

Charles Wesley In-Correspondence (1771–75)

Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition, Duke Divinity School

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1771

From Samuel Arnold¹

[London]
January 16, 1771

My Dear Friend,

I am ashamed to have kept your hymn so [long] without setting it to music. But when I tell you it has pleased God to take my mother from me,² you will not wonder at my delay. Write to me soon. Your letters are replete with affection and friendship. Indeed they afford me much consolation. Nothing will fill up the vacancy in my mind occasioned by my late unhappy loss but the soothing tenderness of my friends.

Commend me with much affection to Charles [Jr.] and all your good family. I long to see you *all*. Perhaps before I have that pleasure, I shall be united to the woman of my heart.³ I bespeak your love for her, though I need not prejudice you in her favour. When you know her you must love her. Tell Charles he has a great treat to come in hearing her perform on the harpsichord; as he likewise has in hearing a lady perform on the violin between the acts of the Oratorios in Lent at Covent Garden—the first of which is Friday the 17 of February (I think).⁴

I hope the hymn will please. You must make some allowance, I have had much weight on my spirits for a long time past. Such as it is, you are most truly welcome to from, dear sir,

Your obliged, humble servant,

S. Arnold

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

Endorsement: by CW, “Jan.16.1771 / Arnold / bereaved of his mother.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/106.

¹Samuel Arnold (1740–1802), a London composer and organist. Educated at Chapel Royal, Arnold became composer to Covent Garden Theatre; his first annual production was *The Maid of the Mill* (1765). Subsequent positions were as music director of the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket (1777), organist and composer to the Chapel Royal (1783), conductor of the Academy of Ancient Music (1789), and organist at Westminster Abbey (1793).

²Arnold’s mother’s name on his baptismal record is “Mary.” She was likely the Mary Arnold buried Nov. 29, 1770 at St. Leonard, Shoreditch.

³Arnold was preparing to marry Mary Ann Napier (1750–1812), the daughter of Archibald Napier, M.D. (d. 1775), of Cheshunt, Hertfordshire.

⁴The violinist was Maddalena Laura (Lombardini) Sirmen (1745–1818), who played to rave reviews.

From Anne (Stone) Barnard

Bovagh near Coleraine [Ireland]
March 1, 1771

Reverend Sir,

Your letter dated January 12th did not reach me till the 19th of February. I know not by what accident it was so long on the way. But I am sure it appears as if I had neglected to return you thanks for it, which was far from my inclination as I look upon your remembrance with high regard and veneration.

It grieves me to find your embarrassment at disposing of your young family has so affected your mind and lowered your spirits that they are ready to sink under the oppression! This must be the case when you can say you wished to have consulted such a poor counsellor as myself. Indeed, my success and that situation I arrived at may occasion a supposition of contrivance and foresight. But I rejoice to know I can safely renounce the smallest degree of it, and solemnly declare all the worldly advancement (in which I shared) of my Lord Bishop of Derry was the leading of a gracious providence by very extraordinary and unexpected accidents. I say “unexpected” because he never gave up a point of religious decency and decorum, nor ever solicited any benefice for himself. I have known great vicissitudes of what is called “fortune.” But have been the most fearful in that which was most ample; that dreadful sentence always sounding in my ears: “Thou in thy lifetime hast received thy good things.”¹ My Saviour grant I may be kept from the consequence!

I am not qualified to offer motives of comfort and consolation to you. Had another complained of “that dejection of mind,” I should have sent them to your incomparable writings for consolation and comfort. A late writer asserts that the distrusting our Redeemer’s *will* to save is near as faulty as denying his power.

Will he not his help afford?
Help, while yet I ask, is given.²

I cannot but believe your trials are sent to a good end, and that you work will abide, however lowly and short of the perfection you seek it appears in your own estimation. Sprinkled with the blood of Christ, and receiving the additional weight of his all-sufficient merits, the end will be happy, however the obstructions on the road may be afflictive. May those comforts with which you have assisted others refresh and comfort your oppressed spirits.

It would render our condition here more quiet and easy, could we divest ourselves of those tender affections which create fearfulness and apprehensions for our children. And yet I don’t observe that Abraham was reproved for his anxious care for Ishmael, whilst he was receiving the glorious promise to his descendants by Isaac.³ But why should I presume to lay these things before you? I hope ere this the contest is past and the cloud dispersed, and anything I can say needless; though I am sure the sincere concern of a friend will be my apology for taking such liberty.

I desire to add my affectionate respects to Mrs. Wesley and your son, and assure them of my constant prayers that he may be preserved in the fiery trial; and that you may enjoy that peace which the world cannot give, and see the reward for your labours, rejoicing in hope and patient in tribulation.

I beg the continuance of your prayers for me and mine, and remain, reverend sir,

Your faithful and most humble servant,

Barnard

¹Luke 16:25.

²From CW’s paraphrase of Psalm 121, published first in *CPH* (1743), 86.

³See Gen. 17:18–20.

I have not head of Mr. John Wesley's arrival.⁴ I heartily wish him a good voyage. I expect a call to Dublin soon after Easter.

Endorsement: by CW, "M[rs] Barnard Mar. 1. / 1771 / [[answered June 1]]."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP: 1/2.

⁴JW reached Dublin on March 24, 1771.

From John Nelson

Northallerton
March 28, 1771

Dear Sir,

I think it my duty to acquaint you how it went with me at York after the horrible murder of our dear brother William Smith. I was summoned to appear before four justices and asked many questions, then bound by them in a £20 bond to appear at York assizes. Some would not have had me go. But for the gospel's sake, I would not have missed for a hundred pounds; though I bore my own charges.

I was the first called, and great silence was in the court. The judge asked me if I knew the deceased.

I answered, "Yes I did."

He said, "Did you know the prisoners at the bar?"

(Answer) "Not in person, till this day, my Lord."

He said, "How came you to turn them out of your society?"

I said, "For not keeping the rules of our society, my Lord. When anyone breaks them, they are reprov'd, and if that will not do, we publicly declare they are not longer with us."

He said, "What are these rules?"

I replied, "First, to cease from evil in word and work; from blaspheming the name of God; from evil-speaking, such as lying or back-biting, speaking evil of magistrates or ministers. Not to buy and sell uncustomed goods. Not to contract debts they cannot pay, or make promises they do not keep.¹ And I understood these people at the bar had broken these rules, and had been reprov'd again and again to no purpose. Then, my Lord, I declared to the whole congregation that they that looked fine in other birds' feathers and fared sumptuously at other men's expense were not fit for a religious society. No! They were no better than thieves and robbers. And I bade all beware of such, for they were not of us, but were crossed out from among us. And we declare to the whole world that none is of us any longer than they keep our rules."

Some of the counsel said, "They are good morals."

Then my Lord said to the man and his wife (the prisoners), "Have you aught to object to what John Nelson hath said?"

And they both replied, "Not a word, my Lord."

Many more questions were asked me, that gave me an opportunity to explain the thing to judge and jury, counsel and sheriff, that I could not have anywhere else. And I doubt not but it will remove prejudice out of the minds of many, and be for the furtherance of the gospel. The class leader was called and heard with much attention. Then the other witnesses were called and the man was condemned, and afterwards confessed the crime. I think we ought to bless God that they were turned out in so public a manner, so long before the crime was committed.

The Lord is converting some sinners among us, and several have died in triumph. Old Mrs. Romaine for one.² O sir, pray for me. And I beg the prayers of all the church. My wife [Martha] hath had a bad winter.

Your unworthy brother and son to serve in the gospel,

John Nelson

P.S. I am distressed about my poor son Charles. I wish you could see him. I have done what I can for them, but his mother hath done little. May the blessing of God rest on you.

¹See *The General Rules of the United Societies*, §4, JW, *Works*, 9:70–71.

²Isabella (Cook) Romaine (c. 1684–1771), the mother of Rev. William Romaine, who lived in Hartlepool, Yorkshire.

Address: “To Mr. Wesley³ at the Foundery near Moorfields.”

Source: secondary transcription (by Thomas Marriott); MARC, PLP 78/53/8.⁴

³JW had just arrived in Ireland for an extended stay; so this letter was likely to CW, as it is titled in *WMM*.

⁴Marriott’s original transcription remains; he sent it to the editor of *WMM*, where it was printed in a somewhat polished form, 65 (1842): 301–02.

From [John Pawson]¹

[London]
[April 1771]

The first time I visited the prisoners was before the dead warrant came down.² They were all very serious and exceeding willing to be instructed. And as I spoke to them one by one, it appeared to me from the account they gave of themselves that they were all in some measure convinced of sin.

I saw them no more till the day on which they were to die. After they had received the sacrament in the chapel, they were brought down into a room near the press-yard. They seemed exceeding cheerful, and upon speaking to them [I] found that they were all delivered from the fear of death. [Thomas] Peake told me that the Lord spoke peace to him the night before, and [George] Burke³ said that he had found that blessing two days ago. We sung a hymn and prayed with them. Their irons were then taken off and I heard several of them bless God as soon as this was done, saying, “The Lord be praised, I have got rid of my irons, and I shall soon be delivered from all my troubles.”

Burke, Peake, and [John] Sidey were put into the first cart. They went out of the prison with great cheerfulness, and as soon as they were set down Burke said, “Let us sing the Passion hymn, I love that hymn exceedingly.”⁴ And [he] told me the page where I might find it, and added, “What a vast concourse of people is here. This is the happiest day I ever saw in my life.” We sung that hymn and several others, and joined in prayer two or three times while on the road. The rest of the time was spent in conversation suitable to the occasion. So far as I can judge, these three were exceeding happy to the very last, and Burke and Peake were rather more cheerful than one would have wished them to have been. This gave occasion to many of the spectators to think that they were quite hardened. Upon their being told of it they said that they were so happy that they could not help it.

When we had got about half way to the place of execution I went to the other cart, where [Luke] Cannon and [Richard] Mortis were. Upon speaking freely to the former, I thought he seemed to be in a very comfortable state indeed, yet very various. The other, who was a very ignorant man, seemed something sorrowful, and Cannon endeavoured to encourage him as well as he could. We sung and prayed with these also several times while on the road.

When we came to Tyburn,⁵ while the executioner⁶ was typing up the first three, these two kneeled down in the cart and we sung an hymn and prayed kneeling. Cannon, seeing several boys he was acquainted with, said “Take care that you do not come this way also; take warning by me.” And to a man that was standing by, “Do you not see how near we are to the blessed tree?” Adding, “The executioner is a long while. I long for my time to come.”

¹While the letter is not signed, the writing matches the hand of John Pawson, and he was stationed at the time in London.

²The *London Evening Post* (March 26–28, 1771) reported that on March 27 five convicts in Newgate Prison were executed for various crimes at Tyburn: George Burke, Luke Cannon, Richard Mortis, Thomas Peake, and John Sidey. This account speaks of all but Cannon behaving “in a most audacious manner” at the execution.

³Orig. throughout, “Burch.”

⁴Almost certainly he means CW, “A Passion Hymn,” *HSP* (1742), 22–24.

⁵Orig., “Tyborn.”

⁶Thomas Turlis was the executioner at Tyburn until early 1771, when he was succeeded by Edward Dennis.

When they were all tied up, the Ordinary prayed with them.⁷ They all seemed to join with him in a very devout and solemn manner, and then very cheerfully sung an hymn. Just before they were turned off, they shook hands with and most affectionately kissed each other, and in a very affecting manner commended one another and their souls to God, saying “Fear not, we shall all meet above in a few minutes, where we shall be happy forever.”

Cannon spoke to this effect: “Sometime since, one Cheek, a carpenter, swore an assault against me, which God knows I was never guilty of. Finding that his oath would not do, he hired another person that I had never seen in my life before (for had I seen him, I must have known him, as he was blind in one eye) to swear the same thing. Upon which I was cast into Bridewell in Tothill Fields⁸ for three months. And it was there that I became acquainted with those unfortunate men who led me to commit the crime for which I now suffer.”⁹ When he his cap was pulled over his face he said, “But I would not have any of you think that I do not forgive the said Cheek. God knows that I forgive the man from the ground of my heart. May God bless him. But I would have all men to beware of such persons as he is.”

Address: “To the Revd. Mr. Chas. Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[Malefactors April] 1771.”¹⁰

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/141.¹¹

⁷The “Ordinary” was the Church of England priest appointed as chaplain to Newgate. John Wood held this role in 1771.

⁸Orig., “Tuttle Fields.” This was a prison in the Westminster area of greater London.

⁹Cannon was executed for a theft, committed with John Sidey.

¹⁰The shorthand is expanded by CW at a later date, underneath.

¹¹For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:

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

Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley to Charles Wesley Jr.

[Bristol]
Thursday, April 4 [1771]

For Master Wesley

By this time I hope my dear Charles has received a letter from his sister and me, which we sent by Mr. [John] James. Your last [letter] came to hand on Monday. Sammy was pleased to find you remembered him. The cold he has had has took him down in strength and spirits, but I hope the spring will soon remove his cold, etc.

If Chesterfield Street is so much improved, it is not unlikely that your papa's house there may be let. Had it been in Charlotte Street it would not have remained unrepaired till now.

Does Mr. Griffin continue to teach you?¹ I imagine Mr. Kelway puts you such difficult lessons as to require his assisting you.² Mrs. [Millbery] Foottit is a good neighbour to you, I suppose, and does (now and th)en³ come for a tune on the harpsichord.

Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor and her sisters, Mrs. [Elizabeth] Farley and Betsy, Captain and Mrs. Va(ughn) join in kind love to you,⁴ As does Sally and Sammy, (wishing?) for your company. Miss Sally James says you told her you would write to her, but did not promise you would to her sister,⁵ and have forgot her and wrote to Miss James.

It is a pleasure to me to hear you have escaped colds. That health and every blessing may attend you is the desire of my dear Charley's

Ever affectionate mother,

Sa. Wesley

My compliments to Mrs. Harris and family.

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at the Foundery / Upper Moor-Fields / London."

Postmark: "6/AP."

Source: MARC, DDWes 7/23.

¹Thomas Griffin (c. 1706–71) was organist at St. Helens, Bishopsgate, London, from 1744, and Gresham Professor of Music from 1763, until his death in early May 1771. He both built organs and gave lessons.

²Joseph Kelway (c. 1702–82), an eminent organist and harpsichordist, was organist of St. Martin's in the Fields. In August 1769, Kelway heard Charles Jr. play, invited him to come to see Kelway whenever he was in London, and offered to teach him for nothing. See CW's "Account of Joseph Kelway and Charles Wesley Jr.," in CW, *Journal Letters*, 439–49.

