which was not a little increased by your cruel and scornful behaviour at Bristol, and when you forbid my coming near your wife. I have no more to say now. If you are a true *minister of Jesus Christ*, you will show it to

Your much injured and offended friend and sister,

Mary Wesley

P.S. Pray be careful how you desire others to worship your idol, or cause them to stumble. For my part, I cannot but pray for you and her that the Lord would open your eyes—that you may not be a “blind leader of the blind.”²⁰

Endorsement: by CW; “1752. M[ary]. W[esley]. and Perronet²¹ / *convicta spirita insolescunt*.”²²

Secondary Endorsement: “Mrs. John Wesley’s scurrility – with Mr. Perronet’s remarks of pity.”²³ *Copie vera*.²⁴ E.T.T.”²⁵

Tertiary Endorsement: “Copied at Sale [Cheshire], March 25, 1859 by Mr. Clegg’s daughter.”

Source: secondary transcription; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Papers, Box 132, folder on “John Wesley and his Wife.”²⁶

²⁰Cf. Matt. 15:14.

²¹Orig., in secondary transcription, “Rouquet”; almost certainly a misreading.

²²I.e., “*convicti spiriti insolescunt*”; “convicted by the Spirit, they become insolent.”

²³A later hand adds: “These were never discovered.” See in this regard Vincent Perronet’s comments in his letter to CW of Nov. 3, 1752 below.

²⁴“A true [or accurate] copy.”

²⁵Elizabeth Tabitha Tooth (1791–1865), was the recipient of many letters and other documents of the CW family, as executrix for Sarah Wesley Jr. Tooth frequently made and gave away transcriptions of these documents—sometimes before either gifting or selling the holograph. [Note: she is often referred to as Eliza Telitha Tooth, but the name given above is what appears in both her baptismal record and the official listing of her death.]

²⁶The survival or location of the holograph is unknown. The transcription that survives in the Baker papers is four stages removed from the holograph. The initial transcription by Eliza Tooth came into the possession of a Mr. Gandy, who loaned it to his neighbour William Clegg (1806–97) of Sale, Cheshire in Mar. 1859. Clegg had his daughter Mary Elizabeth Clegg (1845–1919) make a copy. Mary in turn (after her marriage to Lewis Hartley) shared her copy with R. Thursfield Smith (c. 1828–1907) in

From John Hutchinson

Leeds
June 9, 1752

Dear Sir,

How shall I show my gratitude to you, of in what manner shall I express my thankfulness for your great love and most indulgent affection to me, who am most undeserving. Your letter this day's post brought gave me inexpressible joy.²⁷ It hath abundantly convinced me of your invariable love. It abounds in the most tender expressions, which can flow from none but such as are endued with tenderness and humanity, and partake of the mind that was in Christ. I am very thankful for your friendship, and am satisfied [it] is real. It is of inestimable worth. I pray God I may never forget it. I wish I was worthy. I think was I to lose my friend, through my folly, I should break my heart.

You have great confidence for me. I wish you may not be disappointed. If you knew how far I am from the state you describe, I think your belief would be weaker. I am worse than when I writ last (?²⁸) for you at Bristol. Last Sunday I had very serious reflections. But how are they now fled. I am in the same trifling way, and in short I think it is impossible that I should ever be better. I have no hope at all.

I return my most hearty thanks for your hymn. It is applicable to me. I have not lost that [hymn] you made for me in Yorkshire.²⁹

I do not speak against the Methodists. Nor do I love to hear them degraded by others. When any ask me why I left them, I reply it is because I have not the relish for religion I have had, nor am I so good as I ought to be. What bitter words I say to the Methodists is to themselves, and not to others. I assure you I see the world in the same light I ever did when I was serious.

I am very glad to hear Mrs. Wesley continues well in health. May the good Shepherd watch over her in time of need. I wish I could see you before you leave Bristol, and do myself the honour you intend me, which I take very kind and as a great favour.³⁰ I yet claim him for my son and beg you will be as good as your promise and procure me a proxy. It is impossible for me to come, although nothing would give me greater satisfaction. My love attends your spouse.

Your ever affectionate

J. H.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Cha. Wesley / at the Foundry Moor / Fields / London."

Postmark: "12/IV."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[John Hutchinson]' 1752 [[June]] 9" and "J. Hutchn. / grateful, affectionate."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/21.

Nov. 1902, and he copied it "with care." Smith's copy came into the possession of Frank Baker.

²⁷This letter is not known to survive.

²⁸The word looks like "Perceted."

²⁹These would be two of the hymns among those designated for Hutchinson in MS Miscellaneous Hymns, 44–55.

³⁰CW and SGW had asked Hutchinson to serve as godfather for their coming child; see CW to Hutchinson, Sept. 27, 1752.

Mary (Burland) Hudleston to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley¹

Wells
June 9 [1752]

I am very sensible I ought long before now to have returned my thanks to dear Mrs. Wesley for her kind letter. I hope you'll pardon my not answering it before. I have often intended myself that pleasure, but something or other has intervened. Believe me, dear madam, I shall be always extreme glad to hear from you, so pray let me have that satisfaction. It gives me great pleasure to find you are so happy in your marriage. And I doubt not but it will be a lasting happiness, as you have that most necessary ingredient toward it: piety and virtue. I imagine you are by this time blessed with an offspring. My brother told me he heard you was with child.² If you are not yet delivered, I heartily wish you an happy hour.³ But I hope the time is past and that I may wish you joy in being a mother.

My sister Burland miscarried lately, after having gone with child six months.⁴

I hope our friends at Garth and Ludlow are well. I beg my compliments to them and to Mr. Wesley.

I wish I could make a letter entertaining to you. As you are a stranger to Wells, was I to write what passes here it could afford you no amusement. Could I have the pleasure of seeing you here, I might possibly make my epistles more agreeable. I should rejoice to see you, but if I cannot be so happy, a letter when you have leisure will be extremely welcome to, dear madam,

Your sincere friend and humble servant,

M. Hudleston

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/102.

¹Mary (Burland) Hudleston (1721–95) was the wife of Rev. William Hudleston (1716–66), vicar of St. Cuthbert, Wells.

²John Burland (1724–76), now a lawyer in London, would rise to be named Baron of the Exchequer in 1774.

³SGW gave birth to their first son, John Wesley in Aug. 1752; unfortunately, he died 18 months later.

⁴Laetitia (Berkeley) Burland (1709–1800), who married John Burland in 1747.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Bath
June 13 [1752]

Dear Sir,

I am glad of this opportunity of assuring you of my utmost regard and beg to know how Mrs. Wesley does. I hope if you come over here soon to preach you will give me as much of your times as possible, as I shall with great pleasure serve you, with the rest of my Christian friends about here.

I should be glad to know how to convey now and then a letter safely either to Mrs. Wesley or you. I beg to know how she does in particular, and when she expects to *lie in*.⁵ You both will have ever my prayers. My kind services to dear Mrs. [Sarah] Perrin. I ever am, dear sir,

Your ever obliged friend,

S. Huntingdon

I am glad Mr. Sellon is ordained, and hope it was *quite agreeable to both* your brother and you.⁶

May our Lord hourly bless you and nurture(?) his love and praise in your soul. *Do let me see you soon*. You will be a great comfort to me.

Address: "To / The Rev'd Mr. Charles / Wesley."

Annotation: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon June]] 1752."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/21.

⁵For the birth of their first child.

⁶Rev. Walter Sellon (1715–92), grandson of a Huguenot minister, was a quiet scholarly man. JW appointed him in 1748 as classics master for Kingswood School. In 1750 Sellon left to become a protégé of Lady Huntingdon, who had now secured him episcopal ordination as deacon and appointment as perpetual curate of Smisby in Leicestershire. Sellon would not be ordained as an elder until 1759.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
Tuesday noon [July 21, 1752]

My Dear Friend,

Assure your partner that I wish much to see you both soon again. The day I cannot fix, as I have a brother-in-law dead¹ and must not appear till he is buried, and I have my mourning on. By Friday or Saturday this may happen, but yet too uncertain to determine your thinking of me. I shall hope it may be one of these. I do beg your prayers, and [would] have both of you assured of the sincere friendship of

S. H.

When I come next I believe I shall bring Mrs. Cresset.²

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW: [[Lady Huntingdon - Friendly as at first]]

Source: holograph; University of California, Santa Barbara, Davidson Library, Isaac Foot Collection, Box 2, folder 26, Wesley Family Letter Book, item 20.

¹The husband of her elder sister Elizabeth Shirley (1704–34), Joseph Gascoigne Nightingale (1695–52), died on July 20.

²P.S. written upside down at top of page. Anne (Robinson) Knight (1699–1756) had married James Cresset (1712–75) in Apr. 1752.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Athlone
August 8, 1752

[[Dear Brother,]]

I almost wonder that I hear not one word from you since the trial at Gloucester.¹ Either Mr. [Bryan] I'Anson or someone else should have wrote by the next post.² Does everyone forget me as soon as we have the sea between us?

Some of our preachers here have peremptorily affirmed that you are not so *strict* as me; that you neither practise, enforce, nor approve of the rules of the bands. I suppose they mean those which condemn “needless self-indulgence,” and recommend the means of grace, fasting in particular—which is wellnigh forgotten throughout this nation.³ I think it would be of use if you wrote without delay and explained yourself at large.

They have likewise openly affirmed that you agree with Mr. [George] Whitefield touching perserverance at least, if not predestination too. Is it not highly expedient that you should write explicitly and strongly on this head likewise?

Perhaps the occasion of this latter affirmation was that both you and I have often granted an absolute, unconditional election of *some*, together with a conditional election of *all* men. I did incline to this scheme for many years. But of late I have doubted of it more and more. First, because all the texts which I used to think supported it I now think prove either more or less, either absolute reprobation and election, or neither. Secondly, because I find this opinion serves all the *ill* purposes of absolute predestination—particularly that of supporting infallible perseverance. Talk with any that holds it, and so you will find.

On Friday and Saturday next is our little conference at Limerick.⁴ I hope my sister feels herself in a good hand, and that you can trust him with her and all things.⁵ We join in love.

Address: “To / The Revd Mr C. Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother]. [[August]] Aug. 8, 1752 / of Predestination.”

Source: holograph; Pitts Library (Emory), John Wesley Papers (MSS 153), 2/10.⁶

¹On June 23, 1752, JW interrupted his travels to make a hurried visit to Bristol, “having received letters which made me judge it necessary (JW, *Journal, Works*, 20:432). He spent a week there in conference with CW and others. The nature of the challenge, which seems to have led to a lawsuit, remains unclear.

²Bryan I'Anson (1708–75) was a solicitor at Old Palace Yard, Westminster, whom the Wesley brothers consulted for legal advice from at least 1750. See *WHS* 5 (1906): 230–37. I'Anson included the Wesley brothers, as his “highly esteemed friends,” in his will.

³See “Directions Given to the Band Societies” (1744): I.7, “to use no *needless self-indulgence*, such as taking snuff, or tobacco, unless prescribed by a physician”; and III.5, “to observe as days of fasting or abstinence all Fridays in the year.” JW, *Works*, 9:79.

⁴The first Irish Conference, Aug. 14–15, 1752; see JW, *Works*, 10:250–57.

⁵SGW was pregnant with their first child, born Aug. 21, and baptized “John.”

⁶Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:498–99.

From Mary Degge¹

[London]
August 31, 1752

Dear Sir,

We have this day received yours and take this first opportunity of answering it,² and should be very glad of a line to know when you will be at Chertsey, and we will be there. The Colonel is staff officer in waiting for this month, so can't go further than the Park, in case of fire or any accident he must attend. But in October he will be with us.

We greatly rejoice to hear of Mrs. Wesley's recovery and that Miss [Rebecca] Gwynne is with her. We came to town but this day, and propose seeing Mrs. [Elizabeth] Waller soon.

God has been pleased to give Mrs. Meighen³ a greater share of health than she has enjoyed for these many years, through the use of a water called the Iron Pear Tree.⁴ It has greatly restored her hearing and removed her shortness of breath.

I hope Mrs. Wesley or Miss Gwynne will write to me soon. My aunt received great benefit by the waters while she was at Scarborough, but I fear her distemper is more in her mind than is suspected. We join in our best wishes to you and family, and I remain, dear sir,

Your most obliged, humble servant,

Mary Degge

P.S. Pray direct in Grosvenor Square, but don't write it yourself. Your precaution in the last proved very necessary. I should be glad if you would seal it with red wax.

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Miss Degg August]] 31. 1753" and "M. Degg's in / vitation Aug. 31. 1752."
Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/1.

¹Mary Degge (1737–1829) was born to William and Catherine (Meighen) Degge in 1737. Her father was a brother of Hervey Degge (1709–33), a classmate of CW at Westminster. Mary's mother died the year after her birth and her father died in 1741. While William had remarried, his new wife did not seek custody of Mary, and she was eventually living with her aunt, Martha (Meighen) Colvill. Mary and Martha became close friends of CW and his wife Sarah. On Jan. 1, 1756 CW officiated Mary's marriage to Lord Robert Manners (1721–82), son of the Duke of Rutland. CW typically spells the maiden name "Degg." See *WHS* 59 (2013): 3–11.

²This letter to Col. Gumley, his wife Martha, and niece Mary is not known to survive.

³Catherine (Lander) Meighen (d. 1753), the mother of Martha.

⁴Water from a spring in the garden of the White Hart Inn in Godstone, Surrey.

From John Hutchinson

Leeds
September 20, 1752

Dear Sir,

It is with no small pleasure that your two last letters brought me the news of Mrs. Wesley's safe delivery of a son [John] and continues in a likely way to recover.¹ [I] am glad to hear she is out of danger. I hope when this reach[es] you she will be quite well, fit to nurse and take care of my godson.

I have now to return you and Mrs. Wesley my most grateful acknowledgements for the honour you have done me, as also my compliments to the gentleman (Mr. James) my representative.² Mr. Perronet, I mean Mr. Charles Perronet, is expected here on his journey to Bristol. I shall send two guineas by him for Mrs. Wesley to dispose of as she thinks proper. I had not opportunity, or would have sent it before the christening.

In your next, let me know how my godson goes on, for I think I shall be very fond of him and do assure you once more, nothing would be more agreeable to me than an opportunity of paying you a visit at Bristol. I wish my desires in that may be accomplished. I believe it would be for my eternal welfare.

I continue yet very irregular [and] think I shall never be better until I make my abode with you. I have some thoughts, as I entirely dislike to live at Leeds, to come and live at Bristol as soon as I can be disengaged from business; which will not be before the expiration of two years, if [it] please God so long to spare me. Will you let me board with you, or would Mrs. Wesley condescend to let me have house room? I should not desire much attendance. I think I shall be glad to wait on my dear Mr. Wesley, and render him all the little services I am capable. This I often tell our people and it is the sentiments I have had for twelve months past.

At your request, I have seen Mr. [Henry] 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 Manchester the twenty-third of September Old Style and if I must not see you until spring, don't disappoint me then. My best respects to Mrs. Wesley and my dear godson.

Your very affectionate friend and servant,

J. H.

Endorsement: by CW, "[[John Hutchinson September]] 20. 1752" and "Sept. 20, 1752. J. Hutchinson / offering to board with us and my answer."³

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/76.⁴

¹Neither of these two letters are known to survive.

²When Hutchinson was not able to be present for the baptism of CW and SGW's first son, Captain John James (1714–78) apparently served as his representative.

³A shorthand transcription of CW's answer, dated Sept. 27, also appears on this page.

⁴For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath?]
October 7, 1752

Dear Sir,

With pleasure and thankfulness I acknowledge your most kind remembrance of me and joy with you in the success of your labours.¹ May this light sprung up to you shine to the perfect day and deliver our faint and wailing spirits from the darkness of our present weak and humbling dispensations. And which the Church groans so deeply under—I mean these in her which has had light enough to discover her present obscenity. Upon the fifth instant,² in the evening, I experienced an uncommon degree of the glorious presence of our Lord. It continued from evening till midnight. Then an awful fear come on me. And when that went, these words out of the love of his fire came from the in-spoken word: “I will come again and receive you to myself.”³ These he had left with his disciples, in the state of expectation he was bringing them to of that Comforter coming, that was to abide with them forever. I therefore wait from these words either for my earthly dismissal, or that light which is to replenish my poor, dark, benighted tabernacle and fill it with the light of the land that shall no more go out in his sanctuary. In this doubt has my mind been kept with respect to all his dispensations towards me for two years. And as I had in faith so ardently sought his will concerning what he would have me do, this answer leaves me to expect his appearance for this purpose or a removal from all things in the church militant. His light to you may interpret for me, as one often speaks that another may interpret. Should you see it, let me know and that you get this safe, the first minute you can.

Your hymns I am charmed with. I hope to stay till your return and to see Mrs. Wesley and your sister soon.⁴ Mrs. Wesley looks better every time I have seen her yet. May our Lord increase all his blessings a thousandfold to you.

Endorsement: by CW, “[Lady Huntingdon October] 7, 1752.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/24.⁵

¹CW’s letter is not known to survive.

²I.e., two days earlier; Oct. 5.

³John 14:3.

⁴Rebecca Gwynne was staying with SGW, helping care for CW and her new son, John.

⁵Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 76–77.

From John Hutchinson

[Leeds]
October 31, 1752

Dear Sir and Most Beloved Friend,

Your last gave me great pleasure and I can never sufficiently make you a return for your real friendship and unbounded love towards me.¹ Oh, that the God whom you serve may once more call back a wandering sheep! Then shall I be enabled to pay you back your sympathy, and be truly capable of deserving the real worth of my dear Mr. Charles Wesley's friendship.

A friend is of inestimable value. A friend is not to be purchased with gold. And such I believe I have in my Charles Wesley. I know there can be no true friendship in such as adhere not to the principles and practice of Christianity. The worldly sort are not capable of being friends. I see the world in its proper light, and yet am I still bewitched with its wretched swill. I try to satisfy myself with various fooleries. All are ineffectual, for there is an emptiness in my heart, which nothing less than divine love can satisfy.

You desire I will not expect too much from your 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, and hold you in great esteem. Had I not a very high opinion of you, I should be more ungrateful than I am. As to my love, I think it is of the right sort, and such I hope as was betwixt David and Jonathan. I dreamt last night of being with my dear Charles Wesley, and I don't know what is the matter with me. All this day I feel my heart so exceedingly enlarged toward you, insomuch that I think I could almost pull out my own eyes to do you service.

I return you my best thanks for your kind invitation. My mother gives her free consent,² but would be agreeable to Mrs. Wesley. 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 should repent after taking me into your house.

I delivered your letter to W[illiam] S[hent]. I hope you received mine, by Mr. Charles Perronet, with £2.2.0 enclosed.³ Please to give my love to [John] Trembath when you see him. He is expected here very soon.

My best respects attend Mrs. Wesley and my little godson. Remaining, dear sir,
Your truly affectionate friend and obedient servant,

J. H.

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

Postmarks: "Leeds" and "3/NO."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[John Hutchinson October]] 31. 1752 / [[loving strongly loving]]" and "J. Hutchinson. still loving / Oct. 31. 1752."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/72.⁴

¹Hutchinson seems to be replying to a letter subsequent to CW's letter of Sept. 27, which is not known to survive.

²Mary Hutchinson (b. 1695) of York married Timothy Hutchinson (1693–1747) of Baildon in 1715. They settled in Leeds, where Mary became a member of the Methodist society.

³This letter is not known to survive.

⁴For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From the Rev. Vincent Perronet

[Shoreham]
November 3, 1752

My Dear Brother,

I am truly concerned that matters are in so melancholy a situation.¹ I think the unhappy lady is most to be pitied, though the gentleman's case is mournful enough. Their sufferings proceed from widely different causes. His are the visible chastisements of a loving Father; hers, the immediate effects of an angry, bitter spirit. And indeed it is a sad consideration that, after so many months have elapsed, the same warmth and bitterness remain! You know who can allay that heat and sweeten that bitterness. Therefore do, as I trust you have hitherto done—keep praying for her.

Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.² But till the Spirit from on high be poured upon her, silence and distance seem to be the only prudential methods.

I pray God direct both you and your brother in all things. Our love and respects attend you and your dear spouse. The same to him. I am, dear sir,

Yours affectionately,

V. Perronet

Address: "For / The Revd Mr C. Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "Nov. 3, 1752 Mr Perronet / blaming yet pitying / advising silence and distance."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/472/3.

¹JW's marriage to Mary (Goldhawk) Vazeille was fraying. JW had left her in London to undertake his regular preaching tour just weeks after they married in Feb. 1751. The following year JW persuaded Mary to accompany him on his tour to the north of England, but she proved ill suited to the itinerant life-style JW adopted; see JW to Ebenezer Blackwell, Apr. 16, 1752, *Works*, 25:492–93. Mary soon returned to London, and to brooding about the situation.

²See Rom. 12:21.

From John Hutchinson

Leeds
November 23, 1752

Dear Sir,

I received your three affectionate letters.¹ Your last to post is an expression of love, friendship, and tenderness to one (most unworthy) that it hath almost made me broken-hearted to find you are so deeply and tenderly engaged for my eternal welfare, and my self remain so much unconcerned. And what heightens my grief the more, that I can not effect what I so earnestly desire, and what would [I] am sensible give you also much pleasure. It is impossible for me to attempt taking so long [a] journey this time [of] year. The roads are bad, the weather wet and unhealthful. I fear I should not be able even to reach my dear Mr. Charles Wesley at Bristol, whose retreat would be more agreeable than the most magnificent palace. But [I] hope ere long providence will order it for my asylum, where I shall be sequestered from the fooleries in the world. Indeed, my feeble fabric attended (by my²) bad state of health will not permit me, and I know (you) will not desire me to do anything prejudicial to my health. For I remain in a tottering condition and at times enjoy bad health.

If [it] please God [to] spare [me] till spring, I intend to accomplish my promise. But then I must do it secretly. As I complain often of bad health, my uncle will be very willing to spare me to Bath, in order to recover my health, and my mother hath already given her consent. Otherwise I cannot possibly take so long a journey. My uncle I know would never consent I should travel so far on any other errand. And if [I] come without his consent, it would entirely unhinge all our family and would be an unpardonable offense.

I please myself with the thoughts of seeing my godson. I think I shall admire him too much. [I] am very fond of little children—and him so much more abundantly, being the son of my dear friend. My best respects attend Mrs. Wesley. I remain, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and obedient servant,

J. H.

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. Cha. Wesley / at the new Room Horse / Fair / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “ [[November]] 23, 1752 / [[John Hutchinson]]” and “Nov. 23. 1752 / Friendly J. Hn. promising visit.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/73.³

¹None of these letters are known to survive.

²A small portion is torn away by the wax seal. This reconstruction seems likely.

³For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:

<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

Roderick Gwynne to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

London
November 30, 1752

Dear Sister Wesley,

I have long expected an answer to my letter, which though short yet contained a great deal of comfortable news—viz., the adjusting of matters between Mr. [Samuel] Lloyd and myself,¹ which I now confirm and doubt not of their long continuance.