³A small portion is torn away by the wax seal, affecting four lines.

⁴I.e., Capt. John Vaughan of Trecwn (c. 1713–89), who was currently a captain but would rise to the rank of admiral by the time of his death; see *WHS* 11 (1917): 23–24. "Mrs." Vaughan was his older single sister Ann Vaughan (1707–77), who was now a member of the Bristol society.

⁵Margaret James (b. 1751) and Sarah James (b. 1753) were daughters of Capt. John and Margaret (Jenkins) James, of Bristol.

Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley to Charles Wesley Jr.

[Bristol]
Monday, April 22 [1771]

Though I wrote to my dearest Charley in my letter to your papa on Saturday, yet I send by this post to let you know that I am not quite satisfied at not having a line from either of you but what was dated last *Tuesday*, and then I found you *both* had colds.¹ I fully depended on a letter by *this* day's post but none is come, and now I cannot have one till Wednesday. It is my request that as your papa may not have time to favour me as often as I expect, that *you* will write more frequently to me.

I fear you both expose yourselves too much to the night air, which is not fit for your healths. For you had spent an evening out (by your papa's letter) at Mr. Rush's while he and you had your cold. But I hope you had a coach to bring you to your lodgings. As the oratorios are over, there is no *necessity* of chancing catching colds by being out at night; though the air is *now* very mild to what it was a few days ago, and we have a prospect of fine weather coming on.

Your sister has wrote to you. She and Sammy join in duty to their papa, and unite with me in kind love to you. Tell your aunts from me they are very lazy correspondents.² I suppose you see them once a week. Tomorrow is eleven weeks since you have been absent. Give my love to your papa. God bless you.

I am, my dear Charles,
Your ever affectionate mother.

Sa. Wesley

Mrs. [Margaret] James thinks that Mr. [John] James will have seen you by this time in London. She expects him back this week. Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor and her sisters' love attends you. Prudence and Mrs. Brooks desire their duty.³ Mrs. Vigor will gladly pay for a letter from you by post often.

Address: "To / Master Wesley / at the Foundery, upper Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "24/AP."

Source: holograph; Pitts Library (Emory), Charles Wesley Family Papers (MSS 159), 1/34.

¹Neither of these letters is known to survive.

²I.e., Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller and Rebecca Gwynne.

³Prudence Box was the nanny for the Wesley children; Mrs. Brooks was likely the current maid and cook for the family.

Charles Wesley Jr. to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[London]
May 1, 1771

Dear Mama,

I hope you are very well. My aunts drank tea with us the other day.¹ They are, I think, pretty well.

I suppose you know we are at the Foundery; everything is very comfortable. I have not seen any place cleaner than the apartments we are in. They try every way to make it agreeable, but I often long to see you and all my friends at Bristol, which I am impatient to see again.

I suppose Sammy is quite a man now. I hope he remembers all his songs which, when I come to Bristol, I expect to hear sung very well.

I fancy we shall not go to Marylebone at all;² there is nobody to keep the house and Isaac [Duckworth] does not come. He should [have] told us so at once.

I wrote to dear Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor. Pray remember me kindly to her and all the family. Likewise Mrs. [Elizabeth] Farley [and] Betsy, Capt. [John] and Mrs. [Ann] Vaughn; and love [to] my dear Sally and Sammy.

I am, dear mama,

Your's ever affectionately,

Charles Wesley

P.S. Love to Prudence [Box].

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/63.

¹Elizabeth (Gwynne) Wesley and Rebecca Gwynne; possibly also Emilia (Wesley) Harper and Martha (Wesley) Hall.

²The house leased for them on [Great] Chesterfield Street.

From Peter Jaco¹

Durham
May 14, 1771

My Dear Sir,

Some little time ago I received a few lines of a private hand, whole enough to discern that they were dated Bristol, December 11, 1770, and subscribed “C.W.”! So [I] concluded they must come from you. As I had impatiently expected an answer to my three letters, two of which I wrote before I left London, and one after my arrival at Newcastle, your letter—though exceedingly brief—was highly welcome, as it saved me from the unpleasing conclusion that you had no farther desire of an unprofitable correspondence.

I am just now informed by a friend that you are well in London, and that you have been in town some time. But he can tell me nothing about Mrs. Wesley and the young ones. I suppose they are with you and hope they are well.

By this time I hope you are comfortably situated without your former embarrassments, and that your labours are abundantly blest to needy and thirsty souls. May your latter works be greater than your former. Amen.

The only thing which I can with any pleasure inform you is a report current here that you intend paying us a visit with Mrs. [Susannah] Collinson sometime this summer. This would give me greater pleasure if I had it under your own hand. Thousands in this country would be thankful to God and you for such a visit, and I believe it would be useful to many souls. We have had a severe winter; and what is worse, a great stagnation of the work of God—principally occasioned I believe by two out of the three preachers being laid up for some months. But they are once more restored. I hope God will revive his work.

Myself and little family have had our share in this gracious visitation, and I trust not without profit to us. “O for a humble heart, and prouder song!”²

This morning died one of the first fruits of the Methodists in this country, aged 82; an Israelite indeed. One who under the violent persecution of a wicked husband, the extremest poverty, and for many years the most acute pair of body, never lost her confidence but glorified God in the fire, and yield up her soul in triumph! This can God do! May my last end be like hers.

My little family, with Mr. [Joseph] Cownley and the preachers, join me in much affection to yourself, Mrs. Wesley, and the young ones. A line from you, if you can find time and inclination, will greatly oblige, dear sir,

Ever yours,

P. Jaco

Perhaps you can inform me whether our friends in Bishopsgate Street and Bell Lane are alive or dead? If alive, please to remember me kindly to them.

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

Postmark: “20/MA” and “DURHAM.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Peter Jacco [sic] / May 14. 1771 / an happy Death!”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP: 2/25.

¹Peter Jaco served in the London area 1768–70 and was appointed to Newcastle at the Aug. 1770 Conference (see JW, *Works*, 10:353, 383).

²Edward Young, *Night Thoughts*, Night 4, ln. 633.

From Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
May 26, 1771

My Very Dear Friend,

Though I am as a dead man, out of mind, I do not forget you. While I wander in one part of the wilderness, methinks I see you turning in another. You hope better days; my hopes of seeing them at times fail me. Were it not for a “Whither should we go, etc.,”¹ I know not at times where I would betake myself. I have seen, I think, but *one awakening* in my parish these six years. Offenses of the most public sort arise daily among the few professors, and those who call Jesus “Lord” do not seem to me to have the seal of heaven, the power of the living God, with them and in them. This reflection is levelled at myself first. I am at times tempted to believe we live in the hardest gospel-days as to power and internal life; though we hear so much about the evangelical letter, which keeps (as I fear) poor stinking Lazaruses quiet in their graves.²

I was not more satisfied about Trevecca than about my parish. A deep sense of my incapacity, love of peace; a sight of the absolute necessity of openly standing it out against some concerned in the work, or wounding my conscience; difficulties every day arising with respect to doctrinal points; a conviction that an Arminian is not a proper person to preside over a college that takes a pretty strong Calvinist turn; and a persuasion that a Calvinist, itinerant ministry will go out from thence to feed the professors of that sentimental denomination, and that a moderate Calvinist must superintend (to say nothing of some particular steps relative to Mr. [Joseph] Benson’s dismissal and your brother’s *Minutes*); are the reasons that have engage *me to resign* my charge in Wales. I have only left it as under-director. We parted in love, and I am still the servant of the college and the admirer of its extraordinary foundress [Lady Huntingdon].

I want a heart filled with the Spirit and power of Jesus. I am *not yet established* in the contemplation of his glorious love. Nor am I yet light in the Lord, and free from the carnal mind. In short, where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty, but I am still in bondage to many things. Nor does it avail me to make a profession which my heart, my life, my want of power and the Holy Ghost, show to be more apparent than substantial. I always fail in the persevering in prayer and self denial; and therefore am always a backslider in heart, filled with my own ways. I open my case to you that you may know how to advise and pray for

Your unworthy friend,

J. Fletcher

My Christian love and respects wait upon Mrs. Wesley, the little family, and my goddaughter [Sarah Jr.] in particular.

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley / at the Foundery / Upper Moor-Fields / London.”

Endorsement: by CW, “May 26. 1771 / Fletcher.”

Source: holograph; Duke, Rubenstein, Frank Baker Wesleyana Collection, Box WF 2.³

¹See Ps. 139:7.

²See John 11:39.

³A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 275–76.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Bath
June 3,¹ 1771

Enclosed you have your brother's *Minutes*, sent with those resolutions taken in consequence of their appearing in the world, and that under the proper explanation of them—viz., "Popery unmasked."² They have long affected my mind with deep concern, and thinking all ought deservedly to be deemed papists who did not disown them, I readily complied with the proposal of an open disavowal of them.

The friendship I have endeavoured to show to you and him for so many years could never have been less, but by that confession your brother has so explicitly made of his creed. I can therefore look upon what I do as no more than bearing an honest testimony in that simplicity and godly sincerity with which I have desired to hold the fundamental principles of that Church [of England] to which I belong, and universally with all the Reformed and Protestant churches in the world. I shall ever from Scripture, as well as the happy demonstration of truth to my own conscience, maintain the merit, the sufficiency of that glorious sacrifice for sinners as the *whole* of my salvation, abhorring all in man and giving that glory to Jesus Christ which alone to him eternally belongs.

You must see in this view that neither partiality nor prejudice has anything to do in this whole affair. Principles that do³ make shipwreck of faith, and of course of a good conscience, is what I have to object to and no gloss ever so finely drawn over these apostate sentiments can alter their nature or consequence to me.

Things of such vast importance ever exclude the man. He is like every other man, weak and insufficient, and does therefore demand a Christian temper of opposition and his infirmities uncovered. But which his principles set up another gospel and so exclude that of Jesus Christ and thus expose thousands of immortal souls to the just suspicions of denying the only Lord God that bought them, and in civil as well as religious professions make us appear as rebels to God, our King, and the most wicked enemies of our country. None can blame any who from such withdraw themselves.

As you have no part in this matter, I find it difficult to blame your brother to you. While as an honest man I must pity and not less regard you, as you must suffer equal disgrace and universal distrust from the supposed union with him. I know you so well and believe the Lord who brings light with truth will also show you that no mean disguises, or a less interesting point, could thus influence me in that stand I make and which appears to me of that consequence to the salvation of souls.

May every best blessing attend you, and may you be found faithful in life and in death to him who has so loved us and to whom throughout eternity all praise and glory our heaven must evermore resound with. I am, dear sir,

Your ever faithful and sincere friend and servant for Christ's sake,

S. Huntingdon

The copy enclosed is the first sent out by me to anyone. I have done this in order that with the greatest of openness your brother might be informed by you.

Address: "To the Revd Mr Charles Wesley."

¹LH's indication of the day could easily be read as an "8." We are following CW's date in the annotation, which is written quite clearly.

²LH was sending the manuscript predecessor of what appeared in Walter Shirley, *A Narrative of the Principal Circumstances Relative to the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Late Conference* (Bath: T. Mills, 1771), 3–8.

³Orig., "does."

Endorsement: by CW, “L. HUNTINGDON’S LAST June 3 1771 / unanswered by J.W.’s brother!”
Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/99.⁴

⁴Cf. the previous transcription in Tyson, *Correspondence*, 112–13,

From the Rev. Vincent Peronnet¹

Shoreham
July 9, 1771

My Very Dear Brother,

I am truly concerned, that so labourious a servant of Christ should be attacked in so violent a manner. Insulted by some, without the least decency or regard to common decorum; and threatened by others with a synodical sentence.

Had I been honoured with an invitation from a great personage, for whom I have a very high esteem, I should have told her Ladyship that, in the first place, I could have no greater veneration for synods than the most excellent Bishop Nazianzen had formerly, whose great learning and Christian virtues could not screen him from the usual violence of those assemblies, and who therefore desired to see no more of them.

However, with regard to the *merit* of good works, I should frankly have declared my abhorrence of the very sound of the word; since I could not conceive how an unprofitable servant could merit any thing from a holy God. But then, on the other hand, I should have added that whoever should speak contemptibly of the diligent exercise of good works, as if they derogated from the honour of Christ, I should tell such a divine that whether he found his divinity either in Luther or Calvin, or the Synod of Dort, it was no divinity of the gospel of Christ—since “Christ came to purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”² And as the Holy Spirit has assured us over and over that “we shall be judged according to our works,”³ it is therefore no wonder that St. Paul should pray that his converts might be “established in every good word and work.”⁴

Besides, I might have observed, that the zealot who decries good works was acting a most ridiculous part with regard to faith. For if his faith did not bring forth good works, his faith was good for nothing. Consequently then, every wise Christian should insist upon all possible good work, as the certain fruits of gospel-faith, and the sure evidence of it.

However, though such good works were the fruits of divine faith, and consequently the fruit of the Spirit of Christ, and for that reason must be acceptable to God; yet I must have added that so far as they were our works, so far they wanted the blood of Christ to wash away their defilements and to atone for their deficiencies. And therefore, even our best works can have no merit in them.

I should then have remonstrated to that worthy Lady to the following purpose: That if one who had laboured in the vineyard, I believed, full as much as any person since the days of the apostles—if such a man was not thought worthy of the mantle of love for any mistake he might have made, yet surely he had a right to expect that notice would have been given him to explain his own meaning before his judge pronounced sentence. This is a privilege granted to every supposed criminal in our courts of law, and where this is denied that court is no better than a court of inquisition.

But now, my dear brother, what effect such a letter might have had I pretend not to say. It would, at the least, have testified to that friendship which I have constantly had for you these twenty-five years.

May God direct us both, and your dear brother, in whatsoever may promote the salvation of mankind, and may our worst enemies be all brought to God.

¹While JW endorses this letter with a date of his response (and the *Wesley Banner* published transaction lists it as to JW), he was in Ireland from mid-March through mid-July. CW had apparently sent Perronet a copy of the manuscripts LH sent him on June 3, 1771, requesting a response. Perronet replied to CW, who sent the letter on to Bristol, where JW arrived on Aug. 6, 1771.

²Cf. Titus 2:14.

³Cf. Rom. 2:6, etc.

⁴2 Thess. 2:17.

You have my leave to make what use you please of this long epistle. May the Lord Jesus Christ be with all of us.

I am, my very dear brother,
Your's most affectionately,

Vin. Perronet

Endorsement: by JW, “a[nswere]d Aug. 10.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/472/15; *AM* 20 (1797): 253–54; *Wesley Banner* 1 (1849): 125–26.