Mr. Lloyd sent me this evening to Mrs. Meighen,² who kept me there almost two hours in pleasant conversation. Except when it turned upon her relations, who set out yesterday for France, and then she shed a few tears.³ She longs much for your and Mr. Wesley's company, to spend the winter with her. I hear Mrs. [Martha] Gumley was last Tuesday with Miss [Mary] Degge, to take their leave of sister [Elizabeth] Waller, and had been several times there. I never saw so agreeable an old lady in my lifetime as Mrs. Meighen, and so free considering I never saw her but once before. She is at present greatly afflicted with the gout.

Mr. Lloyd is so angry with Mr. Wesley that he will not write to him, and says if he had him here he could thrash him. My love to him and nurse, and am,

Yours affectionately,

Ro. Gwynne

Address: "Mrs. Wesley / in Charles Street / Bristol."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/79.

¹The Gwynne family hoped that Samuel Lloyd would sponsor /mentor Roderick in business. Roderick proved less that committed to this prospect; see SGW to Samuel Lloyd, Mar. 31, 1755.

²Orig. "Mayne"; i.e., Catherine (Lander) Meighen (d. Apr. 1753), the mother of Martha (Meighan / Colvill) Gumley.

³Something had happened concerning Mary Degge that led Col. Samuel and Martha Gumley to take her out of the country—to Paris (see CW's line in st. 1 of a hymn sent in a letter to SGW dated May 1, 1753 about "our exiled friend, to evil sold"). They would not return until July 1754 (see *Whitehall Evening Post*, June 29–July 2, 1754).

From the Rev. George Whitefield

London
December 22, 1752

My Dear Friend,

I have read and pondered upon your kind letter with some degree of solemnity of spirit.¹ In the same frame I would now sit down to answer it. And what shall I say? Really, I can scarce tell. The connection between you and your brother hath been so close and continued, and your attachment to him so necessary to keep up his interest, that I would not willingly for the world do or say anything that may separate such friends. I cannot help thinking but he is still jealous of me and my proceedings; but, I thank God, I am quite easy about it. Having the testimony of a good conscience that I have a disinterested view to promote the common salvation only, I can leave all to him who I am assured will in the end speak for me and make my righteousness as clear as the light, and my just dealing as the noon-day. I more and more find that he who believeth doth not make haste, and that if we will have patience we shall find that every plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted, however it may seem to have taken very deep root, shall be plucked up. As I wrote to good Lady Huntingdon, so I write to you dear sir.²

I bless God for my stripping seasons. I have seen an end of all perfection, and expect it only in him where I am sure to find it, even in the ever-loving, ever-lovely Jesus. He knows how I love and honour you and your brother, and how often I have preferred your interest to my own. This, by the grace of God, I shall still continue to do. My reward is with the Lord. If he approves, it is enough. More might be said, were we face to face. When this will be, I cannot tell. Several things, especially our design of building a new Tabernacle,³ which I hope will succeed, detain me in town this winter. God only knows what course I am to steer in the spring. I would be a blank—let my heavenly Father fill it up as seemeth him good.

I am glad you are with our elect Lady [Huntingdon]. She will shine indeed in heaven as a common friend. O how amiable is a truly catholic spirit! Lord, make us all partakers of it more and more! I beg the continuance of your prayers; I need them much. God willing, you shall have mine in return. That you and yours may increase with all the increase of God is the earnest request of, my dear friend,

Yours, etc.,

G. W.

Source: published transcription; Whitefield, *Letters*, 2:464–65.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²See Whitefield to Lady Huntingdon, Dec. 15, 1752, Whitefield, *Letters*, 2:459–60.

³Whitefield's original preaching house in London, built of wood in 1741, was replaced by one built of brick in 1753.

1753

From Ebenezer Blackwell

London
January 22, 1753

Dear Sir,

It is not my present design to enter into any arguing about the cause of the unhappy difference which now subsists between you and your wife and Mr. John Wesley and his wife.¹ But this from my soul I say, that if your and Mrs. Wesley will but come to town and spend one week or a fortnight here, I am persuaded with the assistance of a friend or two we shall be able under the directions of our God to put all things in such a situation as will make you all perfectly easy and perfectly happy; that from henceforth you may go on with the love and harmony which is and must be expected of any persons so engaged and so united as you two are.

This I declare, that if you both will come to town to make the trial and cannot in a fortnight's time say from your very souls that you are exceeding glad of your journey, I promise to pay your whole expense both to London and back again.

Dear sir, I do desire and entreat you to indulge me in this, for I cannot be said nay. And let not anything prevent either you or Mrs. Wesley from coming, for indeed I hope it will be a far happier journey than any you have yet ever taken.

My dear Bet and Mrs. Dewell send their kind love to you both,² as well as, dear sir,

Your very affectionate friend and humble servant,

E. B.

Address: "To the Rev. Mr. Chas. Wesley at Bristol."

Source: Blackwell's copy for records (privately held); MARC, PLP 9/23/3 (photocopy).³

¹Mary (Goldhawk / Vazeille) Wesley's tension with JW about his long itinerant trips and frugal financial means had spilled over into her relationship with CW and SGW. In particular, questions had been raised about whether the £100 a year support from book proceeds promised in the marriage settlement of CW and SGW would continue after CW's death.

²Elizabeth (Molland) Blackwell and Hannah Dewell.

³A transcription was published previously in *WHS* 36 (1967): 76–77.

From Ebenezer Blackwell

London
January 30,¹ 1753

Dear Sir,

I hardly know how to write more to the purpose than my last and I am vastly discouraged in attempting anything farther since I have received your letter,² which I suppose you meant for an answer but I cannot call it an answer to mine. You seem to take the intentions of my letter far different from what I meant. For I only mean this: in the first place, to have that true Christian love and friendship established between you all, which is absolutely necessary for your carrying on the great work you seem to be called to; and in the second place, to have any agreement between your brother and you with regard to your marriage settlement to be in the most strong, full, and effectual manner complied with, *all which* is what *both* parties have seem[ed] to be very desirous of. But a true Christian harmony, I am persuaded, can never be perfected without both yourself and Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley will come to town [i.e., London].

Sir, it is neither in your or the trustees power to give up anything that is settled on Mrs. Wesley, therefore I beg of you not [to] esteem me such a fool as to ask it. I have nothing to do in this affair but to make and if possible [keep] peace between you all, which by the grace of God I would most willingly do. Therefore I desire, agreeable to what I before requested of you, a plain answer whether you with Mrs. Wesley will come to town; and if you will, I desire you not to fail to bring your marriage settlement with you, for I find that neither Mr. [Vincent] Perronet, your trustee, nor Mr. John Wesley, the party concerned with you, have any copy thereof. In hope of your compliance herein, I am, dear sir,

Your truly affectionate and very humble servant,

E. B.

Address: "To the Rev. Mr. Charles Westley, at Bristol."

Source: Blackwell's copy for records (privately held); MARC, PLP 9/23/2 (photocopy).³

¹Orig., "Jany, 20"; a mistake, as shown by mention of CW's letter of Jan. 24.

²CW to Blackwell, Jan. 24, 1753; replying to Blackwell's letter of Jan. 22.

³A transcription was published previously in *WHS* 36 (1967): 77.

From the Rev. Thomas Vivian¹

Cornwood
February 17, 1753

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I thank you for your favour of December 12th.² The catholic spirit you there express has considerably increased the high opinion I had before conceived of you.

It gives me great satisfaction to find you approve of the reasons that prevent our seeing each other at Cornwood. The pleasure of conversing with you in some other place I really intended, but was prevented by unforeseen accidents. In God's time I shall have that pleasure and advantage.

I am greatly obliged for that best office of friendship you have done me in expressing the fears of some real Christians lest my zeal should be abated and my hands weakened. I have endeavoured to search what foundation there is for such a suspicion concerning me. When I look upon my heart and inward affections, I think I see there too much cause for this accusation. My zeal and love is really, I fear, colder. But I am not sensible that this discovers itself in neglecting to do anything for God and the salvation of souls that appears to be my duty. Unless it be in the case of reproof, which is a matter than requires much prudence as well as boldness, and here I believe I am defective.

With regard to ministerial duties, I am as frequent in them as usual. If at any time I do not declare the whole truth, it is because I know it not. For my conscience bears me witness that in preaching the word no fear of man nor any other motive constrains me to withhold any plain truth.

With regard to my intercourse with men, I have few, very few, spiritual persons to converse with. And so my discourse is but seldom about savoury matters, nor can I contrive in my situation how to prevent this. I was much more reserved at first, but this I found alienated person from me. I must in this matter do as I can. If any friend will set me in a better way in any respect, I will thankfully receive their advice and very cheerfully follow it.

But one thing I have observed, that it is impossible to be cordially received and approved by any set or party without being entirely, especially in little and external things, such as they are. This bigotry is very general, and greatly prejudices those who are incapable of discerning upon what ground others differ from them in some particulars.

I look upon myself [as] placed by providence in this station, and dare not leave it. But [I] do not for that reason blame those whom the same Lord employs to his glory in another part of the vineyard. I heartily love them. and how far I shall outwardly express this love has been matter of much difficulty with me. I am afraid, on the one hand, of laying stumbling blocks before the weak; on the other, of disregarding those who I am persuaded are God's children.

⟨T³⟩he work begun among you seems to be mak⟨ing great⟩ advances in the Church. This is to me a mos⟨t pleasing⟩ thing. I long to promote it and therefore would act very courteously. But in this I expect the fate of most moderate men, to be slighted by both parties. The bishop and my brethren look on me as a Methodist. The Methodists regard me as timorous, time-serving, etc. I am glad you have larger notions.

¹Thomas Vivian (1720–93), ordained in 1743, served as curate in Truro, then Redruth, where he was removed after less than a year due to his sympathies with Methodism. He took the parish of Cornwood, Devonshire in 1747 and served there until his death. Vivian wrote JW in Oct. 1748 informing of his evangelical awakening; see *AM* 1 (1778): 586–88. Vivian's two letters in 1753 to CW are the last known to the Wesley brothers; likely explained by JW's editorial comment in *AM*, "N.B. He is fallen into the pit of the decrees, and knows me no more!"

²CW had done a preaching tour through Cornwall in Oct. 1752, where he apparently hoped to have seen Vivian, and had written of his regrets. The letter is not known to survive.

³Three lines have some text torn away by the wax seal. The likely missing text has been reconstructed.

O that I had an infallible guide! But God I trust will be so, and make known his will in all difficult cases. May the Almighty be ever with you, and when you draw near to him, remember

Your sincere though weak brother,

T. Vivian

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "T. Vivian Feb. 17. 1753 / Right judgment of the /M[ethodis]ts etc." and "Mem[o] / Vivian's l[ette]r to T. Richards."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP: 1/78.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

London
March 3, 1753

My Dear Friend,

I thank you and your brother most heartily for the loan of the chapel.¹ The favour shall be returned if ever you have the like occasion to borrow. Blessed be God, the work goes on well. On Thursday morning the first brick was laid with a sweet solemnity. I preached from Exodus 20, the latter part of the twenty-fourth verse.² Afterwards we sung, and prayed for God's blessing in all places where his glorious name is recorded. The wall is now about a yard high. The building is to be eighty feet square. It is upon the old spot. We have purchased the house and, if we finish what we have begun, shall be rent-free for forty-six years. We have about eleven hundred pounds in hands. This I think is the best way to build.

Mr. Steward's death so affected me that when I met the workmen than night to contract about the building I could scarce bear to think of building tabernacles.³ Strange that so many should be so soon discharged, and we continued! Eighteen years have I been waiting for the coming of the Son of God. But I find we are immortal till our work is done. O that we may never live to be ministered unto, but to minister! Mr. Steward spoke for his Lord as long as he could speak at all. He had no clouds nor darkness. I was with him till a few minutes before he slept in Jesus.

I have good news from several parts. A door is opening in Winchester. Surely the little leaven will ferment, till the whole kingdom be leavened. Even so, Lord Jesus, Amen! Pray, how does our elect Lady [Huntingdon]? I hope to write to her Ladyship next post. My poor wife hath had another plunge.⁴ We thought she was taken with a palsy. But blessed be God, she is now recovering.

Our joint love attends you and yours, and your brother and his household. That all may increase with all the increase of God is still the earnest prayer of, my dear sir,

Yours most affectionately in our common Lord,

G. W.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Charles / Wesley / in / Bristol."

Postmark: "5/MR."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[March]] 3. 1753 / G. Whitefield of Mr. Stuart's / happy death."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/27.⁵

¹They allowed Whitefield to use one of their chapels (like West Street) for services between the time of the destruction of the original wooden Tabernacle and the completion of rebuilding it in brick, now underway.

²"In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and bless thee."

³Rev. John Stuart (c. 1721–53), a prebendary of Chester and recent associate of Lady Huntingdon and Whitefield, died on Feb. 15. Whitefield's misspelling of the last name may be a remembrance of his close friend William Seward.

⁴Whitefield had married Elizabeth (Burnell) James (1704–68), a Welsh widow, on Nov. 11, 1741.

⁵A slightly abridged transcription published previously in Whitefield, *Letters*, 3:6–7.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath or Clifton]
April 19, 1753

Dear Sir,

I was most extremely obliged by your kind remembrance of me,⁶ and I do rejoice your way was made prosperous. You have never anything to thank me for. My poor little services you will ever command, and in doing it will give me more pleasure than anything I could receive from the world. My pride as well (as I hope) some good desires are enough mortified from the limitedness of my powers. But all I have is so much more than what I deserve that I look upon all in my power as the highest bounty and love of heaven.

Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley is here with us, which gives us all great pleasure. I wish it might afford her the same. I would write about Georgia, but I doubt if the lady you mention is a proper person to apply to. That I will wait [to do] unless your further intelligence instructs me. Mr. [George] Whitefield writes me a word he has not time to copy the letter he intends to print.⁷ I am glad of it, as I hate everything that does not make for peace, and I never saw anything wrote ostensibly(?) that I did not disapprove. Charity is the most excellent way. Private conferences clear up more in an hour than a paper war for some years.

I have not yet wrote the intended letter.⁸ I do think it is but for us all to keep clear of anything that may be followed with a scrape of any kind. The message is quite a natural thing, and what I should wish all the world to see, as I felt only Christian and brotherly love in it. And [I] think of no effects from it but the comforts provided when such a disposition of mind to a stranger; and which, should I never see her, would be retained to her and all in trouble or that loved the gospel sound, as she has appeared to do. And while my name is used for these purposes it has more honour done to it. Do make my most kind and grateful compliments to Mr. Lloyd and let him know I only wait from a line from Mrs. Jones to write to him.⁹ I do most earnestly hope he will succeed in the government, but God can direct us here also best when [it is] left to him.

I long for accounts how the gospel prospers. I hope you will see Mr. [John] Gambold. Oh be ready to love and succour all who do not gather with us. This was the good Samaritan's case, and we don't know, should there be rubs there, God may call us to be his refuge.¹⁰ What I say unto you I say unto all: "Watch, for the good of all is one part of the watchman's work, though not for the soul, yet for good to every man."

May our Lord bless and constantly direct you and believe [me], dear sir, most faithfully
Your sincere friend,

S. H.

Lady Selina and Miss Whelers begs their kind services.¹¹

⁶CW likely wrote Lady Huntingdon on Apr. 16, 1753; the same day he mentioned her in a letter to SGW. The letter is not known to survive.

⁷George Whitefield, *An Expostulatory Letter addressed to Nicolas Lewis, Count Zinzendorff, and Lord Advocate of the Unitas Fratrum* (London: Keith & Oswald, 1753).

⁸CW had apparently asked LH to write Mary Degge; see CW to SGW, May 1, 1753.

⁹Likely John Lloyd (1717–55), nephew of Sarah (Evans) Gwynne, and eldest son of Walter Lloyd (1685–1747). John succeeded his father as MP of Cardiganshire in 1747 and was currently up for reelection.

¹⁰I.e., Gambold's refuge if he leaves the Moravians.

¹¹Selina Hastings (1737–63), daughter of Lady Huntingdon; and the four daughters of Catherine (Hastings) Wheler (1697–1740), deceased sister-in-law of Lady Huntingdon, whom Lady Huntingdon

As soon as I am able I will see Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor.

Endorsement: by CW, “[Lady Huntingdon April] 19, 1753.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/23.¹²

took into her care: Elizabeth (1727–86), Frances (1729–71), Selina Margareta (1730–1814), and Catherina Maria (1734–93); all four were currently unmarried.

¹²Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 77.

From John Downes

[[Bristol]]
[[Thursday afternoon]] [April 26, 1753¹³]

[[Dear Sir,]]

[[The last time I wrote, Mr. Farley was so much better that his hectic and other symptoms had left him, and there was even some small hopes of recovery. But two days since he relapsed and was much worse. And this morning at half [an] hour past 6:00 he went to rest.¹⁴ I was with him yesterday. He was then struggling with his despair, in pretty much pain. His mind was calm and at rest. But there was not much joy. H[owever] in the little intervals when he was able to speak, he testified his entire resignation to the will of God. And at parting took hold of my hand and gave me a thousand blessings.

[[I believe he did not think his change so in[pending] till the evening, when he grew so much worse and the minister was sent for to give him the sacrament. He sent for his brother¹⁵ likewise (who?) they say promised to come but did not come. They were able to give me but an imperfect account of what he said in the night, only that what he spoke related to the glorious place he was going to, and that in a dream he had had such a sight of heaven and of the angels as it was impossible to express. His last words were, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly."

[[My p[—] at the Gardner's(?) is still a prisoner of hope, waiting for deliverance.

[[Mrs. Sanders(?) is in very poor health, and to add to her sorrow, she is like to lose 60 pound by a tenant who it seems to me plays upon her weakness and is endeavouring to wrong her.

[[From your dutiful son,

[[John Downes

[[I have done very little at my Latin since you went away. And [am] sometimes ready to think it is in vain striving.]]

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Wesley / at the Foundery / London."

Endorsement: by CW, "J. Downs of F Farley's / Death April 28. 1753."

Source: holograph (in shorthand); MARC, MA 1977/501/59.

¹³CW's endorsement of "Apr. 28" (a Saturday) was likely the day he received the letter.

¹⁴Felix Farley was buried on Apr. 29, 1753, at St. Peter's church in Bristol.

¹⁵Samuel Farley (1698–1753), who would die in Dec. of this year.

From the Rev. Thomas Vivian

[Cornwood]
May 10, 1753

Dear and Reverend Sir,

It gives me very great satisfaction to perceive your truly catholic spirit, the want of which leaders of a party are usually very subject to because, I suppose, it makes them more caressed by their own. But as that is a title your renounce, I gladly receive the right hand of fellowship you offer, humbly praying that God would in his due time heal our breaches. And till then, give us one heart, bearing with and forbearing one another in love.

You think I ought not to quit my station.¹⁶ I think so too. I dare not till I see a call and sufficient cause. And with respect to you, I think the success God hath given your labours is a clear proof that your irregular way is his own appointment. But whether this is to continue, or to be only for a season, we know not. I hope you will preserve a readiness to act always in such a manner as God in his providence shall make known his will. It seems to be a very desirable thing that your preachers and society might be cordially received into and mingled with the Church, so as to leaven the whole lump. But God's ways are far above our sight.

You enquire how my brethren and I go on, by which I suppose you mean the little society of ministers I spoke of. We lose by gaining. We lose in number by gaining in sound principles. One of our small number is vicar of a parish adjoining to Mr. Thomson's,¹⁷ and curate of Modbury, a neighbouring town to me. He is now convinced that it is his duty to reside on his own parish and therefore is going to leave us, which we durst not oppose.

Mr. Elliot¹⁸ lately desired me to send 100 copies of my sermon to Lady Huntingdon,¹⁹ which I accordingly have ordered to be done, about a month since, in a packet directed to be left with Mr. Thomas Westell in Bristol. I suppose this Lady is the same person you mean. I will soon send you those which you desire. But the sermons are to be given away. Her Ladyship and you shall pay only 25 shillings per hundred. The money keep by you. I owe your brother 10 shillings for the third, fourth, fifth, and six volumes of the *Christian Library*, which I intend to continue to take in, so that I shall soon owe him more than the sum amounts to.

I have met with the fate of most moderate men. My brethren (except a few) look coldly on me as schismatically inclined. The Methodists (many, at least) despise or pity me, as overawed by the fear of man, in not appearing entirely in their ways. But if I can approve myself to him that seeth the heart, I trust I shall not be very uneasy at man's judgment. My path on these accounts is more difficult than yours. But my Master, I trust, will uphold me.

Remember me to your brother. I am

His and your affectionate brother in the Lord and servant,

Thos. Vivian

¹⁶CW's letter making this point is not known to survive.

¹⁷Orig., "Thompson"; but Vivian surely means Rev. George Thomson, vicar of St. Gennys, an evangelical clergyman known to CW, and whom Vivian met while serving in Truro and Redruth.

¹⁸Richard Elliot took his BA from Corpus Christi, Cambridge in 1750. He served as a curate to George Thomson in St. Gennys, earning a reputation as an evangelical, with the result that Bishop Lavington refused to ordain him elder. See the letters of Lady Huntingdon to the Archbishop of Canterbury pleading Elliot's case; Lambeth Palace Archives, Secker MSS, 8, ff. 120–30.

¹⁹Thomas Vivian, *A Sermon preached in the Church of St. Andrew in Plymouth: at the Archdeacon's Visitation, June 1, 1750* (London: W. Strahan, 1750).

Address: To / The Revd. Mr. Chas. Wesley / Bristol.”²⁰

Postmarks: “9/MA” and “10/MA.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Vivian 1753.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/31.

²⁰An initial address to London is struck through.

From an Unidentified Correspondent

[London]
[c. August 20, 1753]

**The Account of our sister Bracey,
who died August 16, 1753¹**

Reverend Sir,

It pleased God to call her in the first year that the gospel was preached in London. But it was only as a pleasant sound in her ears until the first year the preaching was in the field. Then she fell under deep conviction of her lost estate and was sorely tempted by the enemy of her soul that she never should be saved. Then she fell in despair and was incapable of any business for a day or two. But it pleased God deeply to impress in her mind to go to the Foundery to speak to Mr. Charles Wesley, under whose ministry she had been awakened. And after her speaking to him and returning home, it pleased God to speak peace to her troubled soul. And in ecstasy she prayed out, “Oh now I know that God for Christ’s sake hath taken away all my sins. Now I feel that I can love God and all the world.” And from that time her walking was such as became the gospel.

She was a good wife, though with a jealous and froward and persecuting husband, whom she did so love and pity and continually pray for, and bore his ill usage with great patience and composure of mind, even unto her death. She was a tender mother, continually watching over her children for good and providing for them whose unnatural father would take no care for. She always laboured, and often above her strength, lest herself or hers should be burdensome to any. She had been several times visited by sickness and was then calm and serene, and could cast herself and hers upon God.

For two years before she died she was visited with the rheumatism and was then warned that she had not long to live, and would often say that she should not be long with them, and often sought to set her house in order. But none regarded her, believing it only to be fancy. She continued steadfast in the apostle’s doctrine, in fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers, and in daily searching the Scriptures, and at every opportunity she assembled herself with the great congregation. She walked in all the ways of God with great delight.

As to her death, it was very sudden. For going to fetch her child from school, she was suddenly taken ill in the street. And when her kinswoman desired of her to speak if she could, she cried out, “My God, my God, I come,” and immediately died.

Endorsement: by CW, “[S]ister] Bracy’s Death / August 16. 1753.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/28.²

¹Grace Croke (1700–53) married Ralph Bracey (c. 1699–1760) in 1726. She appears as a married woman in the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46)—her husband does not. Grace was buried Aug. 19, 1753 in Hackney.

²For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

Lady Huntington to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[Bristol?]
September 10, 1753

Dear Mrs. Wesley,

I should have wrote to either Mr. [Charles] Wesley or you before, and while he was in town, but business of much importance fills my mind day and night, and I found I could not bear the reproach of ingratitude ^{< 1)} or I believe I should not have wrote her. Mr. Wesley's account of his poor friend afflicted me for his sake more than the poor man.² He is only made to feel his punishment in mercy and then be taken from the evil to come, that he may not sin again and so a worse thing happen to him. I can pray for nothing but being preserved from evil myself, being afflicted, tormented, and distressed. But I am content that my conformity should be thus made to the Son of God—who I hope, by being made like unto him, shall see him as he is and so rejoice with him eternally.

My health, I praise him, yet continues most comfortable to me. I am vastly sorry poor Mr. Wesley suffers so much from his body; but Christians must suffer always, for Jesus Christ suffered in the flesh. I have done the poor ^{>ship³} and shall send it to Sarah. I have heard not one word of Mr. John Wesley, and if he is not willing I should, I am satisfied. We may live without wants of that sort being supplied. The Father of our spirits knows how to feed us with the true bread that comes down from heaven. I could not hitherto well have seen Mrs. Jones.⁴ I intend it soon, when I hope to be comforted by the faith and love of Jesus Christ in them. My services and prayers wait upon Mr. Wesley and you. Live assured, my dear Mrs. Wesley, of the affectionate regard of

Your very sincere friend,

S. H.

Address: "To / Mrs Charles Wesley / at the Foundery / Upper Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "14/SE."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon. September]] 10, 1753 / [[to my wife]]."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/22.⁵

¹A small portion torn away, affecting one word.

²John Hutchinson, who would die within a year.

³The backside of the torn portion, affecting part of a word.

⁴Sarah (Perrin) Jones and her husband John.

⁵Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 77–78.

From the Rev. John Wesley

London
October 20, 1753

[[Dear Brother,]]

I firmly believed that young woman would die in peace; though I did not apprehend it would be so soon.¹ We have had several instances of music heard before or at the death of those that die in the Lord. May we conceive that this is, literally, the music of angels? Can that be heard by ears of flesh and blood?

It was not possible for me to send Jane Bate's² letter before my return to London. I sent it last week to Ted Perronet. But whether he be now on earth or in paradise I know not. He was believed to be dying some days since at Epworth, and vehemently rejoicing in God. William Briggs set out for Epworth last night in order to see him either alive or dead.

It is much easier for me to hope than to despair of any person or thing. I never did despair of John Hutchinson. For with God no word is impossible. And if he testifies a full and deep sense of his long revolt from God, I shall hope he will either live or die happy. But let me hear the particulars of your journals, and I may have a stronger hope.

I came back from Bedford last night. I know not whether it was your will or no (I believe not); but I am sure it was God's will for you to call there. How do you judge whether a t(hi)ng be God's will or no? I hope, not by inward impressions. Let us walk warily. I have much constitutional enthusiasm. And you have much more.

Now I have neither more nor less faith in human testimony than I had ten or fifteen years ago. I *could* suspect every man that speaks to me to be either a blunderer or a liar. But I *will* not; I dare not, till I have proof.

I give you a dilemma. Take one side or the other.

Either act really in connexion with me: or never pretend to it. Rather disclaim it, and openly avow you do not and will not.

By acting in connexion with me I mean, take counsel with me once or twice a year as to the places where you will labour: *hear* my advice *before* you fix, whether you *take* it or no.

At present you are so far from this that I do not even *know* when and where you intend to go. So far are you from *following* any advice of mine—nay, even from asking it. And yet I may say, without vanity, that I am a better judge in *this* <ma>tter than either Lady Huntingdon, Sally Jones,³ or any other. Nay, than your own heart, i.e. will.

I wish you all peace, zeal, and love.

[[Adieu.]]

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Wesley / in / Bristol."

Postmarks: "20/OC" and "Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "B[rother]. Oct. 20. 1753 / of T. Perronet, / J. Hutchinson etc."

Source: holograph; Pitts Library (Emory), John Wesley Papers (MSS 153), 2/11.⁴

¹CW's letter to JW is not known to survive, so the identity of the young woman is unknown.

²The Jane (Beal) Bate, who married Arthur Bate of Wakefield in 1736.

³Sarah (Perrin) Jones.

⁴Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:526–27.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

London
October 31, 1753

[[Dear Brother,]]

My fever intermitted after twelve hours. After a second fit of about fourteen hours I began taking the [Peruvian] bark, and am now recovering my strength.

I cannot apprehend that such music has any analogy at all to the inward voice of God. I take it to differ from this *toto genere*,² and to be rather the effect of an angel affecting the auditory nerves, as an apparition does the optic nerve or retina.

Ted Perronet is now thoroughly recovered. I had a letter from him a day or two ago. You say, “That is not the will of God which his providence makes impracticable. But his providence made my going to Bedford impracticable.” Prove the minor,³ and I shall be content.

In journeying, which of us lays his plan according to reason? Either you move (quite contrary to me) by those impressions which you account divine, or (which is worse) *pro ratione voluntas*.⁴

“I will not believe evil till I am forced.” They are very good *words*.

“I wonder you should ever desire it.” What I have desired anytime these ten years is, either that you would *really* act in connexion, or that you would never *say* you do. Either leave off *professing*, or begin *performing*.

How can I say, “I do not know your intentions, when you had told me you intended to winter in Bristol?” I answer, 1) I heard of your intending to be at Bristol before ever I heard it from you. 2) Did you consult with me in this? Was my approbation ever inquired after in the matter? Or any other of the travelling preachers? Or stewards? 3) Had you previously consulted with me (which you did not) in this one point, yet one swallow makes no summer.

O brother, *pretend* no longer to the thing that is not. You do not, will not act in concert with me. Not since I was married only (the putting it on that is a mere finesse), but for ten years last past, and upwards, you have no more acted in connexion with me than Mr. [George] Whitefield has done. I would to God you would begin to do it now; or else, talk no more *as if* you did.

My love to my sister [SGW].

Adieu.

You told William Briggs that you “never declined going to any place” because my wife was there. I am glad of it. If so, I have hope we may sometime spend a little time together.

Why do you omit giving the sacrament in Kingswood? What is reading prayers at Bristol in comparison of this? I am sure, in making this vehement alteration you never consulted with me.

Address: “To / The Revd Mr Wesley / in / Bristol.”

Postmark: “1/NO.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother]. Oct. 31 1753 / trying to bring me under his yoke.”

Source: holograph; Pitts Library (Emory), John Wesley Papers (MSS 153), 2/12.⁵

¹CW’s letter, to which JW is responding, is not known to survive; but JW includes some excerpts.

²“In its whole nature.”

³I.e., the second claim in CW’s argument.

⁴“[by] will instead of reason”; see Juvenal, *Satires*, vi.223: “*sit pro ratione voluntas*.”

⁵Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:527–29.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Bristol
December 1, 1753

Dear Sir,

This I hope will find you safe[ly] arrived, but I fear your dear brother [JW] in a more declining state than you would have expected to have found him.¹ The days of trial and affliction are appointed for us. These are measured by infinite love, and what we must receive as such at his hands, though for the present not joyous but grievous. Assure your brother of my prayers, with many more much fitter from their faith and love to offer them for him; but such as they are, he is sure of.

I am now in your house with Mrs. Wesley who has had a feverish attack. There appears many symptoms that look as if it *might* be the small pox. But if it should [be], you might have great reason to be thankful, as they appear the most favorable possible. She is in a breathing sweat, and grows easier. And tonight is the third from the first little attack and there is reason to hope if there an eruption it should be seen tonight. Be under no care. I will do all that is possible, and all advice that can be wanted, and I will watch her that she may have that is needful in time. As yet I am doubtful if a doctor is best. Diluting liquors, keeping warm and not interrupting nature seems the affair at present. You shall hear from me tomorrow night again. And I beg by the first post to know, should it prove to be small pox, whether you would have your little boy removed.

Poor Mrs. Hutchins[on]² has never had it, and I advise her to remove in case the eruption appears. But as it may prove only a slight fever, I am not over hasty. I deal with you as I wish to be dealt with, and as it is open I mean it should prevent your magnifying your fears. For as I will be exactly faithful in my accounts, so I depend upon your not frightening yourself. I have ever found one fire does not make a furnace, it is ever composed of what will make many. But may he walk with you through [it], and lead you in peace, love, and confidence both of his power and of mercy. This is the road, and that sooner or later on all occasions and in all events, we may be sure of both as in our suffering so in our comforts. I pray that all that is within you may so see through this cloud that you may be able to rejoice at what the fresh day dawn will produce.

My affectionate remembrances to your brother and services to Mr. [John] Hutchinson, who I trust will forget himself as much as possible, considering how you are tried.

Ever your most faithful, affectionate, and sincere friend,

S. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at Mr Bolts in Christopher / Alley / Moorfields / London."³

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "3/DE."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. of S[arah] in sm. pox / Dec. 3. 1753."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/25.⁴

¹JW had been struggling over a month with his health (see the previous letter). On Nov. 29, 1753, CW received word that JW was near death and he should come as quickly as possible. CW arrived in London on Dec. 2, to find JW starting to recover. See CW's account of this trip and of the illness of SGW and death of their son John from smallpox, in CW, *Journal Letters*, 355–64.

²Isabella ("Bell") Hutchinson (b. 1725), John's sister, was staying at the Wesley home.

³The home of John and Susanna (Davis) Boulton.

⁴Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 78.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bristol]
December 3, 1753

Dear Sir,

I have most sensible compassion for you, as I am sure the agitation of your mind must be great under your twofold situation. But trust God and abide in faith and confidence. Mrs. Wesley had a better night last night than we expected. When I wrote, I suspected the eruption did appear and after letter was sealed I went to her again and examined [her] and I thought then the pustules was clearly to been seen, and I then sent away for Doctor [John] Middleton, who confirmed all I had said. [He] thought it would be a good sort [of pox] and no symptom that tended to danger. There is more appears upon her face, hands, and neck, but we have yet diverted her apprehensions of its being the small pox, as she has heard much of a spotted fever and she yet thinks it is that. She is most extreme[ly] obliging in doing anything I recommend and as much of my time as possible you may depend upon her having all my little skill and like useful care.

It is now more [than] two hours since the former part of this letter was wrote and the doctor has just left me. There is many more pustules appear and it threatens the confluent kind [of pox]. But all things go on well yet. This is now the fourth day. Tomorrow's post shall inform you further. We wish to hear of your brother. I pray God support you through the abundance of inward consolations in these outward trials.

My kind services to your brother. Mrs. Hutchinson I am in care about, not knowing what to do; for to send her to Bath will not be proper either for Mrs. Naylor or her. And she knows no creature there, which will be cruel. I think to get her up the hill and keep her with Mrs. Gallatin.¹ For she lay with Mrs. Wesley the very night before the eruption, and she said whatever it was she had got it, for she had just the same pain in her shoulder.

I write you all particulars that you may see I mention everything as if you yourself was present, and this to keep your mind free in order to be useful to your poor brother as possible and as much satisfied as this event can admit you to be. I beg your prayers and hope for all divine support by our gracious Lord.

Yours ever faithfully,

S. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at Mr Bolts in / Christopher Ally / Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "4/DE."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. Dec. 3. 1753 / Sally in sm. pox."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/30.²

¹Lucia Foulkes (c. 1716–99) married Bartholomew Gallatin in May 1746. She corresponded with all the chief leaders of British Methodism, both Arminian and Calvinist. Something of her own character and her travels as the wife of a field officer in the dragoons may be traced by means of the thirty-three letters written to her by William Grimshaw; cf. Frank Baker, *William Grimshaw* (London: Epworth, 1963), 217–30, 275–77.

²Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 79.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

Bristol
December 3, 1753

Being unexpectedly brought back to Somersetshire, and hearing you are gone upon such a mournful errand,¹ I cannot help sending after you a few sympathizing lines. The Lord help and support you! May a double spirit of the ascending Elijah descend and rest on the surviving Elisha! Now is the time to prove the strength of Jesus yours. A wife, a friend, and brother ill together.² Well this is our comfort, all things shall work together for good to those that love God!

If you think proper, be pleased to deliver the enclosed.³ It was written out of the fulness of my heart. Tomorrow I leave Bristol, and purpose reaching London by Saturday morning or night. Glad should I be to reach heaven first, but faith and patience hold out a little longer. Yet a little while and we shall be all together with our common Lord. I commend you to his everlasting love, and am, my dear friend, with much sympathy,

Yours, etc.

G.W.

Source: published transcription; Whitefield, *Letters*, 3:44–45

¹CW had received word JW was near death and had rushed to London. JW would recover.

²SGW had just come down with smallpox, John Hutchinson was in CW's care, and JW was sick.

³A letter to JW, dated the same day; cf. JW, *Works*, 26:532–33.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Bristol
December 6, 1753

Dear Sir,

I should have wrote last night, but Mrs. [Sarah] Jones gave you the reason. Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, I bless God, continues without any symptom of danger, according the opinion of both the doctor and apothecary. She said tonight to me, she desired that money might be placed with Mr. Lloyd (if you approved),¹ and that it would be a great satisfaction to see you, was your brother's condition such as you could safely leave. I pray God direct your steps into his own appointed way. She has sat up for two hours this evening. I beg my kindness and affection to your brother and am ever dear sir,

Your affectionate friend,

S. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at Mr Bolts / Christopher Ally / Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "7/DE."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon the small pox]] Dec. 6 1753."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/26.²

¹Money related to a guarantee of financial support for SGW in the event of CW's death; see CW to SGW, Dec. 3, 1753.

²Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 79.

From John Hutchinson¹

[Bristol]
[December 7, 1753]

Dear Sir,

It is impossible for me to express the deep affliction I am under for the loss of my dear, my inestimable friend. Your friendship is dearer to me than life itself. And though my abominable tempers hinder me from behaving as I could desire and wish, and makes me act contrary to the deportment of a friend, yet it is with the greatest grief I reflect on it. If my dear Charles Wesley can once more overlook all and again receive me into his tender regard, would it relieve me of a burden I already find intolerable. My ingratitude is of the highest sort, the consciousness whereof sinks my spirits and make me inconsolable. My loss is irreparable, and I must mourn for you until time shall be no more with John Henderson. You are more than all the world to me. All friends, all relations are to me of less esteem than the worth of my Charles Wesley. I never can nor will give you up, although you totally abandon me. I hope and firmly believe I shall love you until time with me shall be no more!

O how shall I weather out the few days I have yet to spend? What the separation from you and the distracting thoughts of your displeasure, and the sense of your declining friendship weigh me down and depress me beyond measure. And what shall I do to regain it? My words are unavailable. I pray God change my ungodly heart and give me the meek, the loving sympathetic mind that at present I should rejoice to have. I have pity for you on the present circumstances and wish I was able not only to bear part but all your burdens. My heart is full and ready to break. And I think I could tear out my heart if it would atone for my ungrateful behaviour. Yet my dear sir, if there be one spark of love and friendship in your heart still remaining, encourage it and let not your poor wretched John Hutchinson remain miserable. Allow yourself time to write to me. I shall receive [it] as a favour additional to all the rest. And believe me to be what I really am,

You most affectionate friend and servant,

J. H.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr C. Wesley / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "J. H. / self-condemning / Dec. 7. 1753."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/30.

¹Hutchinson's fragile emotional state was shattered by the news of the illness of SGW and his godson John, as well as the need to return promptly to Bristol. His behaviour toward CW was particularly disturbing on Dec. 5–6, leading to CW denying Hutchinson's desire to stay at the Wesley house during SGW's illness; see CW's description of these days in a journal letter (*Journal Letters*, 360–63).

From John Hutchinson

Clifton
[December 8, 1753]

My Most Beloved Charles Wesley,

How would revive my drooping spirits if you could allow yourself time to write. I never wanted your assistance more than at present. My burden is more than I am able to bear (oppressed beyond measure). I had a very bad night, much worse than I have ever had since I left Leeds. I think you will not have me long in this vale of tears, and indeed I truly desire I may be prepared to meet that Being who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. I earnestly beg your prayers.

I am sorry to hear Mrs. Wesley hath had a bad night. I pray God enable her to bear her affliction and raise her again.

My time is spent in sighs, tears, and prayers. O heavily pass the lingering moments. I want no pity. I more than deserve all I endure.

I am, my dear Charles Wesley's
Most affectionate,

J. H.

P.S. Please to desire Sarah¹ to get us a gallon raisins to me.
Pray let me know what you dispersed for me upon the road. I forgot to ask you yesterday.
Sister [Isabella] is yet very bad. I fear it is a fever.
Pray let Robert bring up the wine today.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "J. H. petitioning for a l[ette]r / Dec. 8. 1753."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/100.

¹The Wesley family cook.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
December 10, 1753

Dear Sir,

I long to hear how dear Mrs. Wesley does. As the night is so bad (as I could be of no real use), I have begged an account. The distress of your mind will render quiet more agreeable to you, and I trust that God will give you the desire of your heart back from the grave. Assure her of my love and prayers, and to Miss [Rebecca] Gwynne my best and kindest services. May the grace of Jesus Christ sustain your spirit.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. Dec. 10 1753."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/27.²

²Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 79.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

London
December 13, 1753

My Dear Friend,

The Searcher of hearts alone knows the sympathy I have felt for you and yours, and in what suspense my mind hath been in concerning the event of your present circumstances.¹ I pray and enquire, enquire and pray again, always expecting to here the worst. Ere this can reach you, I expect the lot will be cast either for life or death. I long to hear that I may partake like a friend either of your joy and sorrow. Blessed be God for that promise whereby we are assured that “all things shall work together for good for those that love him.”² This may make us at least resigned, when called to part with our Isaacs. But who knows the pain of parting when the wife and the friend are conjoined? To have the desire of one’s eyes cut off with a stroke, what but grace, omnipotent grace, can enable us to bear it? But who knows, perhaps the threatened stroke may be recalled, and my friend enjoy his dear yoke-fellow’s company a little longer. Surely the Lord of all lords is preparing you for further usefulness by these complex trials. We must be purged if we would bring forth more fruit.

Your brother [JW] I hear is better. Today I intended to have seen him, but Mr. [Ebenezer] Blackwell sent me word he thought he would be out for the air. I hope Mr. [John] Hutchinson is better, but I can scarce mention anybody now but dear Mrs. Wesley. Pray let me know how it goes with you. My wife [Elizabeth] truly joins in sympathy and love. Night and day indeed you are remembered by, my dear friend,

Yours, etc.

G. W.

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. Charles Wesly / at the New Room in the Horse / Fair / Bristol.”

Postmark: “13/DE.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Dec. 13. 1753 / G. Whd. – all Sympa / thy and Love.”³

Sources: holograph and published transcription; Oklahoma City, OK: The Green Collection; GC.PPR.002512.1; and Whitefield, *Letters*, 3:45–46.⁴

¹Both SGW and their first child John were ill with smallpox.

²Cf. Rom. 8:28.

³There is also a grocery list written on the address side, listing items in shorthand and the corresponding cost; beginning with [[Milk] 0.2 / [[Bread]] 1.6 / etc.

⁴Over an inch of the right side of page 1 of the manuscript is now missing. The absent material is given in the published transcription (which clearly predated the damage currently present) and it is supplied above without using our typical <angle brackets>. Meanwhile, the published transcription is slightly abridged and we have corrected it from the manuscript as it remains.

From the Rev. George Whitefield

London
December 20, 1753

My Dear Friend,

I most sincerely rejoice in, and have given private and public thanks for, the recovery of your dear yokefellow. My pleasure is increased by seeing your brother [JW] so well as I found him on Tuesday at Lewisham. Oh that you may both spring afresh, and your latter end increase more and more!

Talk not of having no more work in the vineyard.¹ I hope all our work is but just beginning. I am sure it is high time for me to do something for him who hath done and suffered so much for me. Near forty years old, and such a dwarf! The winter come already, and so little done in the summer! I am ashamed. I blush and am confounded.

And yet God blesseth us here. Truly his outgoings are seen in the Tabernacle.² The top stone is brought forth; we will now cry, "Grace, grace!"

I must away. Our joint respects attend you *all*. I hope Mr. [John] Hutchinson mends. I hear that his brother is dead.³ Lord make us, make me, also ready! My most dutiful respects await our elect Lady [Huntingdon]. God willing, she shall hear soon from, my dear friend,

Yours, etc., in our common Lord,

G. W.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Charles Wesly / at the New Room in the / Horse-fair / Bristol."

Postmark: "20/DE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Dec. 20. 1753 / G. W."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP 1/83; Whitefield, *Letters*, 3:54 (slightly abridged)

¹Whitefield appears to be quoting from a reply by CW to Whitefield's letter of Dec. 13; this reply is not known to survive.

²Whitefield's preaching house in London, which he was in the process of rebuilding.

³John's brother Thomas Hutchinson (1728–53) was buried in Leeds on Dec. 6.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
December 26, 1753

Dear Sir,

I had not your letter so soon by three days as the date admitted of.¹ I bless God to hear he has so wonderfully restored Mrs. Wesley. I hope to hear an improvement upon this good news from Bristol tomorrow. As to Mr. Richards, he knows best with what views in his own mind he took orders,² or what obligations from that he thinks himself under. Departing from these in the least degree he will most suffer by, and I believe Lord Northampton³ has such engagements by Lady Fanny Shirley⁴ as occasioned his serving him so warmly. But as I know not these particulars, I leave it to him entirely and so shall write to him to this effect. If possible I will do this tonight.

Though under great surprise and affliction, as I had this day an express messenger out of Leicestershire to tell me my dear little son Master [Henry] Hastings is bit by a mad dog.⁵ I do most earnestly beg your prayers for him and me. I hope there is great reason to believe many favourable particulars, but I can only trust to that goodness of God which will not permit a death so terrible to happen and such an affliction to follow me all the days of my life. But he knows best. I have sent express back the remedy that has never failed yet and to have him come to me here. I beg you again you will remind some of the faithful for me that, as I know not how to pray, they may bear my burden for me. About six weeks I have passed in this terrible suspense, but grace and patience can do all this. I ever remain

Your ever, ever, obliged and unalterable friend,

S. H.

My services to your brother [JW], whose lungs it is said are touched. But this I hope is report only, as it is contrary to your accounts of him while at Bristol.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr Charles Wesley at / The Foundery in upper moor-fields / London."

Postmark: "28/DE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Dec 26. 1753 / L. H. [[Of Harry bit by mad dog]]."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/28.⁶

¹The letter from CW to Lady Huntingdon on SGW's survival is not known to survive.

²Lord Northampton had apparently assisted Richards in obtaining ordination by the Bishop of Lincoln, John Thomas, in 1750; and an initial placement as curate to Rev. George Baddelley in Markfield.

³James Compton (1687–1754), 5th Earl of Northampton.

⁴Frances Shirley (1707–78), a step-aunt of Lady Huntingdon.

⁵Henry would recover, but would die in 1758.

⁶Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 80.