Circular Letter from the Rev. John Wesley¹

Dublin
July 10, 1771

Dear Sir,

You desired my farther thoughts on those propositions which close the *Minutes* of our last Conference.

‘We have leaned too much toward Calvinism.’²

‘1. With regard to *man’s faithfulness*. Our Lord himself taught us to use the expression; and we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert it, on his authority, that if a man is not “faithful in the unrighteous mammon” God will not “give him the true riches”.’³

I think nothing farther need be said on this, as it is grounded on the express Word of God.

‘2. With regard to *working for life*. This also our Lord has expressly commanded us. “Labour” (literally, work) “for the meat that endureth to everlasting life.”⁴ And, in fact, every believer works *for* as well as *from* life.’ ‘Every believer.’

Of such only the proposition speaks, and who can doubt it?

‘3. We have received it as a maxim that “a man is to do nothing *in order to* justification”. Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favour with God should “cease from evil and learn to do well”.⁵ Whoever repents should do “works meet for repentance”.⁶ And if this is not *in order to* find favour, what does he do them for?’

And who can deny one line of this if he allows the Bible to be true?

Thus far, then, here is no ground for this marvellous outcry. Here is no heresy, but the words of truth and soberness.

‘Review the whole affair.

‘1. Who of us is *now* accepted of God?’ (I mean, who is now in his favour? The question does not refer to the *gaining* the favour of God, but the *being* therein at any given point of time.) ‘He that now believes in Christ with a loving and obedient heart.’

Well, and who can deny this? Who can find any fault either with the sentiment or the expression?

‘2. But who among those that never heard of Christ? He that “feareth God and worketh righteousness” according to the light he has.’ The very words of St. Peter: ‘Of a truth I perceive God is no respecter of persons. But in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him’—(δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστίν) is in a state of acceptance.’⁷

¹Debate over the 1770 *Minutes* continued. Walter Shirley was now circulating a public letter (June 1771, online) encouraging those who disagreed with the *Minutes* to attend the next Conference of JW’s preachers and voice their concern. John Fletcher had drawn Shirley’s letter to JW’s attention, and encouraged him to ‘remove stumbling blocks out of the way of the weak’ (Fletcher to JW, June 24, 1771; online). JW’s response was to print this letter, which he circulated to select persons and presented at the annual Conference in early Aug. in Bristol. CW was surely one of the persons sent a copy.

²See JW, *Works*, 10:392–94.

³Cf. Luke 16:11.

⁴John 6:27.

⁵Cf. Isa. 1:16–17.

⁶Acts 26:20.

⁷Acts 10:34–35 (the third Greek word in the original is misprinted: εστῖ).

Disprove this who can.

‘3. Is this the same with “he that is sincere”?’⁸ Nearly, if not quite.’

So I think. But I contend not for a word. You may either take it or leave it.

‘4. Is not this salvation by works? Not by the *merit* of works, but by works as a *condition*.’

By salvation I here mean final salvation. And who can deny that both inward good works (loving God and our neighbour) and outward good works (keeping his commandments) are a condition of this? What is this more or less than ‘Without holiness no man shall see the Lord’?⁹

‘5. What have we then been disputing about these thirty years? I am afraid *about words*.’

That is, so far as we have been disputing (as I did with Dr. [Thomas] Church) whether works be a condition of salvation.¹⁰ Yea, or of justification, suppose you take that term as our Lord does where (speaking of the last day) he says, ‘By thy words thou shalt be justified’ (Matt. 12:37). With justification as it means our first acceptance with God this proposition has nothing to do.

It is true thirty years ago I was very angry with Bishop Bull, that great light of the Christian church, because in his *Harmonica Apostolica* he distinguishes our first from our final justification, and affirms both inward and outward good works to be the condition of the latter, though not the former.¹¹

‘6. As to *merit* itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid, we are rewarded *according to our works*, yea, *because of our works*. How does this differ from *for the sake of our works*? And how differs this from *secundum merita operum*?¹² As our works *deserve*? Can you split this hair? I doubt I cannot.’

I follow after truth. And wherever I find it, I not only embrace it but own it in the face of the sun. If any will show me this is not the truth, I will retract it. But let us consider it part by part. 1) ‘We were dreadfully afraid of the word *merit*.’ None can deny this. 2) ‘We are rewarded (at the last day) *according to our works*.’ Neither can this be denied. 3) ‘Yea, *because of our works*.’ Witness Abraham, the grand pattern of believers: ‘Because thou hast done this thing, ... n blessing I will bless thee’ (Gen. 22:16–17). 4) ‘How differs this from *secundum merita operum*? As our works *deserve*?’ I say again, ‘I cannot split this hair.’ Whoever can has my free leave. And afterwards let him split his throat with crying out, ‘Oh dreadful heresy!’

‘7. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions is drawn from matter of fact. God does in fact justify those who by their own confession neither feared God nor wrought righteousness.¹³ Is not this an exception to the general rule? It is a doubt if God makes any exception at all.’

But methinks I would rather answer: We are sliding away from our question, which is not how we *gain* but how *retain* the favour of God.

‘8. Does not talking of a justified or a sanctified *state* tend to mislead men? Almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in one moment? Whereas we are every hour and every moment pleasing or displeasing to God *according to our works*—according to the whole of our inward tempers and our outward behaviour.’

Perhaps the former part of this sentence is a little too strong. Instead of ‘almost naturally’ I would say ‘very frequently’. But the latter contains a truth of the deepest importance, and one that cannot be too much inculcated. Every hour God is more or less pleased with us according to the whole of our inward and outward behaviour.

⁸Cf. Minutes (1746), §19, *Works*, 10:172.

⁹Heb. 12:14.

¹⁰See *An Answer to the Rev. Mr. Church’s Remarks*, II.1–18, *Works*, 9:95–111; and *The Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained*, II.1–6, *Works*, 9:175–83.

¹¹See JW, *Journal*, June 24, 1741, *Works*, 19:202–03.

¹²‘According to the merits of works.’

¹³See 1 Pet. 2:17; Rev. 14:7; Heb. 11:23.

If any candid person desires it, I am ready to explain myself more largely on any of the preceding heads. I am

Your affectionate servant,

JOHN WESLEY

Source: printed circular; surviving copy, Wesley's Chapel (London), LDWMM 1997/6671/2.

From John Southcote¹

Bristol
July 23, 1771

Reverend Sir,

Your kind and unexpected favour gave me much pleasure.² I am glad that you are all well, and that I am in your remembrance. Thanks be to Christ that I am in his blessed remembrance also. I have often been about writing you, but as I had nothing to say but of myself, and as I'm apt to say too much on this subject, I laid the thought aside. "*incidit in scyllam*"³ However, as you are pleased to enquire how I go on, I come now to inform you.

Since you left us I have seen good days, having had a little glimpse of him who is altogether lovely, even Jesus who was slain for us. For many years I have heard of him and spake of him; but alas, did not really know him! I have long groaned under an evil nature. But I have seen the Lord. He is the burden of my song. My glorying is in him. My religion and experience is him and him alone. I have had a religion and experience, but it was not him. He was not the beginning and end of it. And now I am at a loss of what to say or render to him.

Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands our life, our soul, our all.⁴

But there are some seasons when those divine and soul-transporting joys are suspended, and the poor soul feels itself as it really is, inexpressibly weak and helpless. And then, without clamouring with the Lord for those, I endeavour resigning myself just as I am to him, whom I call and even then feel to be my husband. He hears and pities helpless souls.

Thus I creep on, being deeply assured that without him I am nothing, nor can do nothing. All my safety, strength, and all is in a continued union with him, as the branch in the vine. This separated is nothing indeed. And this divine union with him, who is all a poor sinner can want, can only exist from moment to moment. Look and we are saved. Cease to look, or advert to another object, and we are not saved.

What I now chiefly want is the spirit of Jesus, that spirit which cried, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do."⁵ How easy to love them who love us, as well as them who do not oppose us. But to embrace them who do [oppose], to seek their good, to manifest (not in words but) in deed that spirit which was in Jesus, is what I want. I mean to a greater degree. Jesus sought, laid himself in the way of poor sinners. This I want to do, if by any means some may be saved. I have attempted saying something of the saviour to perishing souls and this sort of preaching seems to carry a divine testimony and savour with it.

We have had a prophet among us (young Mr. Hill), but many of the religious, as well as others,

¹John Southcote (c. 1739–1777) was a master at the Kingswood School until 1760, when he opened his own school in Bristol, initially in the Horse Fair, and from 1764 over the old assembly room in St Augustine's Back; by 1775 he is listed at 33 Broadmead, where he died aged 38 on July 3, 1777. See *WHS* 18 (1932), 127–28; and Jonathan Barry (ed.), *The Diary of William Dyer: Bristol in 1762* (Bristol Record Society, 2012), 212.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³I.e., "*incidit in scyllam, cupiens vitare charybdis*"; from the story of Odysseus, caught in the challenge between the rocks Scylla and Charybdis.

⁴Cf. Isaac Watts, "Crucifixion to the World," st. 4; included by JW in *CPH* (1738), 39.

⁵Luke 23:34.

call him mad.⁶ But God is with him, and the sound of his Master's feet behind him. Many, many souls have been cut to the heart, even of the baser sort. I rejoice that Christ is preached by him, and that the world goes after him. He has been an instrument of good to Mr. [James] Rouquet. What a change! Blessed be God, even our God, forever and ever.

Your friend [William] Pine is much stirred up. He wants the Lord to live and dwell in him. "I have been mistaken," he says. The same discovery brother Procter has made, and is actually crying, "What shall I do to be saved?" There are a few others in the same condition. We have reason to bless God for sending brother Benson amongst us.⁷ He informs me that many in Wiltshire are likewise stirred up.

My wife thanks you for your remembrance of her, and begs her duty to you. She has been very poorly since her lying in. Her daughter is well and hearty.⁸ She would have sent Mrs. Wesley's oil case but her illness prevented. She hopes to do it shortly.

Mr. Baynes is ordained, and came off with great honour and respect.⁹ The Lord was with him all the time.

Some of our friends have been tossed by the appearance of the storm,¹⁰ but I hope not shipwrecked. I am told that some of the principals are ashamed of themselves. How good is it to be ashamed of even an apparent bad spirit. I am, reverend sir,

Your dutiful son,

J. Southcote

Endorsement: by CW, "Southcot / July 23 / 1771."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/127.¹¹

⁶Rowland Hill (1744–1833), the sixth son of Sir Rowland Hill, 1st Baronet (d. 1783), was educated at Shrewsbury, Eton College, and St John's College, Cambridge (BA, 1769). At Cambridge he came under Methodist influence and became an evangelical preacher. This led to hesitance about ordaining him in the Church of England. He was currently preaching itinerantly, and maintaining close relationship with James Rouquet. Hill was finally ordained deacon by the bishop of Bath and Wells in 1773, and given a curacy at Kingston St. Mary, Somerset. But his continuing itinerant efforts led to denial of ordination as priest and Hill went on to found and minister at independent chapels in Wotton under Edge (Gloucestershire), London (Surrey Chapel), and elsewhere.

⁷Joseph Benson (1748–1821) was appointed classics master at Kingswood School in 1766, while still in his teens. In 1769 Benson entered St. Edmund Hall, Oxford, but was denied Anglican orders because of his Methodist sympathies. After serving for a short time as headmaster of the Countess of Huntingdon's ministerial training college at Trevecca, he joined JW's Methodist itinerancy in 1771.

⁸From baptismal records we know that John's wife was named Anna. Their daughter Anna, recently born, would die before the age of 3, being buried on Dec. 9, 1773.

⁹William Baynes, another former master at Kingswood school, was ordained a deacon in the Church of England on July 6, 1771 and priest in June 1772.

¹⁰The debate over the 1770 *Minutes* with the Calvinists.

¹¹For 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

Kingswood
August 3, 1771

[[Dear Brother,]]

I will not throw away Thomas Rankin on the people of London. He shall go where they know the value of him.¹

We cannot put out what we never put in. I do not use the word “merit.”² I *never did*. I *never did*, *neither* do now contend for the use of it. But I ask you or any other a plain question. And do not cry ‘Murder!’, but give me an answer. What is the difference between *merere* and ‘to *deserve*’? Or between ‘*deserving*’ and *meritum*? I say still, I cannot tell. Can *you*? Can Mr. [Walter] Shirley? Or any man living? In asking this question, I neither plead for merit nor against it. I have nothing to do with it. I have declared a thousand times there is no goodness in man till he is justified. No merit either, before or after—that is, taking the word in its proper sense. For in a loose sense *meritorious* means no more than *rewardable*.

As to reprobation, seeing they have drawn the sword, I throw away the scabbard. I send you a specimen. Let fifteen hundred of them be printed as soon as you please.³

Nothing was ever yet expended out of the yearly subscription without being immediately set down by the secretary. I never took a shilling from that fund yet.

What you advise with regard to our behaviour toward opposers exactly agrees with my sentiments.

[[My Lady]] [Huntingdon] I find, is on the high ropes still.⁴ I am full of business, as you may suppose. So

Adieu!

Endorsement: by CW; ‘Aug. 3. 1771 / B[rother] of Merit’.

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/37.

¹Rankin had been assigned in London; he was moved to the western Cornwall circuit at the 1771 Conference.

²CW had apparently sent JW a response to his circular letter on the controversy over the 1770 *Minutes* (dated July 10, 1771; see above). CW’s letter is not known to survive.

³JW, *The Consequence Proved* (1771), *Works*, 13:424–48.

⁴*OED*, ‘in a disdainful, or enraged mood’.

From Anne (Stone) Barnard

Nassau Street, Dublin
August 18, 1771

Reverend Sir,

I received your last favour duly,¹ and should sooner have acquainted you of it and returned my thanks but for the certainty you seemed to promise me of a visit from your brother. He has too much business of high importance to think of ceremonious visits, especially as he is now attacked by his former friends.² I conclude he's preparing to make defence and fortify his stronghold. I feel very diminutive when I am asked to deliver my opinion, and know my incapacity even to speak my thoughts. I have not seen the conferences you mention, but shall now enquire after them. I have been all this month about seven miles from town, to give my little children the advantage of air and whey. But I heard thrice a week from home and should willingly have returned to town, had any notice been sent of an enquiry after me—and hope to be remembered by him among those friends for whom he asks for pardon and acceptance at the throne of grace.