From Rebecca Gwynne

[Bristol]
Sunday Night, December 30 [1753]

As we suppose my dear brother Wesley will be glad to know how the poor little boy [John] does, [I] can't help writing by this post to inform you that he rested tolerably last night, but has the distemper very thick, and the doctor says he cannot tell what sort it will prove till the ninth day is past, being so treacherous a disorder. About Wednesday we hope the worst will be over. My sister [Sarah] took another dose of physic today and is pretty well, excepting her nose, which mends but slowly. She bid me tell you her legs also are still plastered. She desires her love and thanks to all friends who were so kind as to remember her.

We are vastly glad to find you've seen dear Betsy,¹ not doubting but it was a great comfort to her, and rejoice to hear of Mr. [James] Waller's friendly behaviour.

My eyes are so weak that I can only add our love and desires to see you as soon as possible. I am, dear brother,

Yours most affectionately,

Reb. Gwynne

[From SGW]

Many thanks I return my dearest friend for his last,² and I trust all your prayers will be fully answered on me. Nothing is worth living for but to enjoy and glorify our God. O that this may be the end for which my life was lengthened; though I found no desire for a longer continuance on earth than till I found my soul meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and that I firmly believe Christ would have granted even me, had he called me hence in my late dangerous illness. To walk always in the light of God's countenance is most desirable, but some seem more highly favoured in that than others. I long to be one of those, but when will it be?

You have been short in gratitude in not writing to my worthy doctor,³ who is daily here to see dear Jacky. My heart yearns for his so that I wish I could bear that distemper again instead of him. But he is in our great Preserver's hands, who cares for him. You'll chide me for scribbling, what I doubt your reading. Mr. Ham[ilto]n⁴ mentioned the doctor's advice that the old Hot Well is the proper water for your brother. Mr. Doleman's situation, etc., would not do at all, he said.⁵

My love to dear Mrs. [Elizabeth] Blackwell and Mrs. [Hannah] Dewell in particular, also Mrs. [Anne] Davis. The Lord bless you.

Farewell!

Address: "To / The Reverend Mr. Charles Wesley / at Mr. Boults in Christopher Alley / Upper Moor Fields / London."

Postmark: "1/IA."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/10.

¹Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³John Middleton, of Bristol.

⁴SGW abbreviates as Hamⁿ; Thomas or John Hamilton of Bristol are likely.

⁵John Doleman of Bristol; see CW, MS Journal, June 28, 1741 (DDCW 10/2, 2:114).

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bath]
December 31, 1753

Dear Sir,

I have but just time to tell you my accounts are every hour more favorable, and a doubt seems reasonable if the dog was mad or not. I heard from Bristol and Mrs. Wesley grows as fast well as possible, but not a word about little boy, who I begged to hear of.

My last was wrote in distress and hurry, and forgot to mention what I have longed to do, to beg you to go to Mrs. Grinfield.¹ She will be extreme[ly] glad to see you and she is a sweet woman. I beg prayers for her and myself. I want [i.e., lack] more than ever anyone wanted that was called a Christian; poorer and poorer every hour. Lord help me and send me strength. But under this last distress I have not had a five minutes that has not been perfect peace and calmness. But I want so much that I see all [the] little I have and that is not right.

My services to your brother, who I hear is not in a consumption. What then is the matter? Haste bids me assure [you] of my unalterable friendship.

S. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at the / Foundery / upper Moorfields / London."

Postmark: "2/IA."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Lady Huntingdon December]] 31. 1753."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/29.²

¹Anne Grinfield (1710–91) was a bedchamber woman to King George II's two daughters, Princesses Amelia and Caroline in the early 1750s, and maintained a home in Bath. Lady Huntingdon's daughter Elizabeth had filled this role briefly, which may be how Anne was drawn in Lady Huntingdon's circle and converted about 1752. While Grinfield never married, she was in her forties at this time, and customarily referred to as "Mrs. Grinfield." Grinfield's association with the Methodists led to her dismissal from the Court around 1755, after which she resided mainly in Bath. She was eventually drawn into the Moravians (by Catherine Edwin), and is buried in their burying ground in Bristol.

²Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 80.

1754

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon¹

Clifton
January 8, 1754

Dear Sir,

I pray God that David's support may be yours and that you may powerfully feel that wisdom subduing your grief which he felt when he said, "I must go to him, but he cannot return to me."² As a parent and a friend I feel for you most sincerely. But as a Christian, and least that deserve that name, I must believe this little dear child is only delivered from the evil that is coming over a wicked and most apostate nation.

I saw dear Mrs. Wesley. She is sorely troubled, and weak in body [which] makes her more sensible of these distresses. But upon the whole [she] is more recovered than I could have expected. My little conversation intended to comfort, and I could not help using one mitigation which was once given me—that a dead sorrow is better than a living one. The chance against us parents for happiness is a hundred to one, and the dear little creature is happy for eternity. And your grief can be but for one moment. All was done that was possible in means, and then submission is all our most right as well as wise [³].

I came from Bath last night and heard at the pump this morning your brother was at the Hot Well. I called upon him and found him not near so ill as I expected, but I still fear the consequences. It was then I heard of the dear little boy's death, and I hastened and am but returned from the house of mourning. My servant who came from Bath on Sunday to Bristol, brought me word he was better, so that the news surprised me. Mrs. Wesley seemed to wish you had been with her. I urged of her [it would have been] little use, and it must have but added to your affliction. But it dwells much upon her.

Your staying till February,⁴ your situation, calls for the prayers of your friends for your support. But I trust that God is preparing you by sufferings for yet more extensive usefulness, and that both wisdom and power will be given for much you are yet to do. May the Lord direct you to look to his glory in all things, and he will take care of all events belonging to you. I am in haste but in great sincerity,

Your sympathizing friend,

S. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at the / Foundery / upper Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "11/IA."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. Janu 8. 1754."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/33.⁵

¹This letter is written on the occasion of the death of John, the first child of CW and SGW, on Jan. 7, 1754.

²Sam. 12:22

³The word looks like "neon."

⁴CW had returned to London after it was clear SGW was recovering, to fill in for JW's absence during his recuperation in Bristol. In light of his son's death, CW decided return to Bristol to support his wife. He may have stayed in Bristol through Feb., then returned to London.

⁵Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 81–82.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Clifton]
March 30, 1754

Dear Sir,

I was greatly obliged by your brother's and your letter.¹ I should have wrote the last post, but indeed I am so hurried, and all my family in their turns have been so ill, that I have been ready to sink under it, not being very well myself. This without hope or prospect of any single good being done. But our Lord's time is best, and through the fire all that is pure must be brought, that after we have suffered awhile he may raise(?) with strength and establish his work in us and by us.

I beg my kindest services to dear Mrs. Wesley. I often think [of] and wish for those happy mornings we all spent together in Charles Street. But the road is only made at times easy and comfortable, in compassion to our great weakness. But strength must belong to men of war. I beg to know when I may hope to see you, and wish many blessings and prayers for you. I ever remain, dear sir,

Your most obliged and faithful friend,

S. H.

My love to Miss [Rebecca] Gwynne.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr / Charles Wesley at / His House in Charles / Street / Bristol."

Postmark: "30/MR."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. March 30. 1754."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/31.²

¹These letters (or combined letter) are not known to survive.

²Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 83.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Clifton]
[June 7, 1754]

Dear Sir,

I was rejoiced at your letter and wished to hear from you as well as write to you.¹ But both have been prevented and that for better reasons than can be assigned by human judgement. I am glad for this reason you escaped my advice, which I never have no opinion of. It is always bad, but when I have a certainty it is not my own by reflection. And this is merely occasional, and as I have no propriety in it so best serves another. My solitary life is comfortable and I could live so for myself. And my indolence of mind is so great that I think our Lord has laid me aside. And I can't regret his will in this, as my blindness and ignorance in divine things at present is more sensible to myself than ever. I trust he will make his faithful ministers flames of fire, but the burden of corruption is ready to overwhelm all within me, and as out of the deep I call upon him.

You have no reason to expect any advantage you see for dear Mrs. Wesley's being with me, but you may be sure it would be a great pleasure to me. But in that view—for it is a pain to me to think the Lord should use me for good to any creature, since I see none that does not want it less than my poor self. And under this extreme abhorrence of my labours I could even soon be brought to think it is pride, presumption, self love, etc., etc. that engages me, rather than any motive more refined. I am left to see nothing but a distracted head and heart, full of human vanity and weakness, and like the vessel of a furnace remain insensible and unpurified by the flames from it. I don't complain of this as wanting any knowledge to gratify self complacency, but for courage in my labours, and for this reason—as they become painful. Less love and less patience must prove this to me hourly.

Lady Selina [Hastings] and Miss Wheler will, I fancy, be at Clifton by the time you mention, and this will prevent my also engaging dear Mrs. Wesley to their apartment now empty, and which I should wish so occupied most extremely. But all this you will best judge of at that time she leaves Wales.² She mentioned more than two months as her intended absence, and her health and spirits may want that in her native air. I did believe you would hugely approve dear Mrs. Grinfield. I do think her a wonderful instance of God's amazing power. I fear not but he will keep her for his own purposes and engage her heart inviolably his. I do believe she will be a great instrument and called forth to labour more abundantly than any that yet has appeared and be a blessing to many generations.

I am glad you are to see your friends. All is ordered for the best, and this absence will be for body and soul. I pray that we may be all made faithful disciples to our faithful master, that being deeply humbled in the spirit of our minds we may bear and endure all thing to the end, and so receive the utmost salvation of his people. Lady Gertude Hotham has been with me all today. She is a gracious woman and a kind friend. Remember her with me in all your prayers. May the Lord prosper all your labours and increase you more and more with all spiritual wisdom and with all gifts that may edify those you minister to. I am most sincerely

Your ever obliged friend.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at Mr John Phene's / in / Canterbury / by London."

Postmark: "8/IV."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. June 7. 1754."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/32.³

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²SGW had gone to Wales when CW returned to minister in London in Mar. 1754.

³Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 81 (misreading as Jan.).

From the Rev. George Whitefield

On board the *Deborah*
July 20, 1754

My Dear Friend,

I do not forget my promise, though hurrying from place to place and settling my orphan-charge hath almost put it out of my power to perform it. However, I am now once more on the great deep, in my way to New York. Accept a few lines as a token that you are not forgotten by me.

I wrote to you from Lisbon.¹ From thence we had a pleasant passage to Carolina, and since that I found and left my orphan family comfortably settled at Georgia. The colony, as well as Bethesda, is now in a thriving situation. Black and white persons I have now a hundred and six to provide for. The God whom I desire to serve will enable me to do it for his great name's sake. At Charleston, and in other parts of Carolina, my poor labours have met with the usual acceptance, and I have reason to hope a clergyman hath been brought under very serious impressions. Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me but unto thy free grace be all the glory.

What will befall me at the northward, I know not. This I know, that Jesus Christ will suffer nothing to pluck me out of his hands. My health is wonderfully preserved. My wonted vomitings have left me. And though I ride whole nights, and have been frequently exposed to great thunders, violent lightnings, and heavy rains, yet I am rather better than usual, and as far as I can judge, am not yet to die. O that I may at length learn to begin to live. I am ashamed of my sloth and lukewarmness, and long to be on the stretch for God.

I hope this will find you thus employed. My cordial love awaits your whole self, your brother, Mr. [Ebenezer] B[lackwell], and in short all the followers of the blessed Lamb of God. Though unworthy of their notice, I earnestly entreat a continued interest in their prayers, as being, my very dear sir,

Their and your affectionate friend and ready servant in our common Lord,

G. W.

Source: published transcription; Whitefield, *Letters*, 3:94–95.

¹GW had been in Lisbon late March through mid-April 1754; his letter to CW is not known to survive.

Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley to Samuel Lloyd

Bristol
Monday night, September 2 [1754]

Dear Sir,

Being desired by Mr. Wesley to inform you when I am to be in town gives you the trouble of this.¹ On Wednesday morning I intend, God willing, setting out in the machine from Bath, which I hope will bring me safe to London Thursday evening. (And if not inconvenient to you) I shall esteem it as a favour if you will meet me at the inn; or some friend to supply your place if you would be so good as to appoint one, will be gratefully acknowledged by me. Who knows but my partner may honour me with a sight of him before four months absence is expired? I half expect him in town, though I wrote to Norwich Saturday last. May we all have a happy meeting! And however disposed of on earth, the Lord grant we may have our lot among all those who are found in him!

Pardon [my] haste, for I am so weary that I can scarce hold my pen, but [I] remain,
Your ever obliged and obedient humble servant,

Sa. Wesley

Address: "To / Saml. Lloyd Esqr. / In Devonshire Square / London."

Postmarks "Bristol" and "4/SE."

Endorsement: by Lloyd, "Bristol 2d. Sepr: 1754 / Sarah Wesley / Rec[eived]ed the 4. Do. / Ans[were]d."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 21/1.

¹SGW had been persuaded by CW, on her return from Wales, to meet him in London and accompany him to Norwich (see CW to SGW, Aug. 3, 1754). While in London she would stay with Samuel Lloyd.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Clifton?]
Sunday [September 16, 1754]

Dear Sir,

The pleasure of conveying my best wishes by dear Mrs. Wesley gives me double satisfaction.¹ I write little to anyone and when I do I suffer much from it since my last disorder that so violently shattered my nerves. You will always have my prayers, and though I experience that truth that when iniquity abounds the love of many wax cold,² yet sure I am God has prepared some better things for us. He never would so bless those gone before us with love, faith, and patience, and leave us out of the records of mercy. All times must praise him. But sure I am more vileness and wickedness never abounded in the Christian church as it does now, that my soul fainteth for waiting so long upon God, in an hour when I think not, till he come as lightning to our help and perfectly return light and truth to us. We want [i.e., lack] this, and this is the cause of our declinings from him. I breath, I groan, I weep, I pray, and death seizes my soul at times that I am even as another man; weak—yet never hopeless of his love and goodness. Lord keep us from sin, from art, guile, and the new (?) devil.

I will not keep you longer than to tell you I have not before wrote to Mrs. [Martha] Gumley. I shall by Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley. I have thought it not right to have a secret correspondence. I have everything be in the noonday brightness, and in this I have wrote only what I should tell the Colonel,³ that I shall rejoice to be of any use to Miss [Mary] Degge and her whenever they employ me for their real services. In love, most extremely I ever am

Your obliged friend,

S. H.

I leave this place and go for a fortnight upon business. I hope to find a line at my return from you or Mrs. Wesley.

Address: “To / The Revd Mr / Charles Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “L. H. Sept. 16. 1754.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/34.⁴

¹SGW had come to London, where CW met her in mid-Sept.

²See Matt. 24:12.

³Samuel Gumley (1698–1763) had been made colonel of the First Regiment of Foot Guards (later the Grenadier Guards) in 1748. He had recently been drawn into Methodism and had just returned from a tour of duty. In late 1748 he was drawn into Methodist circles, and officially admitted to membership of the London Society on Easter Day, 1749. Here he met Martha (Meighen) Colvill, who became his wife on Sept. 10, 1751. By Feb. 1761 the marriage had fractured. He went abroad, and died in 1763 at Spa, Belgium. See *WHS* 59 (2013): 3–11.

⁴Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 83.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Clifton
October 21, 1754

Dear Sir,

I had your letter this morning and am troubled you should have any difficulty or distress that you don't see may end in or to the glory of God.¹ I think you [are] too hasty. Your fears go before your judgment and this occasions your perplexity. But I think you will be better satisfied when I tell you what I have done upon reading yours. I ordered my coach and went directly to Mr. and Mrs. Jones,² who had all your fears arising from what had passed at Bristol. I was determined to cut the matter short and send Mr. [John] Jones to Mr. Walsh (who was ill) in my name,³ to tell him I had heard such a report as if Mr. John Wesley had laid on hands,⁴ and that if he knew anything of it I expected he should tell me that I might confirm or contradict it. He was surprised, but answered me positively that he had not [laid hands] on him nor any other that he knew of, except John Cennick and some other, but that not as ordaining them to preach the gospel.

This was enough for the present. We have nothing to do with what may be. And should it ever happen, our being quite quiet and acting positive will be all any of us have to do, and go on now without thinking about it. This will be more difficult to them (as it will be more right) than opening the way for them by any possible suspicion or distrust. When people have their own follies to expose themselves, it often prevents them doing them. And should this be only the advice of a few silly people, Mr. Wesley will talk to them, but never mean gratifying them at the sacrifice of himself. And this being mentioned to anybody will have it become a universal supposition and hurt him, when perhaps there is no solid ground for it but the vanity and folly of a few of the ignorant lay preachers. Let us rest quiet. The Lord will take care of the single heart and the single eye—light and heat will be with them when it is wanted, and before we have no use, that we might not make an ill one of them.

My kindest and affectionate remembrance to dear Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, and tell her was this truly the case I would be in town at any warning and see you safe at Lambeth⁵ whenever it is wanted. But all must be still as possible. As to Bishops Stillingfleet and Taylor, they are for themselves but not for you.⁶

¹CW's letter is not known to survive; but it contained his complaint that some lay-preachers, led by Charles Perronet, had begun to administer the Lord's Supper, and that JW was leaning toward ordaining them as a sanction of this activity (see the excerpt from CW's shorthand diary for Oct. 17–24, 1754 in *Journal Letters*, 391). CW (and Lady Huntingdon, at this point!) rejected this move as a separation from the Church of England.

²John Jones and Sarah (Perrin) Jones.

³Thomas Walsh (1730–59), raised Roman Catholic, initially contemplating the priesthood. In a time of questioning he found spiritual assurance among the Methodists. In 1750 he met JW, who convinced him to become a travelling preacher. Over the next nine years he would serve mainly in Ireland, but with stints in England and Wales as well. See CW's multi-part hymn on his death in *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 63–70. See also Atmore, *Memorial*, 438–43; *DEB*, 1154; Jackson, *EMP* 3:11–292; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 368.

⁴I.e., ordained some lay preachers.

⁵The London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

⁶It appears JW had expressed his view to CW that Edward Stillingfleet's *Irenicum, A Weapon Salve for the Church's Wounds* (London: Henry Mortlock, 1660) disproved any claim that an episcopal form of government (and hence ordination only by bishops) was normative in Scripture and earlier tradition; cf. JW to James Clark, July 3, 1756, *Works*, 27:38. Apparently JW also referred to a work by Jeremy Taylor, of which the most likely is *A Discourse of the Liberty of Propheying* (London: R.

The Guide of all truth must be with us, and no bare conviction of the understanding, without the importunity of our Guide leading us and constraining us, will ever be a rest for us. And as occasion yet offers for any trial, they force our prejudices and prepare them for anything. We ought to wish to stand firm in such a moment. It is these that make all mankind such inconsistent animals, and only owing to the not knowing the infallible Guide will never be wanting when we really find we don't know the way without him. But (?) free are these that fear not some way that is not the Lord's, and so don't desire his company, or some thoughts that are so base that they will even run before the explanation of our Lord's thoughts. A Christian, by standing still and letting other men act, will but show them in the wrong without taking any pains about it, and ever secure himself.

I wish to hear when you and Mrs. Wesley intend for Bristol, though I am quite satisfied you are doing that which is best and that my friendly wishes to see you both ought not to interfere. Hurry, and not being sure to find you, with much writing and some late work done here at the Hot Wells, engages my time, thoughts, and pen, and without an absolute necessity for comfort, etc., etc.

Common letters I must drop—last post carried five. And barely sides of this paper that could not be avoided. None on spec(fic) points of our most glorious calling. Not one word this week to my dear little charming daughter at K[—]. I hope tonight to be able. I have a little humour falling into my eyes which makes it rather more troublesome to me. You know who she comes with here. I find by Sir John Mordaunt⁷ (who called upon me after his reviewing the troops here) that Mr. Stonehouse has left the Moravians and has exposed them as having cheated him out of his wife's fortune.⁸ I wish you could hear something, for so fine a worldly man knowing so much about it surprised me. But he had known him before he went among them. My kind services to Mr. [Samuel] Lloyd and I am with more faithful prayers for you, ever

Your most obliged friend,

S. H.

I hope Mrs. [Martha] Gumley is not offended with me,⁹ for truly I felt I could do not otherwise, and make her my complements and to Miss [Mary] Degge the same.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at Mr Lloyds Italian / Marchent in Devonshire Square / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "23/OC."

Endorsement: by CW, "Oct. 21. 1754 / L. Hn. [[of the secession(?)].]"

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/35.¹⁰

Royston, 1647).

⁷John Mordaunt (1697–1780)

⁸George Stonehouse had been drifting away from the Moravians, particularly since the death of his wife Mary (Crispe) Stonehouse in Dec. 1751. He would soon renew relationship with CW.

⁹See Lady Huntingdon's previous letter to CW.

¹⁰Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 83–84.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Clifton]
[October 30, 1754]

Dear Sir,

You understand my meaning as to being quiet.¹ In these dispositions let us be found. And indeed I cannot see why you are to do wrong, that good may come. To avoid dispute is best; and to remain simply as they leave us, carrying with them all that will go. The sincere will soon be sent back without loss or harm. And all the rest? I think it will be a happy event to shake them off. God's ways are not ours, and all deliverances from future evil are only in his hands. And the methods of his providence ought to be submitted to, as the universal intention of him to his children.

I was vastly shocked with a letter from Mrs. G— today about Miss Fenwicke's affair.² Who is the man?³ What is he? Your brother's conduct, I have wrote her word, I cannot well credit, and just at this time I think would prevent any unwary step. O dreadful effects (as they appear) of pushing improper instruments into the ministry! Here is the wound that is incurable.

Mr. [John] Jones will write to you. I wish he was in orders,⁴ and yet no way appears open; in the best time it will. They are best where they are. I think they will, if possible, avoid the Conference, as the few wrote the terms of it.⁵ I am astonished that your brother should make himself nothing for nothing. None will be more despised, great as he may esteem himself. His life was given, I hope, in the end more for the glory God than this step appears. But all will be well, and I cannot pray it should be otherwise than just what its is. And I believe it will happen and produce great good and discover much evil.

My kindest love to dear Mrs. Wesley, and I shall be glad to see her here. Mrs. Barlow and Mrs Skrine are expected at Clifton tonight.⁶ I find work here and some blessing accompanies my labours in the

¹CW's reply to LH's letter of Oct. 21 is not known to survive.

²Sarah Fenwicke (d. 1768), would eventually become Rouquet's wife. She was from a prominent family, her father a plantation owner in Charleston (South Carolina), and her sister Elizabeth (1716–94) the young widow of Henry Scott (1712–40), 3rd Earl of Deloraine. She and recently become attracte to James Rouquet.

³The man was Rev. James Rouquet (1730–76), who was appointed by JW a Master of Kingswood School between 1751 and 1754. LH was shocked because Rouquet, who lacked both a university degree and ordination, seemed entirely unsuited for Sarah's hand. This led Rouquet to leave Kingswood, receive ordination as a deacon in Sept. 1754 and take a curacy. His road to ordination as priest would be prolonged, but in Sept. 1756 Rouquet and Sarah Fenwicke were wed in London, with JW serving as a witness. See LH to CW, Sept. 15, 1755; and LH to CW, Jan. 13, 1756. See Ives, *Kingswood*, 45–47; A. Barrett Sackett, *James Rouquet and His Part in Early Methodism* (Wesley Historical Society, 1972); and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 301.

⁴Lady Huntingdon had assisted both Thomas Richards and Walter Sellon to obtain orders in 1750. The efforts for John Jones would be frustrated, due to his close tie to Methodism, until 1770.

⁵CW was encouraging those most loyal to the Church of England to attend the next Conference, in May 1755 in Leeds, to resist efforts to ordain the lay preachers. John Jones did end up attending that Conference; indeed one copy of the surviving minutes is in his hand.

⁶Elizabeth (Weston / Christmas) Skrine (1695–1756), the daughter of the vicar of Cobham in Surrey, married Gainsford Christmas in 1716, only to suffer his death the following year; she then became the second wife of Richard Skrine (1691–1737) in 1718. After the death of her second husband Elizabeth went to live with her step-daughter Ann (Skrine) Barlow (c. 1715–63), who was herself widowed in 1739, in Claverton, Somerset. The two women were drawn into Methodist circles by Catherine Edwin. In 1755 they and Ann Grinfield resolved to live together in community with Lady

Lord. What can faith do but go on in spite of all that looks so bad as our view at present? Where to send these poor souls who are made hungry? Not to your brother. Not to the Moravians. Not to Church. Not to any but to their Bibles and their praying. My services to Mr. [Samuel] Lloyd, and I am dear sir,
[Your] faithful friend,

S. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at Mr Lloyds / Italian Marchent / in Devonshire Square / London."

Postmark: "02/NO."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. Hn. / Oct. 30. 1754."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/36.⁷

Huntingdon at Clifton. But in 1761 Barlow, Grinfield, and Skrine transferred their alignment to the Moravians, again drawn by Catherine Edwin, supporting them for the remainder of their lives. See Edwin Welch, *Spiritual Pilgrim: A Reassessment of the Life of the Countess of Huntingdon* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1995), 81–85.

⁷Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 84–85.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Clifton]
November 19, 1754

Dear Sir,

Having been at Bath rambling(?), I have heard nothing so long of you and dear Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley that I can no longer forebear my enquirings. I have been in vast trouble about your late [¹]. I expect Mrs. [Ann] Grinfield on Friday. When are we to expect you? We shall want our comfortable Charles's strict meetings. One line to inform me, and assure Mrs. [Ann] Grinfield of my thanks for her letters, and that all our little society here which I hope to introduce her to will be glad of that increase she will make to it. I have a most odd letter from Mrs. W—. I am so blunt I please none but you, who am as much so ever

Your friend,

S. H.

My love to Mrs. Wesley and compliments to Mr. [Samuel] Lloyd.

Address: "To /The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at Mr Lloyd's / Italian Marchent / in Devonshire / Square / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "21/NO."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. / Nov. 19. 1754."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/37.

¹The word looks something like "Busells."

From Ann Partridge

December 3, 1754

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I beg pardon for making so free with you, but duty obliged me to acquaint you of the great blessing I have received 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 though I never had seen you in the flesh.

Dear sir, the Lord gave me to take your message as from himself. He was pleased to show me a glimpse of his face. Nay, he even forced me to believe, 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 convinced me of that and that he was both able and willing to forgive and receive me through 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.¹

I saw, as it were, the Lord’s frown turned into a smile. It forced 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 doubts or fear. 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 evangelist, make full proof of your ministry. I pray God give you a double portion of his blessed Spirit. And wherever you go, may he always watch over you for good; which is the earnest prayer of me,

Your friend and servant,

Ann Partridge

Pray sir, please to give my duty to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley.

Endorsement: by CW, “Anne Partridge / A Seal, at Leigh² / Dec. 3, 1754 / Not unto me, O Lord / not unto me!”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/116.³

¹CW, “Waiting for Christ the Prophet,” st. 5, *HSP* (1742), 211.

²I.e., Leigh-on-sea, Essex.

³For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Clifton]
December 17, 1754

Dear Sir,

I am troubled you should think I neglect anything that I think could be of use to you. But, as I hoped from what Mr. [John] Jones, Mr. [Thomas] Maxfield, etc. have said the difficulties were all by this time blown over,¹ and by letting them rest the fear of opposition will let them remain so. Could I have thought otherwise every post might have brought you my poor sentiments upon it. But none could be better than Mr. [John] Haughton's were.² And all I can reasonably wish is that you may be kept clear from all the scrapes that are upon matters of division. Oh that we had all such hearts that we might follow Jesus Christ with them, he singly possessing them. I grow so weary of outward things, as the janglings about these weaken the power which we should trust in both for our instruction and deliverance in trials.

I can see no objection to Mr. [Walter] Sellon's being at the Conference. He is a most honest man. I conclude fears keep you yet in town [i.e., London]. I am happy and delighted with the disposition of the Colonel [Gumley]. I fancy we must not expect to see you soon. The hopes of this has made me more silent. My kindest and affectionate remembrance to Mrs. Wesley. I am sorry poor Mrs. [Martha] Gumley is so much out of order. My best compliments to them both. Do let me hear soon or I shall fear you have taken something unkind, and my heart denies the possibility of any known occasion.

Your prayers I must hope are for me. I am weak, poor, miserable, blind, and naked. For such, when you pray of that number, is

Your faithful friend,

S. H.

I had a letter from Mr. [George] Whitefield, who inquires after you and yours and wishes to hear from you. My best services wait upon Mr. [Samuel] Lloyd.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at Mr Lloyd's / Italian Marchent in / Devonshire Square / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "18/DE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Dec. 17. 1754 / L. H."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/38.³

¹The struggles over lay preachers offering sacraments.

²The letter or document expressing these sentiments is not known to survive. On Haughton, see LH to CW, c. Aug. 25, 1756.

³Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 85.

1755

From the Rev. George Whitefield

Virginia
January 14, 1755

My Dear Friend,

Some time ago, while in New York, I heard you were sick. This I suppose hath been the occasion of my not hearing from you. Well, blessed be God, rich or well we can go on our way to heaven. This is begun on earth. If it was not so, what should I do in this pilgrim way?

I suppose my circuit upon the continent already hath been two thousand miles, and a journey of six hundred more before I reach Bethesda yet lies before me. Scenes of wonder have opened all the way. A thousandth part cannot be told. In Virginia the prospect is very promising. I have preached in two churches, and this morning am to preach in a third. Rich and poor seem quite ready to hear. Many have been truly awakened. Continue to pray for a poor but willing hunter after souls. Oh it is heavenly sport!

It's presence doth my pains beguile
And makes the wilderness to smile.¹

About May I hope to see England. Oh that you may see me grown in grace! But alas! Alas! I am a dwarf. Lord Jesus quicken my tardy pace. My cordial respects await your dear yoke fellow [SGW], your brother [JW], and all that for Christ's sake are concerned for or enquire after, my dear friend,

Yours most affectionately in our common Lord,

G. W.

I wrote very lately to our elect Lady [Huntingdon].

Address: "To / The Revrd. Mr. Charles Wesly / at the New Room in the Horse Fair / in / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "G. Whitefield / Jan. 14. 1755."²

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/28.

¹Cf. Joseph Addison's version of the Psalm 23 in *The Spectator*, no. 441, st. 4: "Thy bounty shall my pains beguile: / The barren wilderness shall smile."

²There are also three sets of shorthand notes on the address portion of this letter, as brief memos to JW; none of which seem to relate to CW's reply.

From Isabella Hutchinson¹

Altona [Germany]
January 30, 1755

Reverend Sir,

Your most obliging favour I received,² and should have answered it before now, but have been at and obliged to keep my bed about a week. But [I] am now, thank God, pretty well recovered. The doctor that attended me is an English man. His name is Middleton, a relation of your worthy friend at Bristol.³

And now, dear sir, as you desire to know how it has fared with my better part,⁴ I'll give you a short account, as well as I can. But to recount to you all the mercies of God to me is more than I am able to express, particularly in my late illness. In which I was enabled not only to bear patiently what was laid on me, but also to praise his holy name for the same. My desire is still to meet you, with the rest of my Christian friends, in heaven.

He has not left himself without witnesses in this place. There are many here that can now testify of a Redeemer's love to them. Such I have chosen for my companions, and I doubt not but they will be a blessing to me when I can understand the language a little better. I am now learning the language with a master, that I may the sooner understand the gospel ministers in this place. The English minister here is a strict moralist. But I do not find he goes any farther. There are several of the Lutheran ministers that preach Christ very clear, and have many seals to their ministry. Such of them are branded with the name of "Quakers," and of which number is my mother-in-law and her sister, with whom I am very happy. I cannot but look upon this as a fit of God to me, as we are all of one mind.

I do not forget you nor your dear partner, to whom I beg my best respects may be acceptable. It will be a pleasure to me always to hear from 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 manner. Yet a little while and we shall meet to part no more. God grant me strength to hold out to the end. I often fear I shall never hold out, I shall never come there. At other times it is otherwise with me, and I can believe he will finish his work in me.

I thank you for your kind remembrance of me, as also for the hymns you sent me of my dear brother's death,⁵ which I shall keep as a token of your great friendship and love for him. My kind love to your brother [JW]. I hope by this [time] he has recovered his strength again. Mrs. [Mary] Hutchinson salutes you and your wife. My love to all enquiring friends. I am still, dear sir,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

Bell Hutchinson

P.S. Some time ago I read in the English news of a Methodist preacher at Norwich that murdered himself, and afterwards it was contradicted that it was not a Methodist preacher. But I am still afraid that it was poor [James] Wheatley. I should be glad to know if it is not him. Peace be with you all. Amen.

Address: "To / the Revd. Mr. Charles / Wesley att the Foundry / Moor fields / London."

Endorsement: by CW, "Jan. 30. 1755 / Bell Hutchinson / kept at Altona."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/74.⁶

¹Isabella Hutchinson married a cousin, William Hutchinson (1731–91), a merchant in Leeds, on Sept. 5, 1754. They moved to Altona (outskirts of Hamburg, Germany but currently under Denmark).

²CW's letter to her is not known to survive.

³John Middleton was CW's physician in Bristol.

⁴I.e., her soul.

⁵See the three hymns in *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 6–12.

⁶For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see <https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk>.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bristol]
February 11, 1755

Dear Sir,

Hoping and longing to hear from you ever since you went has prevented both Mrs. (?) and me from writing.¹ We were begin[ning] to think you have forsaken us. We will allow it for any new strays you may have picked up, but otherwise that will not be allowed you. My prayers are elevated daily for you and yours, and that your labours and gifts may be blessed. And that we may sink deeper and deeper into that divine ocean of love and light, our saviour, our Jesus, living and loving in us. We sometimes think you are not pleased with us. Love obliges you to tell why. And how oftener comes my love to dear Mrs. [Srah] Wesley, who we all long to see. My kind service to Mrs. [Martha] Gumley, the Colonel, Miss [Mary] Degge, and Mr. [Samuel] Lloyd. I cannot get the curacy for Mr. [John] Jones of (?¹) though I have tried. Something hinders which we don't see. All here enquire much after you, and wish for your return to Bristol. I beg you constant prayers for

Your unworthy but most sincere friend,

S. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at Mr Lloyd's / Italian Marchent / in Devonshire / Square / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "14/FE."

Endorsement: "Feb. 11. 1755 / L. H."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/39.

¹CW had gone to minister in London in late January; he returned to Bristol in late February.

¹It looks like "W. Enin."

From Howell Harris¹

[Trevecca]

February 14, 1755

My Dearest Charles Wesley,

I shall desire no more but that mine may be to you what yours was to me,² that you may be revived as much as I was in reading your resolution to be faithful to the law of God. I know of no other joy here but to have spirits enthroned by him, to set up his name and righteousness before the hearts of poor lost, really lost, sinners—whom almost all are afraid, or are too loving, or too wise to speak plain to.

When you really strike the sinful root and set up the Saviour indeed, you really quite disturb all religion and publicans(?), Jews, Greeks, Romans are alarmed (without faith its impossible to stand, to sound or alarm the fellows we must be determined to die.)

(...?) It is easy to preach and to be seemingly faithful, and yet all the while the flesh and Satan are not as much alarmed. But then you'll find indeed there is a devil and there is a spirit and idol bold in man, and that Pharisees are still in being. You will then comprehend the meaning of many scriptures mentioning Pharisees as you never did before.

I was glad to find your faith and love growing together. I believe that both must be tried before we slay men armed with great (?). I am glad that true moderation dwells in that Spirit, without which (...?) holy fear and deeper self denial must be girdled about the loins of (...?) or this cause will be betrayed. Fear not the opposition. One word of faith puts all the clamour of (?) to silence (...?) and God will be pleased.

You see my freedom and the liberty I had to write to your brother.³ I can say I write in love and from a heart full of zeal for the work in England, and that I think pleases our Lord. I really think the moment the work goes to be a sect or party or out of the Church, let it be in whatever shape it will, the enemy has carried his point and the blessing is no longer; (...?) and whilst two parties are separated, both suffer. There is Belial, another spirit, of a simple undisguised (?) in the Church which the Church annuls(?) there. And there is a spirit of lying and denying the Saviour—his humility.

[The remaining half of the letter is too illegible to be deciphered with any confidence.]

Source: Harris's manuscript copy for his records; National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #2121.

¹Harris's hand is always difficult to read. This letter is particularly challenging and only portions can be transcribed with any confidence. Cf. the similar comment and even briefer transcription in *Trevecka Letters (1747–94)*, 59

²This letter of CW to Harris is not known to survive. CW had seen Harris in early January, while in Brecon (see CW to SGW, Jan. 10, 1755), which renewed their correspondence.

³Surely about the issue of ordaining lay preachers. Harris apparently included the letter to JW, with that to CW. Both bore the same date. Harris's copy for his records of the letter to JW survives (National Library of Wales, Trevecka Letters, #2122), but it is less legible than his copy of this one to CW.

From John Nelson

Birstall
March 4, 1755

Dear Sir,

I received yours this morning,¹ and it affords me great consolation, for I thought both you and your brother had forgotten me. I have been at Newcastle and in the round 16 weeks, and the hand of God is stretched out for good both in town and country, but more especially at Alnwick, Gateside Fell, and Sunderland. I took nine fresh members into the society in one day, and there hath hardly been one week this winter but someone hath stepped into the pool in the North Riding. Several of the colliers at the Fell hath felt the precious blood of Christ applied this winter, and I never preached there since I went, but I took one or more into the society. They have enlarged the house, but they may pull down and build again if they increase as they have done lately. Brother [John] Downes is weak in body, but I believe his heart is right with God, and that he is no weathercock.

My soul hath been blessed in the north, but I have had two sore bouts of the gravel. Yet when I could neither eat nor sleep for near a fortnight together, I could preach as well as ever I could in my life. So that I never neglected preaching once for my affliction. I got home last Wednesday, but happened to get a hurt on my knee by a horse running against me near Leeds, so that I cannot bear to ride at present. But God orders all things well, for on Sunday his arm was bared amongst us in such a manner that some was struck to the ground, and one Magdalene that night was allowed to kiss the feet of Jesus.² O sir, join in prayer with us for her that she may stand, for such a brand was never plucked out of the burning in Birstall before.

The work prospers in all our rounds, and many hath been converted here since I went. And others are stirred up to seek for mercy, for brother Thomas Lee is a faithful labourer.³ He is a right old Methodist preacher, and the power of God attends his word, and I will assure you no other preaching will do in Yorkshire but the old sort, that comes like thunderclaps upon the conscience. For fine preaching doth more harm than good here. Brother Jones is here.⁴ He is very weak so that he is to attend to both day and night. And Williams is but poorly yet.⁵ So that my wife is hurried beyond her strength,⁶ for we have not had the house free from sick preachers these fifteen months; and without death, or a miracle of healing, I know not when it will be free. My wife hath lately had a pleuratic fever, but is much better, and our house is so taken up with sick preachers, and nurses to wait on them, that we have not room for the labouring preachers and our own family. So that it is impossible for us to have anyone to board with us, for when we had no sickness in the house, we had but just room for the preachers and the family. If we had had room, we should be glad to oblige you and the gentleman, by receiving his brother into our house.

Sir, I will assure you my heart is as your heart as concerning the Church, for by the help of God I hope to continue in the way wherein I was called. I heard some words dropped at Newcastle that made me uneasy, that some of our preachers had taken upon them to administer the sacrament in the south that was

¹This letter is not known to survive

²See Luke 7:36–50.

³Thomas Lee (1717–86), a native of Yorkshire, was accepted as an itinerant preacher in 1758, having assisted William Grimshaw in his circuit for several years previously. He remained steadfast in the Wesleyan work from this point until his death. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 240–42.

⁴This is the former blacksmith Joseph Jones (1722–?), who was stationed that year in the Haworth circuit. He entered in 1744 and left in 1760 to settle as a farmer.

⁵Enoch Williams; on whom, see his letter to CW of June 21, 1755.

⁶John Nelson married Martha Webster (1704–74) in Tong, Yorkshire, in June 1727.

laymen.⁷ And they seemed to justify it. But I replied that if you and your brother allowed it, I would turn my back on you and all that join in that covenant. Then I heard no more about it as long as I stayed in the north. Brother William Shent told me about them as I came through Leeds. But he is entirely in my mind, that if we separate from the Church God will leave us, as he hath done all that hath separated before us. The work seems to be at a stand at Leeds, I hear at present. Brother Jones is very strong in grace, though weak in body. He joins in love to you. So doth my wife. This with my best love to you and your dear wife. I beg an interest in your prayers, as you have in mine daily. From

Your unworthy brother in Christ, and son to serve in the gospel,

John Nelson

Address: “To Rev. Mr. / Charles Wesley at / Esqr. Lloyd’s, in Divonshire / Square / London.”

Postmarks: “Halifax” and “7/MR.”

Endorsement: by CW, “March 4. 1755 / J. Nelson, prospering.”

Source: holograph; MARC, PLP 78/53/1.⁸

⁷See the excerpt from CW’s shorthand diary for Oct. 17–24, 1754 in *Journal Letters*, 391.

⁸A transcription was published previously in Laycock, *Haworth*, 157–58.

Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley to Samuel Lloyd

[Bristol]
Monday night, March 31 [1755]

I am very sensible of your readiness to put the kindest construction on what appears like an inclination to oblige; but indeed dear sir, I am ashamed you should mention the short stay *our* welcome guest made here as a favour. I esteemed it as such, done to my partner and me. I beg you would return my sincere thanks to Mr. Dunbar for his obliging letter,¹ which expresses a very grateful disposition. He seems possessed of that and every good natural temper that will make him a comfort to his friends.

My poor afflicted mother has wrote to entreat my partner's and my interest with you in regard to that thoughtless youth;² but knowing the many trials you have already been exercised with through his idleness, I am checked in attempting to urge a continuance of those favours from you, which he has often abused. And yet I believe you are so far unwearied that, if you saw any possible way to save him from ruin, you would not be backward to assist. Be so good as to send me the answer by Mr. Wesley, that I may return my mother.

Lady Huntingdon and Mrs. [Ann] Grinfield inquire after your welfare often. We thought you could have called on us before this time. I doubt not but a visit to them would be a great refreshment to you.

My best wishes and prayers attend you. I trust all things will work together for your good. May we be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

I desire you would give my service to Mr. Dunbar, Mr. Montague,³ and Mr. Osborne.⁴

I am, dear sir,

Your ever obliged humble servant,

Sa. Wesley

Address: "To / Saml. Lloyd Esqr."

Endorsement: by Lloyd, "Bristol 31st March 1755 / Sarah Wesley / rec[iev]jed 5 April in Birm[ingha]m."

Source: holograph; Duke, Rubenstein, Wesley Family Papers, Box 1.

¹Dunbar was a business associate of Lloyd, who spent some time in Bristol; see CW to Samuel Lloyd, Mar. 8, 1755.

²Sarah (Evans) Gwynne, writing about Roderick Gwynne, whom Lloyd was seeking to help get established in business.

³E. Montague was an associate of Samuel Lloyd from Jamaica, who would die there in 1759; see Lloyd to CW, Jan. 24, 1760.

⁴Osbourne was another business associate of Lloyd.

From the Rev. George Stonehouse

[Bath]
April 2, 1755

Dear Charles,

I received thine this moment, and for thy excellent epistle in verse I am to thank you as a dear friend, though certain parts of it I dislike.¹

If please God, I will be with you in Bristol on Tuesday night, April 9th. I accept your kind offer and will surely be myself at your house. Your manner of expressing your old tenderness towards me is moving. I have very few friends indeed my Charles. In me, therefore, thou has a friendship almost entire to thyself. And I hope our Saviour will ever continue and improve it; at least that he will not suffer me as before to be the dividing party.

I have been all this morning with Lady Huntingdon. What she talks appears to me a hotch potch² of opinions gleaned from everywhere without discretion; which, as she delivers them, encounter each other with continual repugnancies, to the amazement surely of the thinking, to the admiration of the simple, and confusion of her own heart. I wish her well but can do her no manner of service. I have sent her a letter respecting the affair of B___ because y(ou so³) advise, but expect tomorrow morning, when I shall again (see her) as by appointment, a rebuff for it. For I judge her to be at present in (a state) of self-importance which you know is supercilious as well as dangerous. However, now as I have acquaintance with her, should she ever slide, it will be my pleasure that I can act the friend by her.

My sister is at present confined to her chamber by a swelled face,² the effects of a cold, but she talks a making a visit at Bristol, for I told her I would be with you. I am, dear Charles, with all tenderness and truth

Thy sincere brother, friend, and servant

Geo. Stonehouse

P.S. All I write to you must be, as shall be yours to me, *auribus commissa fidelibus*.³

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at Mr Samuel Loids in Devonshire Square / near Bishop Gate Church / London."

Postmarks: "Bath" and "4/AP."

Endorsement: by CW, "April 2. 1755 / My George."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP_r 1/75.

¹See CW to Stonehouse, c. Mar. 30; the poetic epistle copied in MS Epistles, 69–79.

²I.e., hodgepodge.

³A portion is torn away by the wax seal; the missing material is reconstructed with good confidence.

²Elizabeth Stonehouse (1714–93), George's sister, never married.

³"For your trusted ears only."

Rev. George Stonehouse to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

Dornford, near Woodstock, in Oxfordshire
Friday, April 24, 1755

Dear Madam,

It is with regret that I am troublesome to you in the present occasion, because I fear it will vex you as much as myself when I tell you that the chest are come alone by the Oxford wagon, and that both my portmantles¹ are left behind. In my portmantles are writings which I cannot well bear the want of, clothes which I am absolutely in need of, a considerable sum of money, some few things which will receive injury from confinement, and my boy's livery and linens, without which he cannot appear before anyone. All which are disappointments very irksome to me, especially as I must relate it to you, having no other on whom I can rely in Bristol. Could you contrive to send them to me before Thursday next, either by the Oxford coach which goes weekly to the Bath and passes through Bladen near Woodstock in Oxfordshire, where (at The Lamb there) I would have them left for me at Dornford? You cannot think how highly this would serve me; or perhaps some speedier way might still be found.

Your dear husband has promised me a letter from you with an account of the age of Mrs. Mary Stafford,¹ and I dare hope you with therewith give me your true judgment of her, which you know I shall prefer to my own.

I am, madam, with great sincerity,
Your most obliged friend and obedient servant,

G. Stonehouse

Address: "To / Mrs Wesley / at the Revd Mr Charles Wesleys / in the Horse Fair / Bristol."