I know not whether I ought to rejoice, but I cannot help being pleased that he's prevented from going to America. I fear *they* are not properly disposed to receive any *good* impressions; there is too much haughty, selfish, licentiousness pervading there, under the specious title of “liberty,” to yield to any kind of conviction at least to confess themselves mistaken. I doubt not but his good intentions will be accepted and rewarded, and his friends will have the satisfaction of seeing him preserved from the dangers and fatigues of so hazardous an undertaking.

It is impossible not to lament the consequences that too frequently follow a *disposition* and a *power* to be serviceable to the cause of *religion in women*. The rareness of such a function in the present degenerate age occasions too great encomiums upon the person who is acknowledged devout and honourable, and makes them forget that their office is to *wash the feet* and not direct the paths.

Popery is the wood, hay, and stubble which will perish in the burning, though piled upon the true and the solid foundation.³ But one of the first principles taught and extracted from its professors is a degree of humility little known or practised by professors of Reformation.

My sincere respects and good wishes attend Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley and Charles. Your brother and self have my constant grateful prayers for the answer of yours, and all the comforts of your conscientious and labourious discharge of your arduous designation. I am, most sincerely, reverend sir,

Your faithful friend and servant,

Barnard

Address: “To / the Revd Mr. Charles Wesley / at the Foundrey Moorfields / London.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Aug. 18. 1771 / M[rs]. Barnard / wise remark of honourable woman.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP 1/3.

¹Apparently the letter of June 1, 1771; which is not known to survive.

²I.e., the attack of LH, Walter Shirley, and others on the 1770 *Minutes*.

³See 1 Cor. 3:12.

From James Hutton¹

[London]
September 9, 1771

My Dear Charles,

I got home wet (with the rain), but well pleased that I had spent an hour with you lovingly. It is [a] pity that we have been these 32 years so estranged from one another. What should hinder our living the short remains of our life in the same friendly footing as of late? It seem to me that kindness of heart towards one another is pleasing to our dear common Lord. We will open our hearts to his Spirit, that such may be the fruits, and beg him to keep them open to his loving, kind, gentle, and affectionate Spirit. We will mutually wish one another the healthy Spirit of his grace and all the blessings he has merited for us, and that much good may be done in the Lord's vineyard.

Each of us will try to please him according to the light, heart, and grace bestowed upon each of us. If he be but pleased with us, it is well. We have no right nor call to find fault with one another. Surely each has faults enough of his own to be ashamed of, and every labourer in any of the great Shepherd's sheepfolds has enough to do, to do his duty to those immediately under his care, without going out of his way to criticise and condemn those in other folds. His field, for the good of souls, is large enough for a hundred sets of brave and faithful labourers. There is room enough, and all we shepherd boys have to learn every day of our common Master. And he has bid us love one another, and has taken care to teach us what kind of spirit we should be of.

I am learning every day, and find reason to be much ashamed of the fruits which my own spirit has but too often produced. And now henceforth my aim is that the knowledge he gives me of his death and love shall draw me closer and closer into his Spirit, into his vortex, till the same mind be throughout in me which was in him.² Amen.

My hearty love to your dear wife and children. I am

My dear Charles's

James Hutton

Source: manuscript copies for records; London, Moravian Church Archive and Library.³

¹In early Sept. 1771 CW and James Hutton met by chance. The two exchanged letters and visits over a couple of months, exploring the possibility of renewing some type of connection. Sadly, a sense of remaining differences ended the conversation.

²See Phil. 2:5.

³This letter is preserved in two manuscripts. One is a simple copy of the letter; the other within a larger narrative of the exchange between Hutton and CW. They both appear to be in a secondary hand.

The Rev. John Fletcher to the Rev. Walter Shirley¹

Madeley
September 11, 1771

Reverend and Dear Sir,

It is extremely proper, nay, it as highly necessary, that the public should be informed how much like a minister of the Prince of peace, and a meek, humble, loving brother in the gospel of Christ you behaved at the Conference. Had I been there, I would gladly have taken upon me to proclaim these tidings of joy to the lovers of Zion's peace. Your conduct at that time of love is certainly the best excuse for the hasty step you had taken, as my desire of stopping my *Vindication* upon hearing of it is the best apology I can make for my severity to you.²

I am not averse at all, sir, to your publishing the passages you mention out of my letters to Mr. [James] Ireland.³ They show my peculiar love and respect for you, which I shall at all times think an honour, and at this juncture shall feel a peculiar pleasure, to see proclaimed to the world. They apologize for my calling myself a *lover of quietness*, when I unfortunately prove a *son of contention*. And they demonstrate that I am not altogether void of the fear that becomes an awkward, inexperienced surgeon, when he ventures to open a vein in the arm of a person for whom he has the highest regard. How natural is it for him to tremble, lest by missing the intended vein, and pricking an unseen artery, he should have done irreparable mischief, instead of an useful operation.

But while you do me the kindness of publishing those passages, permit me, sir, to do Mr. Wesley the justice of informing him I had also written to Mr. Ireland that, "whether my letters were suppressed or not, the Minutes *must* be vindicated; that Mr. Wesley owed it to the Church, to the *real Protestants*, to all his societies, and to his own aspersed character; and that after all, the controversy did not seem to me to be so much whether the Minutes should stand as whether the antinomian gospel of Dr. [Tobias] Crisp should prevail over the practical gospel of Jesus Christ."

I must also, sir, beg leave to let my vindicated friend know that in the very letter where I so earnestly entreated Mr. Ireland to stop the publication of my letters to you, and offered to take the whole expense of the impression upon myself, though I should be obliged to sell my last shirt to defray it, I added that, "If they were published, I must look upon it as a *necessary evil* or *misfortune*" (which of the two words I used I do not justly recollect). A *misfortune* for you and me, who must appear ill-consistent to the world—you, sir, with your *Sermons*;⁴ and I with my title-page; and nevertheless necessary to vindicate misrepresented truth, defend an eminent minister of Christ, and stem the torrent of antinomianism.

¹While this letter is not addressed to CW, it is included here because it is the only surviving record of one of CW's letters to Fletcher. It also provides important context of the debate over the 1770 *Minutes* at the time. Walter Shirley emerged as the leading critic of the "anti-Calvinist" section of the 1770 *Minutes*. In June 1771 he circulated a letter calling on other Calvinist Methodist to attend JW's annual Conference with his preachers in August, to protest that section (see Shirley, *Narrative*, 7–8). At the Conference a declaration was adopted that temporarily appeased Shirley and others; but the issuing of Fletcher's *Vindication* reignited the debate, and Shirley's *Narrative* was published to protest that he and others had been misled.

²John Fletcher, *A Vindication of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Last Minutes; occasioned by a Circular Printed Letter ... in Five Letters* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1771).

³See Shirley, *Narrative*, 19.

⁴Walter Shirley, *Twelve Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions* (Dublin: Johnson, 1762; 3rd edn. enlarged, 1770).

It may not be improper also to observe to you, sir, that when I presented Mr. Wesley with my *Vindication*, I begged he would correct it, and take away whatever might be unkind or too sharp—urging that though I meant no unkindness, I was not a proper judge of what I had written under peculiarly delicate and trying circumstances, as well as in a great hurry; and did not therefore dare to trust either my pen, my head, or my heart.⁵ He was no sooner gone than I sent a letter after him, to repeat and urge the same request, and he wrote me word he had “expunged every tart expression.” *If he has* (for I have not yet seen what alterations his friendly pen has made), I am reconciled to their publication; and *that he has*, I have reason to hope from the letters of two judicious London friends, who calmed my fears, lest I should have treated you with unkindness.

One of them says, “I reverence Mr. Shirley for his candid acknowledgment of his hastiness in judging. I commend the Calvinists at the Conference for their justice to Mr. Wesley and their acquiescence in the declaration of the preachers in connection with him.⁶ But is that declaration, however dispersed, a remedy adequate to the evil done not only to Mr. Wesley but to the cause and work of God? Several Calvinists, in eagerness of malice, had dispersed their calumnies through the three kingdoms. A truly excellent person herself, in her mistaken zeal, had represented him as *a papist unmasked*, an *heretic*, an *apostate*.⁷ A clergyman of the first reputation informs me a poem on his apostasy is just coming out. Letters have been sent to every serious churchman and dissenter through the land together with the *Gospel Magazine*. Great are the shoutings, “and now that he lieth, let him rise up no more!”⁸ This is all the cry. His dearest friends and children are staggered and scarce know what to think. You, in your corner, cannot conceive the mischief that has been done and is still doing. But your letters, in the hand of providence, may answer the good ends you proposed by writing them. You have not been too severe to dear Mr. Shirley, moderate Calvinists themselves being judges; but very kind and friendly to set a good mistaken man right, and probably to preserve him from the like rashness as long as he lives. Be not troubled therefore, but cast your care upon the Lord.”⁹

My other friend says, “Considering what harm the circular letter has done, and what an useless satisfaction Mr. Shirley has given by his vague acknowledgement, it is no more than just and equitable that your letters should be published.”

Now, sir, as I never saw that *acknowledgment*, nor the softening *corrections* made by Mr. Wesley in my *Vindication*; as I was not informed of some of the above-mentioned particulars when I was so eager to prevent the publication of my letters; and as I have reason to think that through the desire of an immediate peace, the festering wound was rather skinned over than probed to the bottom; all I can say about this publication is what I wrote to our common friend: namely, that “I must look upon it as a *NECESSARY evil*.”

I am glad, sir, you do not direct your letter to Mr. [Thomas] Oliver who was so busy in publishing my *Vindication*, for by a letter I have just received from Bristol, I am informed he did not hear how desirous I was to call it in till he had actually given out before a whole congregation it would be sold. Besides, he would have pleaded with smartness that he never approved of a patched up peace, that he bore his testimony against it at the time it was made, and had a personal right to produce *my* arguments, since both parties refused to hear *his* at the Conference.

If your letter is friendly, sir, and you print it in the same size with my *Vindication*, I shall gladly buy £10 worth of the copies, and order them to be stitched with my *Vindication* and given gratis to the purchasers of it; as well to do you justice as to convince the world that we make a loving war;

⁵Fletcher presented his manuscript to JW when JW came through Madeley on July 28, 1771.

⁶See JW, *Works*, 10:403–04.

⁷LH; see CW to JW, July 6, 1771.

⁸Ps. 41:8.

⁹This friend is CW; see Fletcher to CW, Sept. 21, 1771

and also to demonstrate how much I regard your respectable character, and honour your dear person. Mr. Wesley's heart is, I am persuaded, too full of brotherly love to deny me the pleasure of thus showing you how sincerely I am, rev. and dear sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. F.

Source: published transcription; John Fletcher, *A Second Check to Antinomianism* (London: New Chapel, 1771), vi–xii.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
September 21, 1771

My Dear Friend,

I was a good deal encouraged by your first letter.¹ I made use of part of it; i.e. I transcribed one half of it (without mentioning your name) in a letter I wrote to Mr. Shirley,² who asked leave to publish some passage of the letters I had wrote to Mr. [James] Ireland, desiring him suppress the publishing of my letters to Mr. Shirley. Mr. Shirley is printing a *Narrative* to turn off the eyes of the public upon the publishers of my letters, and exculpate himself. It is to be out next week.³

On the other hand I have a letter from Mr. [James] Ireland, “A second edition of your *Letters* is just out,”⁴ says he. “I have one by me. If I have my senses, this is not heathen honesty. If Mr. Wesley, as I suggest to the stewards, had taken away the fifth letter and so altered the others that nothing personal remained, he would have acted right. But how would his conduct now appear in this print when Mr. Shirley’s *Narrative* gets into the world. If I am wrong, do pity me and tell me plainly wherein I err.”

Mrs. [Martin] Madan, [Richard] Hill, and Powys⁵ have brought from Paris a dialogue between Mr. Madan and a popish priest to whom he showed the Minutes, and who condemned them as leaning much more to Pelagianism and an exorbitant dependence on merit than the papist do.⁶ This dialogue was to have been printed with the *Narrative*, but [at] Mr. Shirley and Mr. Ireland request will leave it out. In the meantime, after having wrote to Mr. Shirley that I am reconciled to the publication of my letters and look upon it as a necessary evil, I add that if his *Narrative* is kind and he chooses to print it in the same size as the *Vindication*, I will purchase a number of copies and get them stitched with the *Vindication* and given gratis. I have received no answer.

I wrote last week to the printer not to proceed to a second edition without my corrections, alterations, and additions. But I fear my letter came too late. I am surprised to see so many blunders in my *Letters*. I saw a copy last week and find your brother has added nothing, only in some places shortened them, some times a little for the worse (as I think), but in general for the better. How sick I am of the world of profession. Lord make me heartily sick of myself.

Your brother has corrected my other book and will print it for the benefit of the poor.⁷ But I should be glad to see his corrections. I shall take about 600 copies to disperse in my neighbourhood, and pay for them only paper and printing. Indeed your brother is so kind as to say I shall have them without money, if I please. But I would not make a hard bargain with the poor.

I should be glad you were at Bristol to correct the press according to your own old promise, for I doubt they have no good corrector. I would have designed to make some important alterations and

¹See CW to Fletcher, c. Sept. 8, 1771.

²Possibly Fletcher to Walter Shirley, Sept. 11, 1771 (included above).

³Walter Shirley, *A Narrative of the Principal Circumstances Relative to the Rev. Mr. Wesley’s Late Conference ... with the Declaration then Agreed to by Mr. Wesley and Fifty-Three Preachers then in Connexion with Him* (Bath: T. Mills, 1771).

⁴I.e., Fletcher, *Vindication ... in Five Letters*, 2nd edn. (Bristol: W. Pine, 1771).

⁵Thomas Powys (1725–75), a supporter of the Calvinist wing of the revival.

⁶This was published in early Dec. 1771 as Richard Hill, *A Conversation Between R. Hill, the Rev. Mr. Madan, and the Superior of a Convent of English Benedictine Monks at Paris ... Relative to Some Doctrinal Minutes Advanced by the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley and Others* (London: E. and C. Dilly, 1771).

⁷John Fletcher, *Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense; or, A Rational Demonstration of Man’s Corrupt and Lost Estate* (Bristol: W. Pine, and sold at New Chapel, 1772).

additions, especially to that part of the second letter where I speak of antinomianism. I have got my additions almost ready. I describe the antinomianism of preachers, that of hearers, and am more explicit upon the consequences of both. But their hurry in reprinting without consulting me will prevent the blow I meditated to the wolf in lamb's clothing, and bring one upon their own head. I have seen Mr. Shirley's acknowledgment, and it seems to me rather unmeaning, or not adequate to the insult given by the circular letter. But I am party, and so no proper judge. The Lord bring me safe out of the scrape. I hope you will not leave me without your advice. I shall let you know what turn matters take. When I wrote the letters, and upon merit, I saw a beauty in works which I had never seen before. But somehow I am fallen into the antinomian ditch again. In many things I must be a Baxterian.⁸ Him I admire most for consistency and labours of all the divines of the last century. Blessed Jesus let me admire thee so as to imitate and follow thee every moment.

I sent to your brother last week a copy of a letter I wrote to Mr. Shirley,⁹ with liberty to use it if the world bore hard upon him for allowing the publication of the *Minutes*. I begged he would write to Mr. Shirley and offer to leave out any obnoxious passage of my letter he should point out, if they were reprinted, but fear he has not done it. The Lord enable you to pray for us fighters.

Ἐρροτῶ ἐν Χριστῶ.¹⁰

My blessing to my goddaughter [Sarah Jr.]. The Lord be with her mother and brothers and fill us full of the mind that was in him.

To Mr. [Joseph] Benson,

I thank you for your letter. The salve you put upon my back will not prevent me from feeling the cudgel, though it may assuage the smart. I am grown so exceeding legal that faith not *working*—and that with *love* too¹¹—appears to me worse than unbelief. All Satan's advantages, or most of them, are gotten by driving us to extremes. Either we will do all, or nothing. The safest is certainly to feel that without Christ we can do nothing,¹² this is repentance; and that with him we can do all things,¹³ this is faith, and this faith will work righteousness, yea subdue kingdoms.¹⁴ When God apprehends you one way, take care not to apprehend him another. Reverence and submission become us in his sight.

I hear nothing from our poor college. I am going (by her Ladyship's approbation) to get Aldridge the curacy I spoke to you of when here.¹⁵ God make you little; simple as a weaned child, yet bold for God as a lion; and lowly and meek like our common Lord. My kind love to Mr. [Alexander] Mather and Mr. [William] Ley, if he is yet in London.

Farewell in Jesus. I am,
Yours,

⁸I.e. a follower of Richard Baxter. See JW's abridgement of Baxter's *Aphorism on Justification in Works*, 12:45–88.

⁹The letter of Sept. 11, 1771 already mentioned.

¹⁰Farewell in Christ

¹¹See Gal. 5:6.

¹²See John 15:5.

¹³See Phil. 4:13.

¹⁴See Heb. 11:33.

¹⁵William Aldridge (1737–97) was refused ordination in the Church of England in 1771. Instead he served in LH's connexion for some years, and then as minister of an Independent congregation on Jewry Street in London.

J. Fletcher

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

Postmark: “25/SE.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Sept 21. 1771 / Fletcher.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/37.¹⁶

¹⁶A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 280–82.

From the Rev. John Wesley

[Bristol]
c. September 23, 1771

[...] I feel a great love to James Hutton and Francis Okeley, and shall be glad of any intercourse with them.¹

Source: excerpt in manuscript copy for records; London, Moravian Church Archive and Library.²

¹Sept. 26, 1771. Charles Wesley came to see Hutton, breakfasted, stayed about half an hour, and went away in a hurry. He pulled out a letter from John Wesley to who he had probably wrote that he had seen James Hutton and Francis Okeley, and read those words of John Wesley to Charles Wesley:

²Narrative (in secondary hand) of exchange between James Hutton and CW in Sept.–Oct. 1771.

From James Hutton

[London]
September 26, 1771

My Dear Charles,

Excuse the paper. Your visit here was so short.¹ You hinted a single word about *mistrust*. I heard no more and the maid was in the room. Have you anything further to say about *mistrust*? Pray, speak out with a man whose heart is loving.

You said something also about the *proud*. Do you suspect me also therein? If so, you do me rather injustice in some degree, for though pride is universal in all human beings, yet I watch against it and execrate it in myself whenever I discover it. If you can discover it in me, you will do me a real service in showing it [to] me. For I shall not allow or excuse myself in any such temper, but hasten to get it washed away. I am far from having any reason at all to be proud, but infinite reason for the contrary. Thus I hope you will find me when you can be more open with me.

It seems to me you are somehow rather constrained in your spirit when we are together. I hope that will wear off, for I should be sorry that you should not be quite at your ease in spirit when I am with you. Mine is a spirit inclined to tender affection, and when I come to you it is as a loving child going to its play-fellow. May I lay that seeming constraint of yours to the multiplicity of other thoughts foreign to my person? You have seemed to me to be rather ill at ease. Can I help to ease your spirit in any way? You desired me last Saturday to be your “John Gambold.” Are you disposed to be my old “Charles Wesley”? I am, to be your affectionately loving “James Hutton,” and I offer you my love. You in your sphere of action and I in mine can love one another as he likes we should.² Pray read again that long letter I wrote you about a fortnight ago.³ Hostilities of every kind might cease between you and the Brethren.

Shall I bury in oblivion entirely all what has ill-naturedly passed through the pen of your brother, as I wish him to do whatever may on my side have offended him? I for my part (and I think I can answer for my Brethren too) am ready and willing so to do, and I wish to begin a new life from henceforward.⁴ To try how much of the love of you and your brother can be enjoyed by

Your James Hutton.

Source: manuscript copies for records; London, Moravian Church Archive and Library.⁵

¹The narrative notes that CW visited Hutton briefly on Sept. 26.

²The following appears in the copy of the letter, but struck through. It is not in the narrative copy; thus likely not in the holograph: “I heard once that you had some years ago warned your people at Bristol against the Moravians, even after you had been on a friendly foot with brother [George] Trancker there. Perhaps this was the story of some mistaken idle tale bearer. Hostilities of that kind might well cease on all sides. Shall I mention to you some small apprehensions. If I see John Wesley, will he not mistake something and print it in some *Journal* what he might recollect? Shall I try to get rid of this fear?”

³I.e., his letter of Sept. 9.

⁴Here appears another section in the draft that is struck through: “You will see that this is a confidential letter, not to be communicated to him, for I am not yet embarked with him on that footing we may hope for. With you I am, and shall not be unwilling to try how much he and I can learn to love.”

⁵This letter is preserved in two manuscripts. One is a copy of the letter; the other part of a narrative of the exchange between Hutton and CW Sept.–Oct. 1771.

From James Hutton

[London]
September 30 [1771]

My Dear Charles,

I was at your house today on purpose, to have the pleasure of seeing you, having not received your letter of the 28th till this evening.¹ I came home disappointed and tired. Your letter gave me great pleasure and I would not delay writing to you to thank you for it, though perhaps I may not send it till tomorrow evening, as you will not be at home till next Wednesday.

I thank you that you are without mistrust. That is a sign of love indeed. I am sorry your body is so much worn out. If I might wish, I would that you spent several years right happily on earth in the enjoyment of his love and that of all his children, and then in peace and love and quite *satur*² withdraw to him and the blessed above. But it is a loss to have been on earth without the love of all his children who are within reach.

My warm love to your person could not in the year 1739 outweigh what I thought to be my duty. But I might have (in the method of showing my faithfulness to God as I thought) behaved better towards you than I did. Though I *then* thought your love to me faded first, before mine to you. *Now* I choose rather to blame myself than say anything in excuse.

When I have a dream that I like, I am vexed at losing it and wise to dream so often. The dream of friendship is one of those which I fain would dream often and re-dream. And it is my hobby horse and shall be as long as I live, God willing. Though at the same time I hold fast that old maxim of our Saviour's of forsaking even father and mother in case of competition. With you I hope there will be no such competition, and therefore *vivat Amicitia nostra!*³ The love of the Friend of sinners towards us, when believed, felt, and enjoyed and walked in, most certainly produces friendship on earth. I thank him that he has given you love towards me, which he gave you [in] 1734, and has not taken it away since, from neither of us I believe. Quarrels, and differences, and faults may seem so to do, but what he gives does not often quite fail, and has not quite failed between us, notwithstanding our mutual displeasure. Every symptom of the renewal of your tendency to friendship in these 31 years has been constantly received by me with hopes on my side of its going farther. And that it went not farther was always a great disappointment to my heart, which caught eagerly after your heart. Here you have the true history of my heart and wishes during this long interval, and therefore I know that my love did not quite fail.

How we shall for the rest of our days enjoy our present friendship I wish to know. I will take every opportunity I can of so doing. And if I have not many, let our hearts in themselves cultivate thoughts of friendship towards one another such as he likes should be, who prayed to his Father (John 17) for a deeper friendship and love in his disciples which beggars all description. Here I wish to meet you my dear Charles, and follow you as well as I can, for the path is sweet and very pleasant to my taste, which cannot endure anything lukewarm.

I am, with love to your dear wife [Sarah],

Your James.

Source: manuscript copy for records; London, Moravian Church Archive and Library.

¹CW to James Hutton, Sept. 28, 1771; where CW mentioned he would be out of town.

²“Sated” or “well fed.”

³“Long live our friendship.”

From James Hutton

[London]
October 8 [1771]

Wrote to Charles Wesley to know if he had received this letter [of September 30] and when he would be at leisure for a visit either of James Hutton to Charles Wesley or Charles Wesley to James Hutton, as John [Wesley] was come, who might naturally take up more of his time.

Source: manuscript summary for records; London, Moravian Church Archive and Library.¹

¹At bottom of copy of Hutton's letter to CW of Sept. 30.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
October 13, 1771

My Dear Friend,

I thank you for yours.¹ I am quite reconciled with the publication of my letters.² And as a proof of it, I shall back them by three more, and so clear my head of antinomianism.³ Lord clear my heart of it, for it overflows with that unsuspected evil. My sixth letter shall go by the next post, directed to your brother, for his and your corrections. The subject appeared to me of importance as I considered it. It is the doctrine of justification by holiness—the Quakers’ doctrine placed upon an evangelical foundation. Should we be able to maintain our ground here, we should be doctrinally impregnable. What I have wrote satisfies my judgement, but whether it will yours and that of the impartial public I do not know, and leave you to decide and guess. Do not be afraid to be a severe Aristarchus.⁴ Severity here is the best extreme. What I hinted at was taking off some things which injured the connection, without restoring it. Against this you may easily guard. This letter is merely doctrinal. The next will be chiefly personal. The last chiefly practical. Attend to truth in reading the first, and to love in reading the second, and to both in reading the third. If you let blunders pass on either head, you will be partaker of my sins.

I shall send the letter by the post. It will cost three or four shillings. Whether it is worth postage, I can’t tell. I should think so if it contains nothing but truth. I would stay for an opportunity of sending by a private hand, but I want to make an end of the affair. Hannibal, you know, lost all for not going directly to Rome after the victory of Cannae. We must therefore lose no time, and carry war farther into the middle of the antinomian entrenchments. If we stand it we shall have peace, by hook or by crook, by fear or by conviction.

The last page of this sheet contains a friendly note that I think it proper to insert to prevent the good Calvinists being often at some things that bear pretty hard upon their scheme. I hope you will correct and see it past[ed] in its proper place.

Offences must come, but we cannot be too careful not to give them room. Do you know that my heart fails me about my tract on original sin, though your brother has corrected it.⁵ I sent him last week 20 guineas towards the printing, and the next post I wrote the printer not to put it in the press till you return to Bristol—that you may both recorrect the manuscript and correct the press. For as I design to give it to our gentry and clergy, I should be glad they might have nothing but truth to cavil about.

Mr. [Walter] Shirley was going to print with the *Narrative* the account of the *Conversation* between the popish priest and Mr. Madan etc. about the [1770] *Minutes*. Consult with your brother about printing or not printing the copy of my last private letter to Mr. Shirley about the passage he quotes in his *Narrative* from my letters to Mr. Ireland.⁶ You are engaged in it, for I quote part of your letter. Your brother has a copy, if he has not lost it. Should it be printed, you must take off the epithet “poisonous to calumnies.”⁷

¹This letter is not known to survive

²I.e., Fletcher, *Vindication ... in Five Letters* (1771).

³These appeared in Fletcher, *Second Check ... in Three Letters* (1771).

⁴Aristarchus of Thessalonica, a “fellow labourer” with Paul, Philemon 1:24.

⁵I.e., Fletcher, *Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense* (1772).

⁶See Fletcher to Walter Shirley, Sept. 11, 1771 (above); Fletcher ended up printing it in the preface to his *Second Check*.

⁷This epithet does not appear in Fletcher’s published transcription in *Second Check*.

Mr. [Martin] Madan gave to a friend the answer to the *Minutes* in the words of your brother.⁸ That friend sent it [to] me. I bestow a note upon that performance in the sixth letter to Mr. Shirley. Whether it is worth printing Mr. Wesley must decide.

When I have got rid of my letters, I shall read [Richard] Baxter again. I think him the John Wesley of the last century. It is not every century that produces such. The Lord crown all his gifts in your brother, by sinking him to the depths of childlike humility!

I hope to get one of Lady Huntingdon's students ordained for the next parish to mine at the next ordination.⁹

You have your enemies, as well as you brother. They complain of your love for music, company, fine people, great folks, and of the wane of your former zeal and frugality. I need not put you in mind to cut off sinful appearances. You were taught to do this before I knew anything of the matter. Only see you abound more and more to stop the mouth of your adversaries and of your jealous friends. My Christian love to your household and Sally. I am happy in your prayers and those of our friends in London.

P.S. Let Mr. John Wesley see this letter, as it will save writing to him some parts of it.

Address: "To Mr. C. Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "Fletcher / Oct. 13 / 1772 [sic]."

Source: holograph; Pitts Library (Emory), Charles Wesley Family Papers (MSS 159), 1/8.¹⁰

⁸JW's printed circular of July 10, 1771, *Works*, 28:395–98 (and above).

⁹William Aldridge; see Fletcher's note to Joseph Benson in the letter of Sept. 21, 1771 to CW.

¹⁰A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 283–85.

From James Hutton¹

[London]
at night, October 24, 1771

My Dear Charles,

It somehow happens that I can seldom get any time with you when I give myself the pleasure and go to see you. I must therefore do it in writing, though *vivâ voce*,² when it can be had, is less liable to be incomplete.

I took notice well of what you said of your not being able to make any verses on John Gambold without expressing your sorrow for his leaving you.³ It was from Peter Böhler that he heard the gospel which laid the first foundation for his real deliverance from the dreadful bondage he lay under. Was it not therefore natural that he kept close to that people from whom the first comfortable light came to him? Would it not have been more natural, if I may say so, that you too had done so! If I meant to call to mind old matters, they present themselves thus to my mind. But these things cannot be mentioned without reviving sorrows which are best covered and buried.