Postmark: "Oxford." Marked: "to be sent to / hand immediately."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/45.

¹I.e., portmanteaus, or large suitcases.

¹Mary Stafford (b. c. 1705) was a sister of Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor. The Wesleys mentioned her as a possible spouse for George Stonehouse, but CW decided she was too old (see CW to SGW, May 2, 1755).

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Lichfield
May 4, 1755

Dear Sir,

After many perils we are reached this place. In my way I lay by for Church and the passing the waters. I left Mrs. (Sarah) Wesley well and all our friends, and our parting was less grievous as the hopes of meeting soon again was our joy then. Enclosed I send you L–n letter and beg your prayer. I shall not be at Ashby[-de-la-Zouch] all summer, but at Donington Park, where I shall be glad to see you.¹ Though I must not hear you—time will do all things most for God’s glory, and this I only wish. I pray our Lord to direct your counsels and devote us all to him for time and eternity.

Yours ever.

Address: “To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “L. H. May 4. 1755.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/40.

¹CW had come north to Leeds to attend Conference on May 6, contending against any action that would lead to separation from the Church of England. He met with Lady Huntingdon at Donington on May 11.

Rev. George Stonehouse to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[Dornford]
May 14, 1755

Dear Madam,

Though I have indeed laboured to rid myself of business, it seems not likely that I should become so free a person as to see you in Bristol this summer. However, as an amends your dear partner has promised me, with your approbation, your company and that of your sisters and my godchild¹ at Dornford so soon as it shall please God such a journey may be safe and convenient for you after lying in—a trust which I regard as bespeaking his highest friendship and conferring a lasting obligation upon me; and which I dare hope you will condescend in. After a time too probably Lady Huntingdon may meet you here in her return from Leicestershire. And I hope not to fail spending my winter with you in Bristol.

I am, madam, with great sincerity,
Your most obliged,

Geo. Stonhouse

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr C. Wesley / in Charles Street / Bristol.”

Postmark: “16/MA.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP_r 1/76.

¹CW and SGW had asked Stonehouse to be godfather to their second child, a girl who was born June 25 and named Martha Maria. Unfortunately, she lived for only one month.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
May 23, 1755

Dear Sir,

I cannot express the comfort your letter gave me,¹ for indeed I am in a barren and dry land where no water is. I hope to be enabled to go over to Ashby[-de-la-Zouch] when your brother preaches, and have him in my own house. I don't fear but he will be reconciled to your sudden departure when he finds it is to avoid disputing.² I beg my humblest services to dear Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley and Mr. [George] Stonehouse. I am sure he is very good to like to have me under his roof, having bore with me, but it will do us both good as patience must be learned by all ways and means. I am comforted by the life I see in the poor people and those whom God has given me this morning. I hope I have not laboured in vain.

My kindest compliments to Mr. [Samuel] Lloyd and all who remember me. And in particular, don't forget me in your prayers. I am writing and doing business from morning till night, but our Lord purifies(?) my heart as in his sanctuary and he has said he will never leave me nor forsake me. Nay, he can even teach me wisdom when secretly and when implored for the things of this world such honour belongs unto our God. I thank you for your good accounts of the gospel. It is the joy and the rejoicing alone of my heart to hear of it. May our Lord be your strength and shield, and sustaining great reward for the sake of thousands and for me also.

Ever your affectionate friend,

S. H.

It may be much sooner than Michaelmas I shall be at liberty for my journey to Clifton, but I cannot give a guess this three weeks certainly.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley at Mr Lloyd's / Merchant in Devonshire / Square near Bishopsgate / London."

Postmark: "30/MA."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. May 1755."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/41 (mixed with earlier letter).

¹It is unlikely that CW's letter of May 22 had already reached Donington, so this reference is apparently to a letter that is not known to survive.

²CW had departed the Conference at Leeds before it ended.

From Isabella Hutchinson

Altona [Germany]
May 26, 1755

Dear Sir,

Your obliging favour I received, dated the 5th of April.¹ I return you my most hearty thanks for your kind remembrance of me. And although at this distance, I hope we shall never forget each other so long as we are permitted to stay in the world. I do not forget my Christian friends in England, but often remember them before God in my poor, imperfect prayers, as I trust they do not forget to remember me in the same manner. Intercession is our duty, and also our privilege. We can always reach one another with our prayers.

I am glad to hear your worthy brother [JW] is so well recovered as to be able to travel to Leeds again. I believe the Lord has more work for his to do on this side [of] the grave. My best wishes and prayer attend him. And may the Lord prosper all your undertakings for his glory. My best respects to dear Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley and all my Bristol friends. My most especial compliments to Lady Huntingdon, Mrs. Boulton,² and all inquiring friends.

I hope daily to follow your advice, that is to be much in private prayer and reading the Scriptures. The latter is my daily food, I may say with the good old martyr, Bishop Latimer. I rise(?) after you, as well as I can, in hopes (and fears often).

I now begin to read and understand Dutch³ a little better, and hope to understand the preaching pretty soon. Which will be of great good to me, I hope, and a means to quicken me in the ways of godliness.

If you go to Leeds, pray give my [respects] and love to all friends there. And forget not to comfort my poor mother [Mary]. She is much out of health I hear. May the Lord speak peace to her soul and health to her body, if it be his will to spare her a little longer in this world that I may see her again in the flesh. To God's care I commend you all, and beg an interest in all your prayers, and remain, dear sir,

Your constant friend and servant,

Bella Hutchinson

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Charles / Wesley att the Foundry / Moor Fields / London."

Endorsement: by CW, "Bell Hutchinson May 26 / rec[eive]d. June 16. 1755."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/32.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Susanna Davis married John Boulton in Lewisham in 1723, and the couple resided in Christopher's Alley in Upper Moorfields. Susanna appears in the Foundry Band Lists (1742–46) as a married woman, with her surname spelled "Bolt" (JW also uses this spelling; but Boulton is the spelling both she and her husband use in their wills). Susanna was particularly close to CW, one of the women he consulted about his potential marriage to Sarah Gwynne Jr. And CW received a token bequest in her will.

³I.e., Deutsch, or German.

From the Rev. John Wesley

c. June 8, 1755

So far I can go as to allow my sister Harper four guineas, my sister Ellison four guineas, and my sister Hall five pounds a year.¹ *This year* I will likewise do what I can for the boy.² I never design to write to John Jones. Is he not at your elbow?

Source: transcribed by CW in a letter to Martha (Wesley) Hall); MARC, DDWes 4/21.³

¹Emilia (Wesley) Harper, Susanna (Wesley) Ellison, and Martha (Wesley) Hall.

²Martha's son Westley Hall Jr. (1742–57); her fourth child, but only one to survive infancy. Martha had been estranged from her unfaithful husband, Rev. Westley Hall, for some time. But now he had fully abandoned her, departing for Barbados with his current mistress. JW and CW were trying to work out arrangements for her sole surviving child to be boarded for schooling. One option was to send him to the school at Kingswood, to be tutored by John Jones. See CW's hymns on his nephew's untimely death in *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 20–23.

³Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:560.

From the Rev. Thomas Hartley¹

Chingford near Woodford, Essex
June 16, 1755

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am indeed obliged and honoured by your condescending proposal of a correspondence, for I truly honour you and your excellent brother [JW] as two burning and shining lights, flaming ministers, and messengers of love appointed of God in a dark night of the Church [of England], to call souls out of the horrid apostasy and to lead them to that Jesus who is the way, the truth, and the life. And your abundant labours and success in the gospel, in turning many from unrighteousness and self-righteousness to the righteousness which is of God by faith, even the anointed King who is alone made unto us of the Father wisdom and righteousness, etc.² This has long been with me an evidence that God is with you of a truth, and I desire to give him due praise and glory for the gifts and great grace which he has manifested in his eminently useful ministers.

In comparison of whom I am little indeed and not worthy to be called a minister, not being fitted for much usefulness in the Church through manifold infirmities both of body and mind, through want of profitable gifts, perhaps most of all through great unfaithfulness and 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 and abundant matter of humiliation to me, both before God and man, and gives me to see and feel that I am the least and lowest of my Lord's servants.

But as I am led at this time freely and faithfully to acknowledge my great unworthiness, so I must not through a false humility conceal the goodness of the Lord towards me in giving me some openings of light and love as to his ways and people, something of a discerning spirit both with regard to persons and doctrines, and this in a way which is not common to many, though much higher in grace than myself. And hereby I have been enabled to form a judgement concerning that great work of God which of late years has been carried on amongst us; and in which, dear sir, you have had so large a share as an instrument highly honoured. As touching some particulars of which judgment is as follows.

Namely, that though the foundation was rightly laid, yet the superstructure has not in all things been answerable thereto, and that through some errors in the principal workmen. By which it has happened that the work in general has been less perfect than might have been hoped for. And this I apprehend to be occasioned in part: [1]) By an overhasty zeal, outrunning the leadings of the divine Spirit. [2]) By too great forwardness in undertaking the direction of all sorts of cases without understanding them or their differences, and so ranking them improperly in bands and classes. [3]) By laying too much stress on certain points both of doctrine and experience, which all are not fitted for, and some of which are only opinions. [4]) By following too closely the common acceptation of Scripture terms without fundamentally understanding the ground of the doctrine by which it may be variously applied to different persons and cases. [5]) By over-exercising and so burdening themselves and their people with rules, practices, and discipline; by which the animal powers and mental faculties are impaired and the spirit kept in too great agitation. By which means religion becomes a task and wearisome service.

¹Thomas Hartley (1708/9–84), a native of London, had been educated at St. John's College, Cambridge. Ordained priest in 1732, he was rector of Winwick, Northamptonshire, from 1744 (though not resident in the parish). He was drawn early in his ministry into the emerging evangelical revival, and associated particularly with Lady Huntingdon. CW had recently met Hartley at a meal in London (see CW to SGW, May 28, 1755), which sparked an exchange of letters. Hartley's next letter (July 19, 1755) made more evident that his interests had shifted by 1755 to mystical writers. He would later become Emanuel Swedenborg's earliest prominent English disciple. See *ODNB*.

²See 1 Cor. 1:30.

Whereas by waiting on God in silence and stillness at times, the soul is not only more subject to the operations and comforting influences of his Spirit, but better fitted thereby for the active parts. To this our people, I am persuaded, should be called more to than they generally are. And for want of it, they are apt to begin all in self-activity and 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 usefulness rather by the abundance of their own words and works than by such as are given to them and first wrought in them. Sure I think that some who now shine as the stars would have shined as the sun had they been more truly instruments and less the principals in the main of their work.

But I have, I know not how, wandered from the path I meant to pursue, and 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 and shortness, and well-meant freedom in all things, I think that you will find³ me loving and faithful and full of respect towards you, and also patient under your reproof, correction, and instruction, as it may be useful, and so this correspondence will not be without its use perhaps on both sides, but be the means of a pleasant and 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 and not disdain to receive a word of instruction, should it at any time be given to me for you, though from so weak an instrument. Thus may all be done without controversy, and so to better edification. (I know) your time, dear sir, is precious and full of work, and therefore I shall only expect to hear from you as you have leisure and liberty for it, be it more or less, and all apology 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 prayer at the throne, as it may be a means of strengthening union and of obtaining a blessing, for the communion of saints subsists in love and wonderful are its communications betwixt God and man. I commend you, dear sir, in a breath of affection, to the fountain of grace and love, that he may fill you out of his fullness and transmute you into his own nature, which is love.

I am, dear sir, your very affectionate friend, but most unworthy brother,

P. S. It will be proper to burn this, and the more so as I subscribe my name. We may for the greater safety only set our characters for the future, as you please.

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr Charles Wesley / in Charles Street / Bristol.” [Free Verney]

Postmark: “17/IV.”

Endorsement: by CW, “June 16. 1775 / Mr. Hartley’s excel / lent l[ette]r of advices.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/148 and MA 1977/501/70.⁴

³The manuscript labelled MA 1977/501/148 ends at this point.

⁴The end of the letter became detached, so it now resides in two files; For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription of each, see:

<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

London
June 20, 1755

[[Dear Brother,]]

Do not you understand that they all promised by Thomas Walsh [[not to administer]] even among themselves? I think that an huge point given up—perhaps more than they could give up with a clear conscience.

They “showed an excellent spirit”² in this very thing. Likewise when I (not to say you) spoke once, and again spoke *satis pro imperio*;³ when I reflected on their answers I admired *their* spirit, and was ashamed of my own.

The practical conclusion was, “not to separate from the Church.” Did we not all agree in this? Surely either you or I must have been asleep, or we could not differ so widely in a matter of fact!

Here is Charles Perronet raving because his friends “have given up *all*,” and Charles Wesley because they “have given up *nothing*.” And I in the midst, staring and wondering both at one and the other.

I do not want to do anything more unless I could bring them over to my opinion. And I am not in haste for that.

I have no time to write anything more till I have finished the *Notes*.⁴ Nor am I in haste. I stand open to the light.

Let it be worded any way.⁵ I will give ten pounds between this and Christmas. This I think I can do, though I am just now saddled with Suky Hare, to pay for her board, as well as learning her trade.⁶ Why do not you send for the boy to Bristol?⁷ I do not object.

If Mr. Lampe’s tunes are in print already, it is enough.⁸ I wish you had told me this six months ago, and the rest (which only we want) should have been printed before now.⁹ Pray send them by Michael Fenwick to me here. He will be in Bristol next week.

¹Replying to CW of June 17, 1755.

²JW is apparently quoting from a previous description of the May Conference shared with CW.

³“Quite peremptorily”—Terence, *Phormio*, 1. 195.

⁴JW was preparing *Explanatory Notes upon the New Testament* for publication.

⁵Their agreement about their combined gifts to their sister Martha and her son Westley.

⁶Susanna (“Suky”) Hare is apparently one of the women seduced by Westley Hall, whom Martha took into her home at Fisherton while she was in labour with her illegitimate child (see Clarke, *Wesley Family*, 2:342–43). Martha continued to regard Suky and the baby (Peter) as members of her family, so that JW became responsible for them as well as Martha and her son Westley.

⁷I.e., bring Westley Hall to Bristol, to be tutored by Dr. John Jones; see CW to Martha (Wesley) Hall, June 9, 1755.

⁸CW had worked with John Friedrich Lampe to publish a set of classical musical settings for some of his hymns in *Hymns on the Great Festivals* (London: for M. Cooper, 1746; 2nd edn., London: for Cox, 1753).

⁹It appears JW was beginning work on a set of tunes to supplement *A Collection of Tunes set to Music, as They are Commonly Sung at the Foundery* (1742). He assumed CW would want to include the tunes done by Lampe in the collection, but CW demurred. It would be 1761 before JW actually published a new collection: “Sacred Melody; or, A Choice Collection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes,” appended to *Select Hymns with Tunes Annexed* (1761).

Cyprian is a terrible witness of the sense of the then church.¹⁰ For he speaks it not as his own private sense, but an incontestable, allowed rule. And by *antistes* there I really believe he means the minister of a parish. That pinches me. Nevertheless I think with you till I see more light, though I should be hard set to defend myself against a skilful adversary. When I am convinced it is my duty, I will follow Cyprian's advice. The same say you, and no more. I do not fluctuate yet. But I can't answer the arguments on that side the question. Joseph Cownley says, "For such and such reasons [[I dare not hear a drunkard preach or read prayers.]] I answer, I dare. But I can't answer his reasons.

[[Adieu.]]

I can stay here four or five weeks. Then I purpose for Cornwall. Can you come hither when I go? Or will you go into Cornwall for me?

My love to my sister[-in-law].

What could put it into your head to recommend (if you did recommend) that rude, boisterous clown <...> to Mr. Lloyd?¹¹

Address: "To / The Revd Mr C. Wesley / in / Bristol."

End by CW: "B[rother] calling me away / June 20, 1755."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/8.¹²

¹⁰See JW to CW, June 23, 1739 (*Works*, 25:661), where JW previously misquoted Cyprian's *Epistles*, LXVII.3, "a people ought to separate itself from a sinful overseer" (Cyprian's word for "overseer" was *praepositus*, not *antistes*).

¹¹A small portion is torn away obscuring the name. This was apparently a servant of Lloyd's, whose replacement (likely by the one recommended by JW in his letter to Lloyd of Mar. 20; *Works*, 25:552), had led to a comment in CW's letter of June 17.

¹²Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:561–63.

From Enoch Williams¹

London
June 21, 1755

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I hope my coming to London will provide a great blessing to my own soul, for I have found more freedom for preaching here than ever I did before. And I often enjoy a comfortable feeling sense of the 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, that thou shouldst bestow such favours upon me, who am the unworthiest of all the followers of Christ?”

Dear sir, the cause of my troubling you at this time with myself is this. I have just <received²> a letter from brother Norton, wherein he lays heavy <charges> to my character. If I had been guilty of some very g<reat> crime, he could not have writ[ten] me in much stronger terms. The fault was this: About a fortnight since a poor child was to be buried at Wapping,³ and the parents thereof desired one to sing a few verses and go to prayer. And being before informed that the lay preachers had often done the same thing before, when there was no minister present, I did sing a verse or two and spake a few minutes and went to prayer with the people. Now if you or your brother should advise me to do so no more, I am quite willing to obey you herein, and do it no more.

As soon as I had read and considered brother Norton’s letter, I carried it to your brother, and he did not in the least blame me, but said he desired us to do it whenever there should be a necessity. Dear sir, you know my sentiments concerning those things. When you was at London I told you my sincere thoughts in simplicity, the which I think to this moment—that it is not my duty to perform any of those sacred offices which are peculiar to you and those who are established ministers, except preaching. Whether I shall ever think otherwise, God only knows.

It is not improbable but Mr. Norton may have informed you before this time of my “profane wickedness,” as he calls it in his letter. But dear sir, I hope you can satisfy him herein, and I should be much obliged to you if you please to desire him not to report it any further, as he seem to have begun. His hard thoughts of me do not lessen the esteem and love I have for him. So, dear sir, if you think I am wrong in anything herein, I hope you will favour me with a few lines and let me know it.

I hope the work prospers here for there has some souls stopped in, and one made whole, since you left us. I beg an interest in your prayers, and remain

Your obedient son and servant in the gospel of Christ,

Enoch Williams

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/137.⁴

¹Enoch Williams, who entered the itinerant ministry in 1742, was currently stationed in Yorkshire. He was one of the first ministers to die in the itinerant ministry (last appearing in the Minutes in 1755); little more is known of him. See Atmore, *Memorial*, 505.

²The wax seal has pulled away a portion affecting four lines, but the missing text can be reconstructed with good confidence.

³See JW to CW, June 28, 1755.

⁴For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From the Rev. John Wesley

June 23, 1755

[[Dear Brother,]]

A gentleman who keeps an academy at Brompton offers to take Westley Hall for nothing, to teach him the ancient and modern tongues, and when he has learned them, to give him thirty pounds a year and his board if he will stay and assist him.¹ His mother thinks (and I can't say much to the contrary) that such an offer is not to be slighted. Send us your judgment upon the matter as soon as possible.

I am *proximus ardet Ucalegon!*² The good Bishop of London³ has excommunicated Mr. Gardiner for preaching without a licence.⁴ It is probable the point will now speedily be determined concerning the Church. For if we must either *dissent* or *be silent, Actum est.*⁵

[[Adieu.]]

We have no time to trifle!

Address: "To / The Revd Mr C. Wesley / in / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "B[rother]. June 23. ["1756" added in another hand] / fearing Gardener's Doom."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/9.⁶

¹James Elphinston (1721–1809), a native of Scotland, had moved to London in 1753 and established an academy in Brompton. See CW to Martha (Wesley) Hall, June 27, 1755.

²Virgil, *Aeneid*, ii. 311–12; "Now the flames spread to [the house of] our neighbour Ucalegon."

³Thomas Sherlock (1678–1761), Bishop of London from 1748 until his death.

⁴Gardiner was apparently a Methodist local preacher in London (he does not appear in the Minutes, and nothing more is known of him).

⁵"It is all over."

⁶Transcription published in *Works*, 26:563.

From John Nelson

Mixenden in Haworth Round
June 26, 1755

Dear Sir,

I was from home when yours came to Birstall. But when I got it I went to Dewsbury and asked the questions you desired me, and her answer was, "Give my duty to Mr. Wesley, and tell him that I am not engaged to any man by promise in the world." She hath been out of health since you was here, but is got much better.

We have had four triumphant deaths since you left Birstall. The first was Joseph Mann, who had been about six years in the faith, and was very constant in all the means of grace as long as his health endured.¹ But he had been in a consumption near two years, and he finished his race with joy. Brother Walker preached over his corpse,² and many was stirred up by the word, that I hope will not rest till they are made partakers of the same grace that carried brother Mann to the realms of light. The next was a woman that lived about a mile off, that had but heard a little while, and scarce ever returned home from hearing the word but her husband beat her severely. In the time of sickness the Lord made himself known to her, so that she bore a noble testimony to all that came to see her as long as she lived. She desired a sermon to be preached over her corpse, under which her bloody husband was struck and is become a constant hearer of the word ever since. The next was my own aunt, which had been in the faith near fourteen years. She was converted almost at my first coming into Yorkshire, and walked steadfastly in the ordinances, and was greatly supported under all her trials. She had a cruel husband to live with for ten years of the time, but God heard her prayer for him, so that he began to seek the Lord in the last year of his life and we had great hope in his death. But she hath been a daughter of affliction, for she hath scarcely had one week's health these three years. So she hath endured both sickness, pain, and poverty, yet with so much patience to all outward appearance as if she had had neither pain nor want, and she finished her course with joy. I found the Lord present when I preached over her and I believe there was a blessing among the people. The next was brother Samuel Snell, the class leader of Churle, who was awakened at your first coming to preach at my house and hath followed on ever since, and hath been zealous for the cause of God to his latest hour. Brother Tucker preached over his corpse.³ I think that we seldom bury one that dies in the faith, but we get two or three by preaching over them.

I am now in Mr. [William] Grimshaw's round, and I find my soul blessed in speaking to the people. All the preachers that I conversed with seemed to be more united in love than ever I saw them before, and I cannot say that I heard one of them speak one word in a contending way. But I hear that someone hath been contending with Mr. Baddeley, of Hayfield, in Derbyshire,⁴ since the Conference, and it hath given him great uneasiness. And I hear that there is great uneasiness amongst them of the

¹Joseph Mann was buried in Birstall on May 25, 1755.

²Likely Francis Walker (1722–87), who began serving as an itinerant preacher as early as 1744. He is listed as an Assistant in the *Minutes* starting in 1745 (*Works*, 10:159), until he married and settled in Gloucester, leading to his classification as a local preacher by Conference in 1755 (*Works*, 10:274).

³William Tucker (fl. 1745–50) became a Methodist traveling preacher about 1746, was received as an Assistant in 1748, and accompanied JW to Ireland both in 1747 and in 1749 (during which he occasionally served as JW's amanuensis). A year or two later he gave up traveling, and was listed by the Conference of 1755 as one of the chief local preachers.