Let us for the future love one another more than ever, and act in the path we are now in (by whatever means it happened that they were at all separated) with kind wishes for blessings on each other's labour. Nothing but a total cessation of all enmity and ill will can please our common Lord. So I think, and if you will look over my late loving letters to you, you will see you have not mentioned any kind answer to my hearty question I made in one of them: "Shall I bury in oblivion entirely everything which has fallen ill-naturedly from your brother's pen, as I would have him do whatever on my side has been offensive? etc."⁴ To this I have been looking for your kind reply.

These motions arise spontaneously in my own breast—I mean, by the influence of his grace—I trust without the instigation or intervention of any human being. And as long as I know the Brethren, I have always found them ready for peace and love; or else, I am sure, grace is not in them. He that truly believes with the heart on Jesus Christ, and abides in him, is a peace-maker and not an *animal disputax*⁵ (is that Latin right?). Misunderstandings, mistakes, and controversies have unhappily arisen among those where they should have no place, and many suns have gone down on their wrath. Self is a plentiful source of evil, and no man can be a disciple of Christ if he does not deny *himself*. But I will not carry coal to Newcastle,⁶ or preach to you.

I love, and that is far better. And I am glad of your love, and will enjoy it. Give me as much of it as you can. We will put away the old man and the old things, and Christ shall live alone in us. In that covenant one is ever well. God bless us all. I am

Your James.

Love to you dear wife.

Source: manuscript copy for records; London, Moravian Church Archive and Library.

¹Hutton is responding here not to a letter, but to a visit with CW, likely this very day.

²"In live voice."

³Hutton had encouraged CW to write an elegy on Gambold, like he had on Whitefield, etc.

⁴See Hutton to CW, Sept. 26, 1771.

⁵"A disputatious person."

⁶I.e., do the unnecessary thing.

From James Hutton

[London]
at night, October 31, 1771

Dear Charles,

I received yours first this morning and will try to meet you, God willing, on Monday at 8:00 or thereabouts.¹ I see by the early hour that you are willing to keep me to early rising, which you find so useful for your health.

If you think I have nobody but my “party,” as you call it, you reckon yourself thereof; for you know and feel that I love you. And therefore I have found out what your party is, you are of mine. Seriously, a brother of ours is not otherwise a circumcised man. He would be buried in Christ, locked up literally in him, and have kind and tender sentiments even to his personal enemies and to the enemies of his sect; much more towards those whose faces [point] Jesus-ward. I hope by God’s grace to love every day better those you call of my party and those supposed to be of other parties.

A true brother of mine cannot shut up his heart in a party if he understands his calling, which is to serve, and help, and love all mankind; to be an officious being and a disciple of Christ, who rent the veil and the wall of partition by dying for every some of Adam. Though this same man who I call a brother be closely united to some specific visible body of people, as more closely their fellow member, giving and receiving that which is received from Christ for the purposes of *a* house of God—not *the* house, as if there were no other.

I wish you may understand me right by my dear friendship for you. I mean to make no confusion in your connexions you are more particularly in, nor disturb or wish to disturb anything practised and approved by you wherein I might happen not to be quite of the same opinion. Heart is the thing; I mean, kind and tender love, and the best wishes, such as I suppose Christ would like should be in me.

And I thank you that you are not backward. I, poor worm, am his through mercy, which he is justified in showing me, having bore my iniquities, done cruel penance for my sins. And remembering what I cost him draws me after him, and attaches me to himself, because I cannot do without him. I can not look in his face, or he in mine, without getting somewhat of his mind in me. And hence, I take it, it is that I am so inclined to you. You see I know not how to leave off. Yet I will, and am gladly

Yours in ours,

James

Love to your dear wife and children, and to your brother [JW] if you see him before Monday.

Source: manuscript copy for records; London, Moravian Church Archive and Library.

¹Hutton is responding to the letter CW likely mailed on Oct. 24; perhaps Hutton was out of town some of the intervening time.

From the Rev. John Fletcher (to both brothers)

[Madeley]
c. November 18, 1771¹

Reverend and Dear Sirs,

I send you my third letter,² *μεγα κακον*.³ I call it so on account of its exorbitant length; the antinomians will call it so on account of its contents.

The plan is: an introduction; 1) an apology for evangelical legality; 2) the antinomianism of *hearers* described; 3) that of *preachers*; 4) the latter is summed up in some dangerous propositions of Dr. [Tobias] Crisp which center in *finished salvation*, with a rational demonstration of the absurdity of that shibboleth; 5) the antinomianism of *societies*; 6) that of *families*; 7) that of *individuals*; 8) a scriptural description of the process of the day of judgment, with an antinomian's plea and comment upon the answer of the wicked (Matt. 25); and 9) a recapitulation, objections prevented, concessions made, and conclusion.

The fourth and eighth parts did not at first enter into my plan. They fell unawares into it, and I cannot now spare them, as they appear to me to sap the foundation of the three main antinomian pillars: *finished salvation*, *free grace*, and *imputed righteousness* taken in the antinomian sense. I would have made it shorter, but two things hindered it: 1) a fear I should not do the subject justice; 2) Mr. John Wesley's exhortation not to cramp myself, as he would abridge if necessary. If I had foreseen the subject would have swelled so much, I would have divided it into six rather than into three letters. Should they ever see two editions, that defect might be obviated in the second.

One of the strongest proofs that antinomianism reigns among us is the *abhorrence* or *neglect* of the doctrine of Christian perfection. I had made this the subject of one of the heads of this letter. But being ashamed of its length, though conscious of its importance and reasonableness, I left it out. But to clear my conscience, and second you in your stand for that exploded doctrine, I must publish it. Query, shall I bring it after this letter as a postscript, or reserve it for a particular tract, a *Third Check to Antinomianism*? It will, I trust, establish the doctrine upon such a rational bottom as to make the opposers of it ashamed of themselves. I am glad you will both take up the sword on the occasion. Let us all shout for the battle. And let us fight it with our hearts and lives as well as our tongues and pens. Mr. Charles Wesley wants a *legal* answer. I send him this *arch-legal* one, which I beg he would have the patience both to read and correct. I am, honoured and reverend sirs,

Your unworthy affectionate brother,

J. Fletcher

[on the back side]

To Mr. Charles Wesley: I have sent for my other manuscript from Bristol. I want to guard some things a little more with regard to works, and I suppose you will be at Bristol before it returns thither. A thousand thanks for your kind offers. If I trust God with my book, I can trust him for the keeping you alive two months more.

Adieu.

¹This is the note sent along with the manuscript for the third part of Fletcher's *Second Check*, which Fletcher says was sent "last week" in his letter of Nov. 24 to CW.

²Of his *Second Check*.

³"great evil."

My kind respects to all at your house. Sal⁴ especially has my poor blessing and love.
Pray revise the three sheets and send them to the printer.

Address: “To Messieurs Wesley.”

Endorsement: “Fletcher / 1771.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/39.⁵

⁴I.e., Sarah Jr., his goddaughter.

⁵A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 285–87.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
November 24, 1771

My Very Dear Friend,

I sent you last week a 50-page legal letter with a postscript to you and your brother, desiring you to use your pruning knife and cut off the many luxuriant branches without weakening the tree.¹ I am not easy unless I beseech you in particular to alter, prune, and if need be lay even your ax at the root of the tree. One said “*brevis esse laboro, obscurus fio.*”² I must say just the reverse: wanting to be clear, I am tediously prolix; and desiring to be strong, I am sharp—so sharp that they tell me the *Gospel Magazine* charges me with scattering fire brands, arrows, and deaths.³ Pray quench my brands in holy oil, and leave no deaths but those I meditate against antinomianism. I am glad you will take the cudgel. You really owe it to truth. We shall die more content after clearing our mind.

I am busy about my third and last *Check*, which I trust will be the most useful.⁴ I want sadly both your prayers and advice. I shall introduce my (why not *your*) doctrine of the Holy Ghost, and make it one with your brother’s perfection. He holds the truth, but this will be an improvement upon it, if I am not mistaken. In some of your Pentecost hymns you paint my light wonderfully.⁵ If you do not recant them we shall perfectly agree.

I am quite clear I shall die only a disciple of John [the Baptist] unless I receive the baptism you have so well described—what you saw in Hannah Richardson.⁶ When I read your hymns, the[y] only I find comfort in, when I do not smother my convictions. I always find fellowship with you, and want to be with you and mourn with you. Surely you have great light. O let it be practical, or we shall be beaten with many stripes. I ask you pardon for giving you the trouble of your apology.⁷ I mentioned what I had heard without judging you. What you say is weighty, but nothing will set us fully right but the indwelling God.

What is man? What is woman? A student of Lady Huntingdon wrote me word by her leave he should be glad to be my curate.⁸ I refused, as not wanting one; but offered if he would not stand upon much salary, to procure him a title in my neighbourhood. The answer was I should do it at any rate, and Lady Huntingdon would be at all charges. I set my irons in the fire and got the title, with 30£ salary towards which to encourage the old miser who give it. I said I would give 5£, as I did not think it expedient to say they should come from my Lady if they were wanted. I supposed Lady Huntingdon would have repaid them [to] me, after I had tendered them to the young man. But this is taken as treachery, a decoying or engrossing of her students, etc. And she, with her usual lordliness, has turned him off, if I understand him right. What must I do in the case?

You never wrote me word that you had corrected my second letter, though I had so much entreated you to do it. Think it is the common cause, and let me not do mischief when you can help it.

The God of grace and glory bless you. Pray he may bless me with his wisdom and Spirit. Till this,

¹See Fletcher to CW & JW, c. Nov. 18, 1771.

²Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 25–26: “Striving to be brief, I become obscure” (Loeb).

³‘Simplex’, Letter to Mr. Wesley, Mr. Sellon, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Olivers, *Gospel Magazine* 6 (1771), 433–37 (here, p. 437).

⁴John Fletcher, *A Third Check to Antinomianism: In a Letter to the Author of “Pietas Oxoniensis”* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1772). This would not prove to be Fletcher’s last *Check*.

⁵CW, *Hymns of Petition and Thanksgiving for the Promise of Father* (Bristol: Farley, 1746).

⁶Cf. CW, *A Short Account of the Death of Hannah Richardson* [London: Strahan, 1741].

⁷About supporting his sons’ interest in music, etc.; see CW to Fletcher, Oct. 25, 1771.

⁸William Aldridge; see Fletcher to CW, Sept. 21, 1771.

I am nothing. Then, he shall be all. My love to all around you and Sally.

P.S. I have read a printed letter desiring the clergy who will stand by the 39 Articles of our Church to prepare and send an account of their design to the Society held at their office, Bridgwater Square, London.⁹ They say an attempt will be made for a repeal of these to parliament. Shall I send in my name? Give me some account of the affair.

I hear advertisement about the *Narrative* have been put up at London Bridge, and all over it is dispersed about with assiduity, as well as Mr. Madan's penny tract.¹⁰

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

Postmark: "27/NO."

Endorsement: by CW, "Fletcher / Nov. 24. 1771."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/38.¹¹

⁹A society of clergy who desired abolition of compulsory subscription to the Thirty-Nine Articles was founded at the Feathers Tavern in the Strand, London, in the summer of 1771. The letter Fletcher had read was by a group organizing in resistance to this call.

¹⁰I.e., Richard Hill and Martin Madan, *A Conversation Between R. Hill, the Rev. Mr. Madan, and the Superior of a Convent of English Benedictine Monks at Paris ... Relative to Some Doctrinal Minutes Advanced by the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley and Others* (London: E. and C. Dilly, 1771).

¹¹A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 287–89. CW transcribes on the address side of the letter a letter from JW dated Nov. 28, responding to Richard Hill, *A Conversation Between R. Hill, the Rev. Mr. Madan, and the Superior of a Convent of English Benedictine Monks at Paris ... Relative to Some Doctrinal Minutes Advanced by the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley and Others* (London: E. & C. Dilly, 1771).

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

[[Staines]]
November 28 [1771]

[[I said it is two verses of my brother and five passages of the *Christian Library* which he supposes to contradict what I have said elsewhere.² I answer, whether they do or do not, this does not prove the one point in question, that I contradict myself, because my brother is not myself, neither is the *Christian Library*. I never undertook to defend every extreme in my brother's hymns (although these as it stands there I do not object to). Much less will I defend every sentence which occurs in the *Christian Library*. In these 50 volumes he may find five sentences more which are contradictory to some of my sentiments, and which either escaped my attention when I abridged these authors, or were left in by the carelessness of the press (which was the case in about 100 places), though I had drawn my line through them. All these things amount to no proof at all that Mr. Wesley contradicts himself.]]

Annotation / Address: [[from Staines to Chesterfield]].³

Source: CW shorthand transcription; MARC, MA 1977/495/38.

¹Though neither are named explicitly, the letter is by JW, who was in Staines on Nov. 28; and the recipient was CW, now residing in the house on Chesterfield Street in London. This is the earliest expression of JW's response to criticism from Richard Hill. JW is responding here to *Conversation Between R. Hill, the Rev. Mr. Madan, and the Superior of a Convent of English Benedictine Monks at Paris ... Relative to Some Doctrinal Minutes Advanced by the Rev. Mr. J. Wesley and Others* (London: E. & C. Dilly, 1771). Hill elaborated his criticism in *Review of All the Doctrines Taught by the Rev. Mr. Wesley; Containing a Full and Particular Answer to a Book entitled A Second Check to Antinomianism* (London: Dilly, 1772); and JW elaborated his defense in *Some Remarks on Mr. Hill's Review* (1772), *Works*, 13:433–87.

²See Hill, *Conversation*, 20.

³There is also an annotation in another hand: 'No. 383'.

From Michael Callender¹

Newcastle
December 12, 1771

Reverend Sir,

I thank you for your kind letter sent me some time ago.² I rejoice to find I am still thought by you worthy of your notice, which favour I would [have] answered sooner but I was afraid of being troublesome. I think if I should live to survive you I would, on hearing of your departure, cry out with the kings of Israel over old Elisha, “My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof.”³

It has been no small comfort to me to find you like-minded with me in seeing the judgements of God ready to burst on the guilty land to which we belong. What has kept it from us so long, but the intercession of the blessed Dresser of the vineyard? O that we may all now bear fruit, so that we may not be cut down, to be forever destroyed.

You would hear how the hand of the Lord was lately upon us in this part of his vineyard. When all was saying, “Peace,” then came sudden destruction.⁴ Surely the Lord came at midnight, and found many sleeping; and some awaked no more in this world. How soon can Jehovah make a fruitful land barren, a desolation, for the wickedness of them who dwelled therein! Yet in this mercy was mixed with judgement, for had it happened at any other time than Saturday night late, some hundreds of lives more would [have] been lost. But it had its commission, like the raging sea, “Hitherto shall thou go, and no further.”⁵ All here, religious and profane, agree it is the hand of God. I have made the most strict enquiry I can of them who has been at Liverpool, Whitehaven, and other parts around us, and do not find any such quantity of rain or snow fell as could cause so sudden, so impetuous a deluge of waters.⁶ Either the Almighty on the mountains near the heads of the river of Tyne, Wear, and Tees poured down water spouts, or he by an earthquake caused it to burst out of the earth and sent it to destroy and take away a great deal of the riches of this country, that all seem so greedily pursuing. Or it might be caused by both, for the rising of that moss in Cumberland on the Reverend Mr. Graham’s estate so high as to be even with the tops of the chimneys of the villages where it suddenly spread over seems to confirm this.⁷ May the Lord grant it may have the effect for which it is sent on our future conduct. May it rouse us all from our spiritual drowsiness, from our love of this present world and our conformity to it.

I wish I had no reason to say that some of “the hand of the rulers have been chiefly in this thing.” If the shepherds themselves go astray, no wonder the sheep follow. Example is more prevailing than precept. But I hope what was done at the last Conference will roll away that reproach. Those who love the cause of the Lord Jesus will shake themselves from the dust. I was much refreshed by reading the Rev.

¹Michael Callender (1716–19) was a nurseryman in Newcastle. He had contact with the evangelical revival and in 1760 (as his third wife) married Elizabeth Romaine (1723–1806), the sister of William Romaine. See Margaret Maddison, “The Callenders, Eighteenth-Century Northern Nurserymen and Seedsmen,” *Garden History* 33 (2005), 210–24.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³2 Kings 13:14.

⁴See 1 Thess. 5:3.

⁵Cf. Job 38:11.

⁶Several days of torrential rainfall in the Pennines resulted in major flooding of the rivers Tyne, Tees, Wear, and Eden, on Nov. 16–17, 1771.

⁷The rainfall also flowed to the west, leading to the bursting on Nov. 16 of a soft peatmoss lagoon known as the Solway Moss, on the estate of Robert Graham near Longtown, Cumberland; about ten miles north of Carlisle.

Mr. [John] Fletcher's *Letters*.⁸ If it would not be thought impertinent in me, I would send him a letter of thanks. Many in this age, who think they are the only builders, pull down the work of God because they were not the hewers of the stones.

If Mr. [John] Wesley is with you, give my dear love to him, Let him know, though I do not trouble him with letters, I bear the same love to him as formerly. Whisperers separate chief friends, if in any respect he has conceived a bad opinion of me and by that have done to me what otherwise he would not have done. I freely forgive it. The time will come when everyone will appear in their own colours.

I must now conclude with desiring an interest in your prayers for me and mine, and must subscribe myself

Your affectionate though unworthy brother and servant in Christ,

Michael Callindor

P.S. Please to give my best respects to Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley. Perhaps she can remember something of me though many years since I saw her.

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

Postmark: "18/DE" and "Newcastle."

Endorsement: by CW, "Dec. 12. 1771 / Calendar Inundation."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/32.⁹

⁸I.e, Fletcher, *Vindication ... in three letters*.

⁹For 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 Fletcher

[Madeley]
[c. December 15 1771¹]

In general, when my views of things seems clearer, I think that there is a gradual rising to the top of John [the Baptist]’s dispensation. And that when we are gradually risen to that top, and are fit for the baptism of Christ, it is in an instant conferred. “If any man love me,” says our Lord, which implies undoubtedly keeping his commandments—i.e. making frequent acts of evangelical obedience, “I and my father will come and make our abode with him,”² revealed by and with our common spirit. We will make him all glorious within.

I think sometimes that the souls that are dissatisfied, as you and I are, and cannot rest in the plain with Calvinists, would do well if, after the example of the apostles, they retired from the world, to wrestle their 10 or 30 days in an upper room.³ I fear there is a devil of formality and carnality in the world of professors, that will not go out but with much fasting and hard prayer. I speak of fasting in faith, and in all the latitude of the word, not of that kind of blind papistical fasting which we formerly used and with so little success. We must, I doubt, be reawakened. And a death must pass upon us which you have admirably described in your hymns.

But now you must stand to them, and I to the *Checks* practically. I think at this time we are perhaps less called to recommend perfection to others in words than heartily pursue it in deeds ourselves. The world will generally cry out to us, “Physician heal thyself,”⁴ and laugh at us for our pains, unless we are benefited by our doctrine. You convene the preachers to settle the rounds. The Calvinists convene themselves to throw down the doctrine of perfection, which is inseparably connected with the second gospel axiom. And shall we only talk about it, or write hymns and *Checks*? The Lord help us to arise and be found doing! I mean, agonizing to enter in at the straight gate. Would not a conference of prayer and mutual exhortation among dissatisfied believers, especially preachers, answer a better end than that of surfeiting our hearers with exhortations and sermons, which they hear mostly out of custom, and have no heart to receive, unless it be in the notion. You watch alternatively over the great flocks of London and Bristol. You can strike great blows there in heading the van of earnest souls, and cutting off the rear of disorderly walkers. I, and thousands more, look at you and your brother just as some of my flock look at me. If it is not for him, say they, it is not for me. Thus they give it up, for why should the sheep *devance*⁵ the shepherd?

What can I say? I remain confounded and conscious I am guilty of the pharisaic absurdity of saying and not doing, of tying preceptive burdens upon the shoulders of others which I touch more with my pen and tongue than with my hand and shoulders. I hope God has not yet sworn in his anger that I shall not enter into his rest; that I shall die in the wilderness for my past cowardice, disobedience, hypocrisy. Come, let me have the benefit of your example, warnings, and reproofs. The Jewish priests were the last to get over Jordan, and to embrace the faith of Christ in Jerusalem. But Christian priests are always first in every good work and conquest. Undoubtedly the apostles went into the kingdom before the 3,000 on the day of Pentecost. If we get in, who knows but perhaps three scores may follow us. This is

¹The letter is not dated, but it continues the topic breached in Fletcher to CW, Nov. 24, 1771. It was surely sent sometime within Dec. 1771 and Jan. 1772.

²John 14:23.

³See Acts 1:12–14.

⁴Luke 4:23.

⁵French for “outdistance.”

the only way to retrieve the aspersed doctrine of perfection. Our works will preach, and back our words with a kind of omnipotent influence; and God will seal a truth which we seal ourselves in a right manner.

Adieu, I would not have troubled you with this long scrawl if I had not had an opportunity of sending it without expense. My kindest love waits upon all yours, especially Sally.⁶

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/60.⁷

⁶Sarah Jr., his goddaughter.

⁷A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 290–91.

From James Hutton

Lindsey House, Chelsea
December 18, 1771

Dear Charles,

Yesterday I bought your brother's XIV *Journal*, to read it in the evening. I found [on] page 96 these words:

Tuesday, 25. I read Mr. Crantz's account of the mission into Greenland. *Although I make much allowance for the liberty¹ which I know the Brethren take in their accounts of one another, yet I do not see any reason to doubt that some of the heathen have been converted.*²

As he cannot *know* but from hearsay that the Brethren take the liberty hinted at, why he will now, 1771 in December, publish as his own testimony and from his own knowledge what he cannot possibly be strictly said to *know*, I do not conceive.³ This paragraph has afflicted me, *for his sake*, more than I can express.⁴

I bear the disappointment, the cruel disappointment of the hopes I had that all things of this kind were over as well as I can.⁵ I had too sanguine hopes that, because I found myself moved to bury in oblivion whatever had given personal offence and so produced enmity, that he was less so.⁶ By and by things may go better. I am

Your sorrowful

James

Source: Hutton's manuscript draft; London, Moravian Church Archive and Library.

¹Hutton used a double underline here, because JW's published *Journal* had it italicized.

²See JW, *Journal*, Aug. 25, 1767, *Works*, 22:99–100. Hutton underlined the italicized section in his draft.

³The following appears in the draft, but has a vertical line through it, indicating it was almost certainly not in the holograph sent CW: "What our Lord thinks of such judging, and of such testimonies, is a very serious affair. I wish you had thought proper, or had had any good opportunity to communicate to him my correspondence with you. Perhaps this might not have been *now* printed in this manner. Yet, even to think such thoughts of the Brethren as that they take the liberty above hinted at, seems to me not consistent with common morality. And to publish such an accusation as from his own knowledge—what is that? I must tell you that this paragraph . . ."

⁴Here another section in the draft is struck-through, and surely not sent to CW: "I am truly cast down about it, and melancholy fills my heart. I lay myself and all my spirit at our Lord's feet in the dust concerning this matter."

⁵Here appears one more section, with a vertical line through it: "In the mean time I can assure you as an honest man, and as a witness before God, that the Brethren's principle is that to take such *liberties* as John says he *knows* they take is wicked; and they among themselves will endure no such things."

⁶Hutton wrote JW a letter elaborating his concern the next day.

From the Rev. John Fletcher (to both brothers)

[Madeley]
c. December 24 1771¹

To Messieurs Wesley,

I know not whether you thought it worth your while to correct my strictures upon Mr. [Richard] Hill's *Conversation*² (for he is the publisher; at least Mr. [Thomas] Hatton saw the manuscript and the book passes as his at Salop). The preceding scrawl is designed to stop the malignant influence of the personal reflections, which I had taken no notice of as being foreign to the question. But they may want a kind of guard, and the author a little rap.

I am quite satisfied with your alterations. I make no doubt but you correct and alter for God.
[small portion at bottom of manuscript torn off]

Address: "To the Rev. Mr. J Wesley / at the Foundery / Moorfields / London."

Postmark: "26/DE."

Annotation: by CW, "Fletcher's PS / Dec 1771."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/40.³

[The "preceding scrawl" referred to, which takes up the first two and half pages of the manuscript letter, is as follows:]

Addition to the P.S.⁴

To the *Conversation* are annexed personal reflections against the author of the *Minutes*. Poor arguments these, which injure the publisher's charity more than Mr. Wesley's character. Divest of the smart dress in which they appear and they amount just to this.

I. Mr. Wesley is undoubtedly a Pelagian, and his *Minutes* are worse than popery, for he is *inconsistent*. What! In the *Minutes*? — No, but he uses in his *Christian Library* the expression of "imputed righteousness," which he disapproves in some of his latter works.

To refute this charge I only need inform my readers of three things: 1) that Mr. Wesley is not the author of the *Christian Library*; 2) that though he believed the doctrine it contained was sound, he never designed to defend every particular mode of speech in which it was conveyed, much less any expression that is not found in the Scripture, or any word to which he observes a sense different from his own is generally affixed; and 3) that when he admitted the above-mentioned expression (which, as I have observed, may bear a very good sense) he had not yet seen antinomianism lifting up its banner in the three kingdoms with this deceitful motto: "The imputed righteousness of Christ."

II. To invalidate the *Minutes*, another proof of Mr. Wesley's inconsistency is wittily produced. He formerly recommended celibacy as preferable to the married life, and nevertheless he is now married.

But does this demonstrate that "popery is about half-way between Protestantism and Mr. Wesley"? Just the reverse. It proves that he imitated the great reformer Luther who, after having been in

¹It reached London on Dec. 26, as seen in the postmark.

²Hill, *A Conversation Between R. Hill, . . .* Fletcher's strictures were published as a Postscript to his *Second Check to Antinomianism* (London: New Chapel, 1771), 107–09.

³A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 289–90.

⁴I.e., Fletcher was proposing an addition to his Postscript in the *Second Check*. This was a working draft, with many cross outs. We transcribe only the final text that Fletcher retained.

love with a single life, found it at last expedient to marry—and oppose popery by his practice as well as his doctrine. Again, when St. Paul *had no commandment of the Lord*,⁵ he wished the Corinthians would continue unmarried as he was, that they might live *without carefulness*, and avoid *trouble in the flesh*. But afterwards, conceiving higher thoughts of the beauty, expediency, or necessity of marriage, he wrote to Timothy, “I will that younger women marry.” Would it be right in our severe author to charge the apostle with popery, or inconsistency, for peremptorily commanding young women to do what Mr. Wesley has done—although he had before wished his converts what Mr. Wesley once recommended to his flock; that is, the great advantages of a single life? (Reader, if a popish monk had not prepared thee for a popish jest, wouldst not thou be astonished to see the *real Protestants* forced to defend their cause as the real papists do popery—this is, by making merry about the wives of Protestant ministers?)

III. But this is not all. The author of the *Minutes* once also strongly recommended to his society the use of a decoction of sage, or some other cheap vegetable, instead of tea; and now he drinks tea himself as other people.

That may be, but what has this to do with his orthodoxy? May not he change his diet without changing his doctrine?

Well, he drinks a dish of tea, with Mrs. [Mary] Wesley too! And where is it harm? Shall I cry out he is a heretic? A Pelagian? An inconsistent divine? No, I will candidly hope he had once good reasons for trying to break the custom of drinking tea; but when he found his attempt was vain, like a wise man he submitted with a good grace to what he could not help, and thought it better to “become all things to all men,”⁶ rather than to countenance unnecessary singularity and render himself perpetually troublesome to his friends. Besides, tea is much cheaper now than it was formerly, and the poor people under his charge do not, buy drinking it, hurt themselves near so much in their circumstances as he once feared they would.

And are these your strong arguments, ye zealous opposers of the *Minutes*? Think ye the religious world can be convinced by such means? Are not your cool friends themselves sorry to see the poor figure which your popish champion makes upon the stage of our controversy? And do not your thinking readers ask with surprise whether Mrs. Wesley’s dish of tea, so briskly played off against us with your new fire-engine, is to put out the eyes of the public and extinguish the light breaking forth from the multitude of scriptural and rational arguments advanced in the *Vindication of the Minutes*? O how long will you make the ⟨profession⁷⟩ under the heavy, and yet unsupported, charges of popery and heresy? If to prove them you come against us with a friar’s aspersions in one hand, and a dish of tea in the other; the Lord being our helper, we shall meet you with love in our hearts, a Bible in our hands, and sound arguments, honest reproofs, and calm expostulations in our mouths or on our paper!

[JW inserts between this draft and Fletcher’s short letter, apparently as directions to CW, “Pray take of the letter, and if you see good, send the rest to Strahan.” It does not appear the suggested addition was ever published].

⁵See 1 Cor. 7:6.

⁶1 Cor. 9:22.

⁷The word is faded; this seemed the most likely rendering.