⁴Baddeley, Rev. John Baddeley (c. 1704–1765) was assigned as perpetual curate of Hayfield, Derbyshire in 1735 and served until his death. He underwent an evangelical conversion in 1748 and for a while welcomed JW in his parish. But Baddeley eventually distanced himself from JW, for not taking a firmer hand with Methodist lay preachers in resisting separation from the Church of England.

dissenting in Leeds, and that they are for separating from us and building a place for themselves. This is what I hear, but I have not been there lately. My kind love to your dear wife [SGW], and tell her I hope she will have an interest in my prayers at all times, and my wife's too.⁵ I am glad to hear that my boy goes on well at the school. I desire you to give my kind love to Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor and all her sisters, and all friends in that place. This with my best love and earnest prayers for you and yours, and all the Church of God, from

Yours, to service as a son in the gospel.

John Nelson

Address: "To the Rev Mr / Charles Wesley at / the New Room in the Horse / Fair, in the City of Bristoll."

Postmarks: "Halifax" and "30/IV."

Endorsement: by CW, "June 26. 1755 / J. Nelson / happy Death."

Source: holograph; MARC, PLP 78/53/2.⁶

⁵Martha (Webster) Nelson.

⁶A previous transcription was published in Laycock, *Haworth*, 158–60.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

London
June 28, 1755

[[Dear Brother,]]

Let George Stonehouse write and welcome.² When we are both together I trust we may read safely.

Go to Ireland, if you think so, and save Ireland.³ Wherever I have been in England the societies are far more firmly and rationally attached to the Church than ever they were before. I have no fear about this matter. I only fear the preachers' or the people's leaving, not the Church, but the love of God and inward or outward holiness. To this *en*d I press them forward continually. I dare not, in conscience, spend my time and strength on externals. If (as my Lady [Huntingdon] says) all outward establishments are Babel, so is this establishment. Let it stand for me. I neither set it up nor pull it down. But let you and I build up the city of God.

I have often *desired* our preachers to bury a corpse at Wapping⁴—I mean, to give an exhortation closed with a prayer. I do not know that this is any branch of the sacerdotal office.

None of our societies have received James Wheatley yet. I suppose none will. Yet we may give a caution wherever we write.

Thomas Walsh (I will declare it on the housetop) has given me all the satisfaction I desire, and all that an honest man could give. I love, admire, and honour him, and wish we had six preachers in all England of his spirit. But enough of this. Let us draw the saw [of controversy] no longer, but use all our talents to promote the mind that was in Christ.

“Not yet” is totally out of the question. We have not one preacher who either proposed or desires or designs (that I know) *to separate from the Church* “at all.” Their principles (in this single point of ordination) I do not approve. But I pray for more and more of their spirit (in general) and their practice.

I have talked with Mr. Graves,⁵ and shall do again.

Driving me may make me fluctuate; though I do not yet.

“When the preachers in Ireland set up for themselves, must you not disown them?” I answer,
When.

I thought you said my sister[-in-law] expected to lie in in May. Now it is the end of June. If you can go to Cornwall in the end of July it is soon enough. I wish you would see each of the country societies. And why not New Kingswood too?⁶

[[Adieu.]]

¹Replying to CW c. June 24, 1755.

²CW had apparently suggested that Stonehouse invite JW to join CW at Stonehouse's new residence.

³CW continued to chafe under what he viewed as JW's failure to rein in the lay preachers who were pushing for ordination, instead sending a group of them to Ireland (see CW to LH, June 9, 1755). He had now apparently threatened to go to Ireland himself and rein them in.

⁴Following up on Enoch Williams's letter to CW of June 21, 1755.

⁵CW's concern was to increase the presence of ordained clergy in the Wesleyan branch of Methodism. When Charles Graves was ordained priest in 1750 he stopped itinerating, becoming perpetual curate of the chapel in Tissington, Derbyshire. CW was likely prodding JW to bring Graves back into full connexion.

⁶JW's name for the hamlet of Kingswood near Wootton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire; see JW, *Journal*, Sept. 5–11, 1753, *Works*, 20:473–74.

[Added in the hand of Robert Windsor]⁷

Dear Sir,

When I came to town today I received your second letter for your brother,⁸ but could not give it to him before this evening. He cannot answer till a post or two hence. He sets out for Norwich, God willing, on Monday.

Robert Windsor

Mr. Wesley desired me to write the excuse.

Address: “To / The Revd Mr Wesley / in / Bristol.”

Postmark: “28/IV.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother]. June 28 1755 / justifying his Preachers.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/10.⁹

⁷Robert Windsor (1704–90) was converted by JW’s preaching in Moorfields early in the revival, and one of the first members at the Foundery in 1740; see *AM* 14 (1791): 73–79, and Foundery Band Lists (1742–46). See also CW’s letter to Windsor, on the death of Windsor’s wife, Apr. 17, 1785.

⁸CW’s letter of c. June 26, answering JW’s of June 23, is not known to survive; for JW’s delayed reply, see below, July 16, 1755.

⁹Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:564–66.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Ashby[-de-la-Zouch]
July 7, 1755

Dear Sir,

My present great distress cannot waive me returning thanks to God for his great goodness for dear Mrs. Wesley and you. I did hope our Lord would bring her safe through and hope her little girl will live and be a great blessing to you both.¹ My hurry and fatigue of body, as well as affliction of mind, has prevented my writing so much or so often as my heart inclined me. And till after the last office of the funeral is over I must expect no rest.² A house full of people upon this occasion is my care, as well as the ceremonies belonging to my relationship oblige me to in my situation. But as my day is, so is my strength.

I have been carried above all and through all by an unseen arm. And for my great comfort who should come in to strengthen my hands on Thursday but Mr. [Benjamin] Ingham. He would have gone away but I obliged him to stay to the funeral, and hope this may be a means of reconciling him more to our family than anything yet has done. He is an honest and truly simple heart I do believe, and an hour together now and then comforts me much. And my hurries makes this dear and sweet to me. Oh how gracious is the Lord so to care for me who desires to be abandoned of heaven and earth!

My kindest love to my dear Mrs. Wesley. Her and you are near my heart, and I trust I may say I love you both with an never failing love. Your brother I think will be but too soon glad at the bishop's wrong step.³ Nothing but hurry or self-will can hurt us. May you, dear sir, be kept from this, let what will come. My best thanks and compliments to Mrs. [Martha] Gumley and Miss [Mary] Degge. I have had a most kind and friendly letter from your friend Mr. [George] Stonehouse and I hope nothing will prevent my waiting upon him. This terrible event has and will be a means of three-weeks delay in my needful business, and so much hurts me. But my diligence will not be wanting to hasten to my friends. Assure all that love me of my heart's warmth for them, and live assured of my many prayers and blessings for you and yours.

S. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at his House in / Charles Street / Bristol."

Postmark: "7/IV."

Endorsement: "L. H. / July 10, 1755."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/42.⁴

¹SGW had given birth to their second child, Martha Maria Wesley, on June 25, 1755; unfortunately, she would die on July 25.

²Lady Huntingdon's sister-in-law, Lady Ann Hastings (b. 1691) died on June 28, 1755.

³The excommunication of the lay preacher, Mr. Gardiner; see JW to CW, June 23, 1755 and CW to LH, June 28, 1755.

⁴Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 91.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

London
July 16, 1755

[[Dear Brother,]]

Are there not more of the same kind who are not discovered? How will you know? It deserves all diligence. I wish you had mentioned only his drunkenness in the society. It was pity to add anything more.

Keep to that, and we are agreed; *some time* you may spend in recommending outward modes of worship. But “not *all*, not the *most*, not *much* of it.” There are many greater things, and more immediately necessary for our people—holiness of heart and life they want most. And they want it just now.

I have often heard that word “Babel” used,² and I do not understand it yet. What does it mean? I cannot see one jot of it (if I guess at its meaning) in the rules either of our society or bands.

I do not myself, and dare not give *that* under my hand, to you or any man living.³ And I should count anyone either a fool or a knave that would give it under his hand to *me*.

You are by no means free from temptation. You are (acting) as if you had never seen either Stillingfleet,⁴ [Richard] Baxter, or H(owso)n.⁵ I am very calm and cool, determining nothing but to do nothing rashly. Now which is more in the temptation? To my thought, you are in it, over head and ears.

Whoever is convinced or not convinced, ordination and separation are not the same thing. If so, we have separated already. Herein I am the fifteenth.

Your gross bigotry lies here, in putting a man on a level with an adulterer because he differs from you as to church government.

*Ne scutica dignum horribili sectere flagello!*⁶ What miserable confounding the degrees of good and evil is this?

I should wonder if Wales or Margate or something did not hinder your taking any step which I desire, or which might save my time or strength. Then I will go to Cornwall myself, that is all.

[[For a wife and a brother, I may challenge the world! But all is right.⁷]]

[[Adieu.]]

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. Chas. Wesley / in Bristol.”

Postmark: “17/IY.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother]. July 16. 1755 / still defending his P[reache]rs.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/11.⁸

¹JW’s delayed reply to CW’s letter of c. June 26; see Robert Windsor’s appended comment on JW to CW, June 28, 1755. Unfortunately CW’s letter is not known to survive.

²Cf. Lady Huntingdon’s comment noted in JW to CW, June 28, 1755.

³CW had likely pressed his brother to sign a declaration binding himself and the societies *never* to separate from the Church of England.

⁴Edward Stillingfleet (1635–99), Bishop of Worcester, whose *Irenicum* (1659) was highly influential in convincing JW that no form of church government was divinely ordained.

⁵Probably John Howson (1557?–1632), Bishop of Oxford, and then of Durham.

⁶Horace, *Satires*, I.iii.119; “Do not flay with the terrible scourge what calls for the strap.”

⁷The shorthand expansion here corrects *Works*, 26:573. What was expanded as “love” there is simply the sign for “I,” which usually expands to “all” when standing alone. On occasion CW and JW used it as a concise form for “the Lord”; so the last sentence might be: “But the Lord is right.”

⁸Transcription published in JW, *Works*, 26:572–73.

From the Rev. Thomas Hartley¹

[Chingford]
July 19, 1755

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I bear a part in your joy for the safe delivery of your good yokefellow. May the dew of heaven water both root and branch, to the bringing forth much precious fruit, to the praise of him that is the true planter and who also giveth the increase. I thankfully acknowledge your kind acceptance of my letter and your very friendly answer.² And as you seem to have the right key of love, you will easily unlock my heart and find an open door to take freely out of my little stock, and to pour in of your fuller treasure.

You will excuse me, dear sir, for pointing out at this time the particulars you desire an explanation of. It would perhaps be giving to this correspondence too much the air of a bill and answer in the chambers. Besides, I know too well my own defects to begin with charges upon my betters. These things will appear better in another form, and take their place more gracefully as they shall 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 where not all teachers, those of the Methodists not excepted—viz., the not seeing or at least not preaching Jesus Christ as the light and word of the Father, the gospel of eternal life in the hearts of all men, and as being that very principle of truth, light, and love which he there preaches. But instead thereof, directing men altogether or nearly so to the written word as their first and chief guide, which is only the divine testimony concerning him, the true spiritual guide, and which can only be known rightly by his Spirit. This going to the written word only, with our natural understanding, for the knowledge of Christ once ministering and dying for us and now in heaven interceding for us, places the Saviour at too great a distance from us and sets up our ideas and doctrinal knowledge of him in the temple, instead of himself. This is preaching Christ only for us, and not also in us. It is confining the divinity anointing to the particular humanity of our Lord, instead of showing how we, through Christ (the anointed above measure) are (in a measure) anointed with the same divine nature. Whereby the Lord Christ becomes really and properly our father and brother, by being the fountain of a new nature to us as well as partaker of our human nature. Wherein arises our true union with God through Christ.

In this union all our perfection stands. We are complete in Christ³ thus formed in us, being Christed with the divinity (according to our measure) as he was in the fullness. And therefore to place any part of perfection in what man of himself believe, know, will, or do, is misplacing it entirely—since all this we must die 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, and hereby they suffer various hindrances, distractions, and perturbations from evil spirits, men, and accidents, therefore the sword of death is appointed to cut off this earthly part in which remains the curse; that we being totally delivered from the evil may be perfected in the good, which cannot be in this miserable state. Though some few have been carried far on their way toward it. Not by planning and executing their own particular schemes of perfection. Not by multiplying observances and practices, etc., and so going about to force nature to help grace. Not by running and willing and striving of themselves. But by dying to all these and also to their reasonings, imaginations, and inventions (however previously gilded with pretexts of bringing glory to God); that so they might simply follow their leader, content to go or hold still, to know or not to know, to this or that or let it alone, according to his good pleasure and teachings.

When you say, dear sir, that you have no character to maintain, would be nobody, nothing, etc.,

¹Hartley's growing alignment with mystical writers is evident in this letter.

²CW's letter, which included news of the birth of their daughter Martha Maria on June 25, is not known to survive.

³CW has underlined "all our perfection stands" and "complete in Christ."

how much better do you describe in a few words the persons I have been speaking of in many!

I am now going into Northamptonshire,⁴ 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 us. Dear sir, pray for the most unworthy of me

Your affectionate [servant]

Endorsement: by CW, “July 19. 1755 / Mr Hartley’s loving Instructions.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/71.⁵

⁴I.e. to Winwick, where he was rector; though he did not reside in the parish.

⁵For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park]
July 24, 1755

Dear Sir,

Your letters ever supply me with not only pleasure but comfort.¹ Indeed, I do rejoice in finding dear Mrs. Wesley is so well. And her little girl will, by the blessing of almighty God, be continued as a present from heaven to her.² My great hurry is over now. But I am going to engage in a fresh one, for Lady Margaret is in vast affliction and I go into Yorkshire for ten days just to see her.³ She is very desirous to see me. And I hope we shall be comforted together. Harvest supplies me with a short fortnight from my workmen, and then I hope our Lord will be with me. And we shall remember in an acceptable season our very dear and absent friends. Don't forget me to Mr. and Mrs. Jones,⁴ though hurry often makes me not mention them, for they are both in my heart.

I had a very pretty letter from Miss [Mary] Degge that I never write. I will do as you bid me about Mrs. [Anne] Grinfield.

What to say about my removal I cannot determine. I yet hope it will be before Michaelmas, but so little dependence can be had on the people I have to deal with that till within a fortnight of my time I shall not positively be able to settle.

I expect Mr. I'Anson and his wife tonight.⁵ They are Methodists of the first order and I am in hopes they will model me for the better. I am sure I want it. Mr. Cennings?⁶ is here and I hope he comes on. But I shall commit him to them for the humiliation of his spirit in all things, but [particularly?] drinking, etc., etc.

I love and honour in the ground of my heart in others what I cannot feel or see to be religion in myself. I am sure you must have found this, for the fountain of good I always hope sends it up, though they direct it into such manners?. Assure dear Mrs. Wesley none can love her better. Don't forget to join in prayers for me, and may our Lord bless you a thousandfold.

Even in tender affection yours,

S. H.

Endorsement: "L. H. / July 24. 1775."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/43.

¹This is apparently LH's delayed response to CW's letter of July 12, 1755.

²Unfortunately, Martha Maria Wesley died the day after this letter was written.

³Margaret (Hastings) Ingham, LH's sister-in-law and the wife of Rev. Benjamin Ingham.

⁴John and Sarah (Perrin) Jones.

⁵Bryan I'Anson and Elizabeth (Sewel) I'Anson.

⁶The spelling of the name is hard to decipher, but this is surely the person prone to drinking that CW had denounced in a Methodist society; see JW to CW July 16, 1755.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

August 4 [1755]

Dear Sir,

I feel for both you and Mrs. Wesley as parents.¹ But since it pleased God to remove the dear little creature so young, you must have felt less by this means. I beg my kindest regards to dear Mrs. Wesley and Miss [Rebecca] Gwynne, who I hear is with her. I have never heard or seen anything of your brother and perhaps never may. He had a reason for avoiding Ashby when I was there to meet him on purpose. The good of souls could not be the first thing *then*. But I pray God reward all his labours of love to all.

I set out tomorrow for a few days to see Lady Margaret Ingham. You have been vastly good to my nerves. Do remember me in all your prayers., The coach waits for me. Live assured you can never be forgotten by

Your ever affectionate friend,

S. H.

Are not you glad for poor dear Mr. Jones?²

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley in Charles Street / St James's / Bristol."

Postmark: "8/AV."

Endorsement: by CW, "Aug. 4. 1755 / L. H."

MARC, MA 1977/504/1/44.³

¹Their second child, Martha Maria, died on July 25, 1755, at one month of age. LH is replying to CW's letter of July 26, bearing this news.

²John Jones was wanting to move into a regular parish setting. The possibility had been raised of him serving as a curate to George Baddelley (c. 1726–92), rector of Markfield, Leicestershire, and a friend of Lady Huntingdon. See CW to LH, July 28, 1755.

³Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 93–94.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park?]
August 20, 1755

Dear Sir,

The great hurry of my journey into Yorkshire, with the fatigue of it upon my return, has been one reason why I have not yet wrote fully to your letter which found me at Aberford.¹ And as I know not where to find you, [I] commit to this by Mr. [John] Jones, who I have sent the nomination of the curacy of Markfield, and hope he will get his testimonium signed. As to your nephew,² it will, I fear, be a good while before there will be a vacancy in the school—not only because the boys stay so long upon the foundation as to be old enough to go directly to the university, but (what makes the chance worse) my son nominated lately and the turns of vacancies are in others as well as him. This makes my certain friendship to him an uncertainty for him, and this you will let Mrs. [Martha] Hall know from me. Had I a prospect of his succeeding soon, I should insist upon her moving him for my care of the additional expenses that attend this foundation. But unless by deaths, it is too distant a view for her to depend upon. The first when it falls I will apply for, and the success of such application I cannot answer at that time the vacancy is.

Mr. [Bryan] I'Anson is an honest, good-hearted man, he is now here, and I think his zeal is commendable and helps such a cold, dull creature as I ever am. If I feel but life, I am apt to think it will have its proper and natural reviving, and this under the proper influence of that life that is to desire of.

I conclude this will find you at Dornford. The great news of Mrs. [Anne] Grinfield[']s having left the princess you must have heard. She meets me at Dornford, and a line from you and Mr. [George] Stonehouse would cause a general assembly of the colony there: I mean to Mrs. [Elizabeth] Skrine and Mrs. [Ann] Barlow and Miss. It would find them at Richard Skinners Esq. at Cobham in Surrey.

My love to dear Mrs. Wesley. I have had things in this my retirement that will make me cease to think there is a place on earth for me that is not to engage every moment that I breathe but those in which I sleep. Oh it is such a world and we of the church so weak, poor, blind, and miserable that I know not which has more present trials! Sure I am these are naught but we eye the recompense which is our glory and joy.

Assure your faithful friend³ I love him and for being so to you. When I know him better, I shall do it more as the sure consequence of all other good in him.

Ever your faithful friend,

S. H.

Address: “To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “L. H. Aug. 20. 1755.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/45.⁴

¹CW to LH, July 28, 1755.

²Westley Hall Jr. See CW's hymns on his untimely death in *Funeral Hymns* (1759), 20–23.

³George Stonehouse.

⁴Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 94.

From Ann Nowell¹

[Cardiff]
August 25 [1755]

My Dear Friend,

I did not see our friend [John] Hodges in his return, but am told he is better since he got to Wenvoe. But [he] was quite tired when he did alight at cousin Glascott's,² having made great speed in his journey. I can't find that he proposes to get to Bristol again (at least not soon). He designed to visit the prisoner on Sunday, but that he found himself so weak.³

I am pleased to find my friends at Bristol are well and glad of your letter,⁴ and think I may say your sentiments with regard to our late interview are just.⁵ It did not lessen my love, but increased it.

Since your departure I have been often troubled on many accounts. I visited the poor murderer on Wednesday, who continued in a very uncomfortable state. No intercourse by prayer unto God; between lay a great gulf. The poor wretched creature harboured some hopes of life and was strongly solicited to deny the crime. But that he would not consent to do. But he vainly attempted to get the girl's father not to prosecute him so strongly, and also expected that he might be begged off. And in this manner his thoughts ran till Friday morning, when he received sentence of death. The judge informed him that none were to be admitted to his [cell] but the clergy, which prohibition proceeded from one of the grand jury having represented the Methodists as a people who caused schism amongst their followers, and that they were arouzers of sedition and deceivers of mankind.

And further [he] charged you with having declared that the poor guilty felon was in as good a state, if not better, than any present, and that he would be a happy soul. On which there was a motion made to petition the judges that whenever you, or [George] Whitefield, or any of the strolling preachers come about, you might be taken up and prosecuted. But it pleased the Almighty (to whom alone be the glory) that my stepfather⁶ (who was second on the jury) stood up and asked the person who affirmed this whether he was sure that what he advanced was truth. "For," said he, "I know somewhat of this matter myself, and as far as I can understand, Mr. Wesley only declared that ever man in an unregenerate state (as all men are in by nature) without repentance could not be saved, and therefore they stood in as great danger, and as much need of mercy, as that poor wretch. But as of anything besides, I believe you were misinformed. And 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, and then another, that they would not admit it. And so the scheme was broke.

However, they so far influenced the judge as to cause him to give those orders to the jailor, who was smartly reprimanded in court for his having admitted the Methodist to visit the criminal and to preach in the prison. On that occasion also my stepfather declared that he thought the jailor did not deserve blame, for that he was the best jailor that ever we had.

As soon as the poor creature returned into the dungeon, he sent to desire cousin Glascott to come to him with speed, and then declared to him that he desired the persons might not visit, for he expected to

¹On Ann Nowell, see her letter to CW dated July 5, 1745.

²Thomas Glascott (1709–80) was a prominent member of the Methodist society in Cardiff.

³The prisoner was Josiah Hugh, who was hanged on Aug. 19, 1755 in the parish of Penmark for the murder of Mary Rees.

⁴This letter is not known to survive.

⁵CW made a trip to Cardiff in early August.

⁶Craddock Nowell died in 1748; the name of Ann's stepfather has not been determined.

receive ⟨no⁷⟩ good from them. By the favour of the jailor, however, some of the Methodists were allowed to visit him. But yesterday they were obliged to procure a special warrant, from the judge, for cousin Glascott, Thomas Price of Watford, and Parson [Nathaniel] Wells only to have access unto. These watched great part of the night with him, but yet the poor creature remained in a sad, dangerous situation. I would fain have spoke with him this morning but was refused. Cousin Glascott walked by the cart side till he came to the gallows. But before I saw them come to the heath, whither I went and waited to see his end, but with little hope. News came that the miserable creature had cut his throat in the night, which though it was not deep yet he fainted in the cart. This was a dreadful omen, and I had almost given up all hope. When, to our great surprise, as soon as the cart stopped, he got up and stood on a plank laid across, and with a composed and cheerful countenance made a very earnest and strong discourse to the people. After which cousin Glascott prayed fervently, having before asked him how it was with him. He declared he had no fear of death but resigned himself freely in the hands of the Lord, having strong appearance of happiness. This was surely an unexpected turn, even beyond all that any of us could hope. The name of God be adored and his mercy, his unbounded mercy to the chief of sinners, be exalted!

You'll excuse my tediousness on this head, being willing to add to your satisfaction by every circumstance of this mysterious proceeding. My spirit was in a flutter. Neither can I ⟨express⁸⟩ the surprise that affected my whole frame. Indeed, I did not think 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.⁹ My poor mother has been extremely ill, but is got about again.¹⁰ When I can I will inform you of the subject of Josiah [Hugh]'s discourse at the gallows, unless you may hear it sooner from other of your friends. Let me hear from you soon, which will I hope add to the satisfaction of

Your affectionate friend,

A. Nowell

Address: "C. Wesley"

Endorsement: by CW, "Aug. 25. 1755 / A. Nowel of mur / derer saved."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/115.¹¹

⁷A small portion is torn away; this is almost certainly the missing word.

⁸A small portion is torn away; this is likely the missing word.

⁹Thomas Nowell (1729–1801), had received his MA from Oxford in 1753. He would remain at Oxford, serving eventually as Regis Professor of Modern History.

¹⁰Ann (Jones) Nowell (now remarried).

¹¹For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Thomas Price¹

Cardiff
August 25, 1755

Dear Sir,

This day that poor unhappy criminal suffered and was left in a stupid condition of his eternal state almost to the last.² Brother [Thomas] Glascott and [my]self attended him until 12:00 last night. He seemed to us to have some small hope that Jesus Christ would come to visit him, though at that time he told us he was not afraid of either temporal or eternal death. This morning we came to him again about 6:00?. He seemed then much in the same condition.

After we had spent some hours with him in exhortation and prayers, to our great surprise, when the jailer came to have the cord put round his neck there appeared two small cuts near his throat, upon which he [the jailer] asked him how that happened. I asked him did he attempt to destroy himself. He answered he had last night with an old knife. You must think this gave brother Glascott and [my]self a real shock. So far with his assuring us that the blood upon his clothes was occasioned as he hit one of the fellows who knocked off his fetters, of his bleeding at the nose, that really we thought he was given up to a reprobate mind.

But here see the free grace of God and the riches of his mercy in Jesus Christ, that as soon as he came in sight of the gallows the Lord, out of his abundant clemency, set 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. To that effect I further asked him would he have the cart to stop. He made excuse with a cheerful countenance. In the drive on, when he came under the gallows, he stood up and gave a weeping pathetic exhortation to the spectators and justified the ways of God. And [he said] that the only people that God was with these days were those who went under the name of Methodists. And [he] adjured them not to speak one word against them, and that the occasion of his coming to that ignominious death was in leaving them and going after sin. He said a great many more things very affecting, which can't well be mentioned at present. However, after he had done, brother Glascott spoke and prayed very movingly to the people. And now as he was going off the stage of this life his last words were to this effect: "I believe in Jesus Christ, and am sure I shall go to heaven."

Thus I have given you a short sketch of his dispatchure. God grant we may all fight the good fight of faith and finish our course with joy. I am, in the bond of friendship, reverend sir,

Yours affectionately,

Thos. Price

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/120.³

¹Thomas Price (1712–83) of Watford was a prominent supporter of the evangelical revival in Wales.

²Josiah Hughes; see the prior letter by Ann Nowell.

³For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park?]
August 27, 1755

Dear Sir,

I hope you had not left Bristol till you had received my letter by Mr. [John] Jones.¹ I thank [you] ten thousand times for all yours. They are a great comfort indeed, as I am far from that retirement I hope for. The death of my dear sister² has engaged me very much in business and daily I have more. Pray I may walk through the fire unhurt. I feel the Lord [to be] my continued helper. Mr. Ingham and Lady Margaret I did rejoice in.³ They are very simple of heart. I do not wonder that they could not agree(?). He speaks with high regard of Mr. [George] Stonehouse and that great integrity of heart he is so particular for. This will find you happy in this your friend, who I truly find (yet I know not why) so remarkable a joy on both sides for you in this friendship. Your openness of spirit as well as goodness and singleness of desire makes you the more fit for the comfort of each other.

I shall, I do assure you, impatiently wait to make one [i.e., a visit] at Dornford, but I have a difficulty that I must inform the generous possessor of in the letter this comes inclosed in. My eldest niece [Elizabeth] Wheler returns to Bristol for the waters and I fancy will wait till I go; if so, her and her three sisters and Lady Selina [Hastings], with our maids, will make such a train that it will be quite the hen and chickens, and with which I shall be ashamed to enter the hospitable host's house. Should this not happen, we shall be three instead of six, and one servant or two at most. The temptation of seeing Oxford makes the wish natural to them, but should my niece go before us, this will have no distress to me which it will not fail of them.

Mr. Stonehouse is so good to dispense with it. I fancy Mrs. Grinfield would come from Bristol but I can say no more. She has left the court, and the house of Clifton is now explained as not our ways or doings but one who saw before we thought.

My kindness and affectionate remembrance to dear Mrs. Wesley. I have not been able to get a moment or did intend writing to her. Cease not to pray for

Your truly affectionate friend,

S. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "Aug. 25. 1755 / L. H.."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/46.⁴

¹LH to CW, Aug. 20, 1755.

²I.e., her sister-in-law, Lady Anne Hastings.

³Rev. Benjamin Ingham and Margaret (Hastings) Ingham.

⁴Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 94–95.

Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[London]
[c. September 1755¹]

My dearest sister Wesley's favour by yesterday's post was the more acceptable as I did not expect that pleasure till tomorrow, when I hope again to have it repeated, notwithstanding your hint about franks (which are scarce enough with us). But [I] should be uneasy were you at any time to make that an excuse from depriving me of so great a satisfaction. Though as Captain Trant(?) was so obliging as to give me a few the other day, I shall enclose one, being your desire.

It will give me pleasure to hear that you and my dear brother accept of Mrs. [Lucia] Gallatin's kind invitation to Margate, as he has often been advised to the salt water; which I trust he will reap benefit from, therefore it is a pity he should lose so good an opportunity. As to Dr. Lyndell's oil of mustard (which I'm sorry to find you have occasion for), it has been tried here by papa only,² who always gives a good account of every medicine he takes a fancy to. But in my opinion he has not done justice to this, for he took it not above three mornings in the whole. So that it is impossible to judge by him what it might do, though he says it has done him some service. I wish you would try it, as it is reckoned very safe and good for that disorder ... [remainder missing]

Tommy is very well and often asks me when Aunt Wesley will come.³

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/33.

¹Date suggested by reference to son Thomas but no daughters, and that CW visited the Gallatins in Margate first in Sept. 1755.

²I.e., Marmaduke Gwynne Sr.

³This is written on the back of the page that survives.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Donington Park?]
Monday, September 15, 1755

Dear Sir,

Your most kind letter I had this morning,¹ which gives me great pleasure in the thoughts of so soon seeing you. The time may be sooner by a few days than the thirteenth of next month for my arrival at Dornford, since here business seems to threaten me. But of this and its consequences I shall inform you. I am in pain ever in any engagements from the enemy. You know I must stand in to events from different quarters, and to get free properly from the entanglements of useful and needful business has much conducive for a Christian. You know my fears when first here about the preaching. Without my taking any sort of pains for it, I have found it rather pressed to have it, to my utmost astonishment. And Mr. [George] Whitefield has called and given two sermons. Strange but blessed are God's ways.

Mr. [Charles] Manning (who I never saw before) called here this morning. He seems a good, honest, humble man. Mr. [John] Jones's time is not yet, and poor Mr. [Walter] Sellon has suffered much by the delays of his bishop for priest's orders.² This all signifies as nothing, so we are all in the road to Canaan from hence. We shall be brought home safe, so [long as] we do but keep in it and wait his time for our dismissal.

I don't think your brother will come to Dornford. He will not chose to meet me. The work poor [James] Rouquet has made about Miss [Sarah] Fenwicke, I suppose it will be.³ And Mrs. Wheler would again make me the cat's paw,⁴ but I have desired to be excluded.

I hope to hear some account the first of October of the colony that will be fixed upon Clifton,⁵ and I depend upon your seeing and giving me some account of.

Let me know my next direction to you, that I may let you know the day (if I know it) within this next fortnight. I shall write to your friend by tonight's post—to let him know that Miss Whelers do not come.⁶ They will set out before me to Bristol directly, so there will be nobody but Lady Selina and Miss Kitty with me and my servants.⁷ He has been so obliging to invite them. I beg your prayers and am

The most unworthy of all your friends,

S. H.

Mr. [Bryan] I'Anson I grow quite fond of. He is a most sincere, honest soul.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at Mr Lloyd's Italian / Marchent in / Devonshire / Square / near Bishopgate / London."

Postmarks: "Ashby" and "17/SE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Sept 1. 1755 (sic) / L. H."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/47.⁸

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²LH had been trying to obtain ordination for these two. John Jones would not receive formal ordination until 1770; Sellon (already a deacon) would be ordained priest in 1759.

³See LH to CW, Oct. 30, 1754.

⁴I.e., the person to carry out an undesirable task.

⁵Elizabeth (Weston / Christmas) Skrine, Ann (Skrine) Barlow, and Ann Grinfield were moving to Clifton, to live together with Lady Huntingdon in her residence as a community.

⁶Cf. LH to CW, Aug. 25, 1755.

⁷Apparently Catherine Wheeler was coming with LH; the other sisters going ahead to Bristol.

⁸Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 95.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Ashby de-la-Zouch / Donington]
September 22, 1755

Dear Sir,

Your letter full of comfort and strength reached me this morning. I truly joy at the blessings you have found in your last pilgrimage.¹ May God increase and bless you more and more in all you do, and fill your heart with that love and power that is above all you can ask or think. Did I say anything of poor dear Mr. [Charles] Manning that you might think unguarded? If I did, I do from my heart thank you. But what I say to you I do not say to anyone else. But I don't remember. But I am sure it is a useful talent, wisdom of speech. And I long my heart should be so full of love to all God's creatures that it should ever direct my tongue. I love your reproaches. They always do me good as they come from a heart I have long experienced the friendship of.

Mr. [Samuel] Lloyd called kindly upon me in his way to Derby. I had a table full of people and the subject is nothing then but that of eating and drinking, and they all of the world. He could not call at his return, as I pressed him to do before Tuesday, the fourteenth of next month. I fear as my affairs are I cannot leave this place now. But those concerned with workmen know the difficulties that attend them. I hope to write to Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley next post. Cease not to pray for me. And that I ever am sincerely

Your most unworthy friend,

S. Huntingdon

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. / Sept. 22. 1755."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/48.

¹CW's letter to which this responds is not known to survive; it would have included the news that he was now in London, filling in for JW at the Methodist chapels, etc.

Lady Huntingdon to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[Ashby de-la-Zouch / Donington]
October 6, 1755

Dear Mrs. Wesley,

I have delayed writing in hopes of being able to give you some account of myself, and to save Mr. [George] Stonehouse the trouble of so many of my letters about nothing. Under that share of distress you felt,¹ I knew I could do nothing. You had every comfort you wanted at hand. And I am of all others the one person that never served one under the least distress which temporal affliction produces, that I seal up my lips for life on these occasions. And yet hence by friends has been more remarkably blessed by the comfort of other to be in those situations. But so it is! This is among the many other things I wait for.

My present intention, if God permits, is to leave this place on Tuesday, sevensnight, Oct. the 14th. And yet so terribly bad are the roads and the waters out that should there be rains between this and then it will be impossible for me to stir from this place. All about has been such floods as never was known. Yet if the roads are passable, I hope a few days will not alter much. If to be at Mr. Stonehouse's on Saturday can be brought about, I surely shall.

The road he purposed, no wheel carriage can go, so that Litchfield, Birmingham, Worcester, Gloucester, and Oxford is the only way that we can with any degree of safety think of. This will be four days a-doing if so accomplished, and all inquiries agree in this conclusion of those who know every step of the roads. Thus I do expect the whole week will be employed in reaching you. And I will speak my mind, I cannot help wishing my engagement had been for summer. Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday we shall stay, and then we must make three days to Clifton, to get there the Saturday following. Don't say a word of this to that worthy and excellent man who I wish to wait upon and show every mark of respect to. I bring a set of horses with me from home, and have one from Bristol to meet me on Wednesday night, ready to set forward on Thursday morning. Lady Selina is my only companion. Two of my poor scholars are at Bristol, and their father keeps my room(?) till they return.

I desire my most kind remembrance to Mr. [Charles] Wesley and entreat his prayers, and to Mr. Stonehouse, and [inform him] that should anything prevent my being with him on Saturday, the 16th, he shall hear. The post hurries me, so that I can only assure my dear Mrs. Wesley that I am most truly

Her affectionate friend,

S. Huntingdon

Address: "To / Mrs. Wesley at George / Stonehouse's Esqr. at / Dornford in / Oxfordshire."

Postmark: "10/OC."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. Oct. 1755."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/50.²

¹The death of her daughter Martha Maria.

²Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 95.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Clifton]
October 25, 1755

Dear Sir,

I did indeed feel all my journey that your kind heart, with that of dear Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, followed us in prayers and wishes for our safe arrival. Don't think no more of your friend's¹ supposed distressings(?); there was all, nay seemed to abound. And I do most faithfully assure you had his fortune been expended to entertain me, I could not love and esteem him more than I do. For I look to the disposition of heart and that seemed full of good will and kindness. It is that which sweetens all things to me. With it I never saw a want or felt one, since I know and was sure nothing but that makes us last anything. Dear Miss [Rebecca] Gwynne we brought safe with [us] and would fain have made her share Lady Selina's bed, but nothing could prevail as she had so many obligations to fulfill from you to Bristol. She is a sweet, innocent, well-disposed practical young person. May our Lord give me and her (?) of strength in the love and knowledge of him. I found all our dear friends well, kindly inquiring after you. And they all will rejoice at your being at Bristol. I know I shall, for I do truly love and esteem you and dear Mrs. Wesley.

I am glad you have some glimmering hopes of your friend that he may be a pious and blessed example. Indeed I wish it from the ground of my heart. He bore much with me and I hope I did not offend with my plainness and ignorance, which I feel to be great in points so high as we went. But as my heart felt, I spoke to him, without reflection or reserve. I am in haste, so by the continuance of your prayers and true Christian love to dear Mrs. Wesley and live assured, dear sir, of the most faithful regard of

Your ever obliged friend,

S. Huntingdon

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles / Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. Oct 1755."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/49.

¹George Stonehouse, who had hosted LH at his home.

Mary Degge to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[St. Anne's Hill, Chertsey]
Friday, November 21 [1755]

As soon as anything essential was fixed on I would not omit acquainting my dear friend of it. In my last I told you of Mr. Mures(?) and Lord Robert's safe arrival.¹ And having taken this in their way to town, not finding us here, they continued their journey to London. And by that time we got here at 11:00 at night I was much surprised at Lord Robert's return here, he having only changed horses and come back. All law affairs are near settled and the last and great is to be concluded, if it is the will of God, on Tuesday fortnight, the 9th of next month. It will be as private as possible, having only two of his sisters and brothers present. I begin to have some doubts concerning our bishop. However that is settled, I will not fail letting you know immediately. [I] only say it will be done in London, in our house. We go to town this day sevensnight.

My dear friend will excuse this scrawl. I am only able to add my sincere desire of yours and your partner's hearty prayers and a constant share in your heart. Believe me, I am,

Sincerely yours,

M. Degge

Remember me to Lady Huntingdon and tell her the day from me.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/428/2/119.

¹Mary Degge was preparing to marry Lord Robert Manners (1721–82), son of the Duke of Rutland and a colonel in Samuel Gumley's regiment of the 1st Foot Guards.

Mary Degge to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[London]
December 4 [1755]

This moment I have had the pleasure of receiving a fresh remembrance from my dear Bristol friend. By this time I suppose her partner has informed her of the delay, so that at present cannot fix a day.¹ I yesterday heard from him and propose meeting (as before intended) at the [West Street] chapel on Sunday morning.

I must now acquaint you of an accident which had near proved fatal for Lord Robert [Manners]. But God said “so far and no farther.”² We cannot see the wise end, but sense there is a great reason for all things. My aunt³ and he going out together on business, he went to see at the Dove (from the little parlours) if the coach was come round, when unexpectedly he fell down against the edge of the clock in the hall and has cut his head from the hair to the eyebrow, deep enough to see the skull—which most providentially is not touched. Had it been the length of a small pin any other way, it must have killed him on the spot. I knew nothing of it till evening, only he had fell and hurt his foot a little, till with the Duchess of Montrose in the evening I went to see him.⁴ He was immediately bled and the wound was an hour bleeding violently, till they could find his surgeon to dress it. He must have lost above 20 ounces of blood that day. However, through God’s will, it is not attended with any bad consequence at all. He is confined to his house.

How near is life to eternity! May I never forget it. And may he feel it *now*. But as it may not be fatally experienced, I cannot say how much I feel *for fear*. For God can—sure he will—save us. Sure it is his will if ever we meet, then we shall *never* be separated. If so, would the Lord himself give me that assurance, I cannot say how unspeakably happy it would make me. If anything less than this, I wish he would receive now my soul. My anxiety is great, as my heart is deceitful. So I feel it.

I can only add that you will give me great pleasure always to write on in the same free style. Remember I think when once joined we are *no more two* but *one* at all times. I hope you will give a share in your prayers to her who is now

Your most sincere friend,

Mary Degge

My Dear friend will excuse the length, if she considers *me*, and the *subject*.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 24/12.

¹The delay was in her marriage to Lord Robert Manners. CW finally officiated their marriage on Jan. 1, 1756.

²Job 38:11.

³Martha (Meighen / Colvill) Gumley.

⁴Lucy (Manners) Graham (1717–88); wife of William Graham, 2nd Duke of Montrose (1712–90), and sister of Lord Robert Manners.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

[Bristol]
[December 15, 1755]

Dear Sir,

I thank you for a letter we all thought late.⁵ I really hope you have united happily one pair.⁶ Mr. [George] Whitefield brings this. He will tell you how happy we have been at your house with dear Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, and all longed for you there. We talked over matters as he had talked over matters before he left London, and he tenderly feels for you. I am sure he will act the honest part in whatever he is entrusted with; and all mischief arises from these sweet and wise lay preachers whose interest it is to keep you from being all friends. But I trust the Lord will break the snare. May our Lord bless you, and in his own time send you among us full of the gospel of the blessings of peace. Mr. Whitefield can tell you so much of us that I only at present can assure you how affectionately I ever feel my heart

In friendship yours,

S. H.

Address: "To/ The Revd Mr / Charles Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "L. H. / Dec. 15. 1755."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/51.⁷

⁵This letter is not known to survive.

⁶Mary Degge and Robert Manners; whose marriage was still delayed.

⁷Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 96–97.

From George Lambertson

[Leeds]
[c. December 20, 1755]

An Account of a Few Expressions from Brother Lambertson's Daughter¹

It is about three months since she was convinced of sin and of the deplorable condition she was in by nature. Afterwards, it pleased the merciful God to draw her by the cords of his love.

Three of her acquaintances came in her way, to which she directed her discourses: "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 our sins forgiven; I say there is."

About six weeks before her death she was seized 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 too 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 doctors, when we have so good a God to go to?"

Her cry was more times than can be remembered: "I believe he will come."

It was asked her if she rather chose to recover. She replied, "Not to live as I have done. But if it please God to lengthen out my days, I hope I shall live to his glory."

Her cry often was, "I am afraid of deceiving myself." Her mother, standing over her, seeing her in agony, asked what was [the] matter. She broke out into tears and said, "I want a Saviour."

The physicians which attended her earnestly entreated her not to sign nor mourn. They told her it rendered their medicines ineffectual. She immediately replied, "I can never rest until I know my sins forgiven." The they told her that she could never know, and likewise these coming would be in vain.

A few days after this she said² to her father, "The devil has nothing to do with me now; I almost love Jesus. Though I am not a partaker 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 prevailed over me. The poor Methodists are a despised people. They are in the true way I sincerely believe."

Her brother and sister being present, to which she directed her discourse: "I desire you will get into the company of the few serious your persons and not have this blessing to seek upon a death bed."

Still she continued wasting and struggling into life. Sleep was fled from her. Two or three days before her death she was whole nights in prayer to God; witness those that watched with her. About twenty hours before her "happy change" the cold sweats seized her. She had a great conflict with the accuser of the brethren. She cried out, "O it is a sad thing to have a weary body and a weary soul! O it is hand to bear!" Her father told her the bowels of Jesus yearned over her. She immediately answered, "I believe they do."

About half an hour before she departed, she broke out with an audible voice (not like a dying person), "O sweet Jesus! O Jesus, it is sweet! It is sweet! It is comfortable! It is delightful!" And in a little time resigned her soul into the arms of Jesus without either sigh or moan.

¹George Lambertson (1706–74) of Leeds was active in the Methodist society there. The register of St. Peter's parish in Leeds records of a burial of "a daughter of George Lambertson" on Dec. 15, 1755. George Lambertson had two daughters, Elizabeth (b. 1736) and Sarah (b. 1745). This account may have been written for Lambertson by a third party.

²Orig., "says."

Endorsement: by CW, “ Bro. Lambertson’s Girl / 1755.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/99.³

³For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Clifton
December 23, 1755

My Dear Sir,

I have the pleasure to tell you dear Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley is well. She is now setting by me and we both wish to be able to say something to comfort you. This affair you mention will soon do it.¹ The crisis you think it appears coming to will dissolve all bonds for you but what love makes, and I do wish there never might be any between Christians but such. Let our Lord deliver you, and then it will not only be out of all evil and distress but into all the ways he himself appoints for you.

I have not yet wrote to your brother, and I hate evasion so much that I dread not distinguishing between that and him. I wish you would see Mr. [George] Whitefield and talk matters over with him, as he had done that already with your brother. His heart is honest, and he has a truly brotherly love for you and I think I know when he has proved it. I think if your brother found you [two] in friendship, then it would keep him in order more than anything. I know he would not like you both to unite against those preachers he espouses, and could this end be obtained all might go on well again.

Mr. Whitefield has no design of staying in England or dividing any interest. This I know to be a fact. His time will not admit of it, no more than his opinion agree to any influence but what preaching a sermon may gain him, and this is only for his Master. He is more and more detached from all things but that of public labour that if such a one is not a disinterested friend in the blessed cause I know not who can be. May our Lord bless and direct you, and take this as the effect of my best judgment and most unfeigned friendship. Mrs. [Anne] Grinfield is, in great love, yours. I trust the Lord will bring you soon and safe among us. If I hear anything, you shall soon hear again. Mrs. Wesley writes tomorrow. I ever am, my dear sir, most faithfully

Your most obliged friend,

S. H.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at Mr Bolts in / Christopher Alley / upper Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "25/DE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Dec. 23. 1755 / L. H."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/52.²

¹CW was currently in London, hoping to meet the Bishop of London about a possible church living (assuming he would be put out of Methodism due to his criticism of lay preachers seeking right to preside over sacraments).

²Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 97.

Mary Degge to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[London]
December 30 [1755]

I have only time to say a few words to dear friends at Bristol and Clifton. [I] could not till now get a moment, and even now Miss Rich is drinking tea with me. You will receive this *on the day* when your partner will have met us.¹ I trust you all remembered me and continue so to do.

Remember me to Lady Huntingdon and Mrs. [Anne] Grinfield. I will write as soon as possible, though I first expect to hear from them to encourage me.

My dear friend will excuse my abrupt conclusion. Consider me, and *remember*

Your sincere friend,

M. Legge

Endorsement: by SGW, “Decr. 30th 1755 / the last l[ette]r from / Miss Degge yt I shall / ever receive.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/60.

¹CW officiated the wedding of Mary Degge and Robert Manners on Jan. 1, 1756.