1772

From Joseph Kelway

Park Lane [London]
January 16 [1772]

Dear Sir,

You'd do me a very great favour, particularly at this time, if you would take my last twelve books of lessons.¹

Pray pardon this liberty from

Your obliged humble servant,

Joseph Kelway

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

Endorsement: by CW, "Kelway *in formâ pauperis!*"²

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/105.³

¹Kelway was asking CW to purchase the remaining copies of the second edition of his *Six Sonatas: for the Harpsicord* (London: Welcker, 1770; 1st edn. in 1764). This request came in the context of CW's resistance to beginning to pay for the personal lessons Kelway provided for CW Jr. See CW to Bromfield, Jan. 21, 1772.

²"In the manner of a pauper."

³This letter is appended to an extract of his manuscript journal that CW made relative to the issue of Kelway's recent desire to charge for the lesson for CW Jr.; cf. *Journal Letters*, 439–49.

From John Murlin

Bristol
January 18, 1772

Reverend Sir,

I received you letter¹ and, as you desired, have visited all your friends which you mentioned, except Mr. Lunell.² But I hope soon to see him.

I saw brother [Daniel] Jenkins several times before he left this world. He told me the Lord was always present with him. He was greatly afflicted, but he bore his affliction with patience and a cheerful resignation to the will of God. He blessed God that the great work of his salvation was not then to begin, but that he was now waiting to enter into the joy of his Lord. He died on Monday, 13 instant. I was then out of town. On Sunday night, at 11:00 he began to change for death, and he thanked God very heartily. Then he complained of his horse, that it went very slow. "I want" (said he) "to gallop. But however," (said he) "I shall get there by 4:00." And at 4:00 he resigned his spirit into the hands of the Lord Jesus. Last Thursday [Jan. 16] I preached his funeral sermon to a very large audience, and our Lord was present in the midst of us.

I think we are [in] no danger of enthusiasm at present. Yet I hope the holy fire of love does burn in many hearts. Lord increase it more abundantly. I believe the congregation at Bristol is as large as it has been for many years, and some have lately found the Messiah. We are all in peace, both in our family, preachers, and people.

My wife joins in duty to you and Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley. Love to all friends. Desiring an interest in your prayers. From

Your dutiful son in the gospel,

John Murlin

I should be glad of a line when convenient.

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

Postmark: "20/IA"

Endorsement: by CW, "J. Murlin / Jan. 18. 1772 / Dan Jenins translated."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPPr 2/47.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²William Lunell, originally of Dublin, had retired to Bristol in 1766.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Tuesday, January 21, 1772

My Very Dear Friend,

I thank you for your hymns. Death hymns we have not yet seen collected, and you have my imprimatur.¹ Your versification of the New Testament struck me through its spirituality.² I think it would be a great pity if it was condemned to moulder in the dark, or to appear after your death in the fool's coat of some conceited corrector.

I thank you for your care about the *Second Check*.³ What I like best of it is what is none of mine—viz., Bishop Hopkin's quotation.⁴ I expect to be represented as a blasphemmer for what I say about imputed righteousness.

Last Friday I began an answer to Mr. Hill's *Letters*.⁵ They seem calculated to quiet the Calvinists and fix the odium they have put upon the legality of the gospel. I have wrote the heads of an answer. Consult with your brother whether he thinks the performance is worth notice. I shall think so if Mr. [Martin] Madan shouts victory over it.

I have had a call to write upon a new subject, and against opposite adversaries: the infidels. A vile Socinian pamphlet, a bold shrewd address to candid Christians by Elwall, a Quaker, who being tried for blasphemy came off with flying colours after having made Jesus Christ a mere man.⁶ This address I say hath been reprinted for the third time at Birmingham and some serious people there have desired me to answer it, urging that having entered the lists for your brother, I cannot refuse to do it for his Master.

These two incidents have made me lay by my treatise upon perfection.⁷

That upon original sin was lost some weeks, but was found wilfully or inadvertently concealed in the back room of an alehouse in my parish, where the bargemen had left it.⁸ Mr. Hill brings you in with

¹CW had sent Fletcher the hymns published in *Preparation for Death, in Several Hymns* (London, 1772), either in manuscript form prior to publication or as just published.

²CW had sent Fletcher a copy of one or more of his manuscript collections on each of the gospels, and the book of Acts.

³While dated 1771, Fletcher's *Second Check* was first advertised as published on Jan 4, 1772.

⁴Fletcher quotes from Ezekiel Hopkin's sermon "Practical Christianity" on pp. 71–78 of the *Second Check*.

⁵Richard Hill (1732–1808), *Five Letters to the Rev. Mr. Fletcher relative to his Vindication of the "Minutes" of the Rev. Mr. John Wesley* (London: E. & C. Dilly, 1771).

⁶While Edward Elwall (1676–1744) is its subject, the pamphlet raising Fletcher's concern was compiled and published by Joseph Priestley, *An Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity, on the following subjects, viz. I. The Use of Reason in Matters of Religion, II. The Power of Man to do the Will of God, III. Original Sin, IV. Election and Reprobation, V. The Divinity of Christ, and, VI. Atonement for Sin by the Death of Christ. By a Lover of the Gospel* ([London: s.n.] 1771; 3rd edn., [Birmingham]: for J. Johnson, 1771). Priestley published the same year *The Triumph of Truth: being an account of the trial of Mr. E. Elwall for Heresy and Blasphemy at Stafford Assizes, before Judge Denton. To which are added, extracts from some other pieces of Mr. Elwall's, concerning the Unity of God* ([Leeds]: Joseph Binns, 1771).

⁷This treatise appeared finally as Fletcher, *Last Check: A Polemical Essay* (London: R. Hawes, and sold at New Chapel, 1775).

⁸Fletcher, *Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense* (1772).

one of your hymns to prove the state of sanctification good where not one bud of grace appears, and sin and only sin is here.⁹

I beg your leave, if my answer is published, to quote part of your last letter, which will be a sufficient vindication.¹⁰

The Lord help us to make a stand against antinomianism with our lives and in our hearts; and then with our tongues and pens. Heart-felt faith, heart-felt faith is a remedy against all. Mr. Shirley had thrown his *Sermons* overboard;¹¹ and Mr. Hill, justification by faith. What will they give up next? What think you, shall we have it out now?

My kind love to all your household and blessing to Sally [Jr.]. I thank you for your invitation to go to London. I have not call now to stir. What time may bring forth, I know not. The Lord prepare us soon for death and glory is the prayer of

Your's,

J. F.

My manuscript is gone back to Mr. [William] Pine. When will you be at Bristol?

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

Postmark: "23/IA."

Endorsement: by CW, "Jan. 21. 1772 / Fletcher."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/41.¹²

⁹See Hill, *Five Letters*, 29–30, where he quotes from st. 3 of CW, "Hymn on Habakkuk 3:17–19," *HSP* (1742), 138.

¹⁰Fletcher's reply to Hill was published as *A Third Check to Antinomianism: In a Letter to the Author of "Pietas Oxoniensis"* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1772); where the extract of CW's letter of c. Jan 15, 1772 to Fletcher appears on p. 88.

¹¹Shirley, *Twelve Sermons* (1762).

¹²A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 292–93.

From William Boyce¹

[London]
Monday, February 17, 1772

Dr. Boyce's best respects attend Mr. [Charles] Westley and has been greatly obliged by the entertainment he received on Tuesday last.² He intended to have indulged a friend of his with the like pleasure tomorrow, but the gentleman is a present from London, so shall defer calling again till his return to town. It shall be on a Tuesday when the Dr. calls, and between the hours of 12:00 and 1:00.

Compliments to Mrs. [Sarah] Westley, etc.

Endorsement: by CW, "Feb. 17. 1772 / Courteous Dr. Boyce."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/107.

¹William Boyce (1711–79), of London, was a composer and organist. He became quite close with CW's family; cf. CW's *Ode on the Death of Dr. Boyce* [1779], published as a broadsheet and in *AM* 2 (1779): 606.

²Boyce had apparently dined with the Wesley family, and surely heard CW Jr. play.

From Marmaduke Gwynne Jr.¹

Brecon
February 21, 1772

Dear Brother,

The £15,000 has long been said to be ready.² But my poor brother [Howell], by rascality somewhere, is still kept out of it. I left him yesterday in a bad state of health, greatly impaired by troubles and disappointments. He expects daily to have it paid in, and I hope it cannot be far off. I know little of its destination, having no curiosity in that respect. I hear nothing of sister Peggy's fortune.³ I have long told that I was ready to cooperate with you, etc. I know no more of that matter.

I have succeeded beyond the utmost of my expectations in the chancery cases with Mr. Gwynne, and shall soon reap the fruits of a most just and happy decree.⁴ Though there are some ceremonies of the courts to be gone through before I shall be entitled to touch them.

Beck shall soon be made as easy as I can possibly make her.⁵ But she must submit patiently a while, as well as myself. I am as poor as a church mouse at the present, but better days are very near at hand.

Our affectionate respects await every relative at the Foundery and Islington.⁶ I am, dear brother,
Faithfully yours,

Marmaduke Gwynne

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

Postmark: "24/FE."

Endorsement: by CW, "21 Feb. 1772 / Duke concurring."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/73.

¹The letter from CW to which Gwynne is replying is not known to survive.

²The money in question related to settling the estate of their parents after the death of Marmaduke Gwynne Sr. in 1769 and Sarah (Evans) Gwynne in 1770.

³Margaret Gwynne had died in 1752; the question was apparently how her share of inheritance would be handled.

⁴These cases were likely with Roderick Gwynne (1699–1777), of Glanbran and Buckland; he was Marmaduke Sr.'s oldest brother, and may have laid claim to some of the property from their parents.

⁵His unmarried sister Rebecca Gwynne.

⁶Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller and her husband James lived in Islington; and Rebecca was staying with them.

From Maria (Hill) Littlehales¹

West Hatch [Essex]
February 21, 1772

Just as your last letter arrived,² wherein you expressed your kind wishes that my poor dear boys might escape the corruption of a public school, Ben was sent to Harrow, which is almost as public as the two great schools.³ I have been much harassed about it, or I should have wrote to you before. Ned is to stay two or three years longer at Mary[le]bone and then go to Westminster.⁴ That is the present plan, and if it should be followed I hope I shall make myself easy, since God can preserve them both in the midst of that fiery furnace unhurt.

Thank you for the two sweet hymns you sent me, particularly the second, which has been much blessed to me. I have enclosed one of those Mr. [Samuel] Arnold set for Laura.⁵ She has been very idle and not wrote to Miss [Sarah] Wesley. When she does, I'll send the other. My dear friend Charles [Jr.], I fear, will hardly be able to make it out, it is so badly wrote; but if there are any places he can't read he will fill them up with something as good or better than the original.

Pray give all our love to all your family. I rejoice much to hear of your coming to town [London]. Who knows but some good may yet be do to him who had the good seed in his heart choked by the cares of riches and pleasures of this world!⁶ Who knows what may be done by you, whom he still loves and has so high an opinion of. You will not be at a loss to guess who I mean. O sir, remember us in your prayers.

Poor Mr. Green is to be this week a bankrupt. I am extremely concerned for him and his children. Your friend Mrs. [Lucia] Gallatin is indefatigable in her endeavours to serve him. She is really uncommonly kind to people in distress.

I don't like to hear you talk of dying! I hope you will yet live many years (if it is the will of God) to be a blessing to your flock, your family, and your friends; and among the latter to, dear sir,

Yours ever sincerely,

Maria Littlehales

Endorsement: by CW, "M. Littlehales / Sept. 21. 1772 / her sons sent to pub. school."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/70.

¹Maria Hill (1736–96), an acknowledged daughter of the composer Bendall Martyn (1700–61), married Baker John Littlehales Esq. (1732–85) in 1759. They resided in West Hatch, near present-day Chigwell, Essex, and became friends of CW's family.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³"Ben" was apparently the nickname for the oldest son, Lyonel Martyn Littlehales (1762–94)

⁴"Ned" would be Edward Baker Littlehales (1764–1825); later Edward Baker, 1st Baronet, of Ranston.

⁵Elizabeth Laura Littlehales (1761–1825).

⁶Apparently referring to her husband, Baker John Littlehales.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
Thursday, March 12, 1772

Reverend and Dear Brother,

I may with truth plead my public correspondence with Mr. [Richard] Hill as an excuse for not thanking you for your two last,¹ as well as for your patience in reading and correcting my *Third Check*.² I bespeak the continuance of your boldest and freest corrections with regard to a large addition which I have sent to your brother. A sensible Calvinist, a lawyer, said last week he found fault with only one expression of the *Second Check*, that of ludicrous versifier, which he considered as calling names. How delicate is the Calvinist taste!³

I have not been able to get Baxter's answer to Crisp.⁴ If I had, I would have brought him upon the stage of our controversy for something besides merit. I thank you for your honest friends Mr. [Francis] Oakley and [James] Hutton. Return them my love and thanks for theirs, and the enclosed letters. I hope the time will come when all our breaches will be made up. I dreamt the other night I embraced Lady Huntingdon's knees and (plea)ded⁵ so for peace that she relented and cast the mantle of (love over) all grievances. I was very happy about it. My dream and the savour of the happiness delighted me still when I waked. I wish it might be an omen of future peace.

They have sent me two printed letters. One from Bristol, signed Dixon. The honest blunderer is won by an answer of eight lines. He seems to think it is along with you. He is not of the society. If it is so, permit me to intercede for him. The other is anonymous from Bath, and renews the charge of scattering firebrands, arrows, and death. I seem to be insensible to dispraise. I am not so clear about insensibility to praise. I have sent my treatise to Mr. [William] Pine. If you go to Bristol, I recommend it to your care, and put you in remembrance of your promise to correct the press.

It is amazing how near the words "soberness" and "truth" come to those of "ranterism" and "error." This ought to make us cautious in writing, the more patient to those who mistake us, and the more hopeful of those who are mistaken.

I have begun my answer to Elwall.⁶ Though Mr. [Walter] Sellon has answered him, the friends to whom I made a promise of answering it will not release me.⁷ I am the more ready to yield to their importunity as Mr. Sellon's answer is very short, and does not touch a mischievous addition made to the Birmingham edition of the book. It stands chiefly upon the defensive, and I design to carry war into the enemy's country. So that upon the whole it will not be tautology I hope.

¹One of these would have been CW to Fletcher, Feb. 22, 1772; the other is not known to survive.

²Fletcher, *Third Check to Antinomianism* (1772).

³See Fletcher, *Second Check* (1771), 15; where he quotes CW, "Psalm 51:10," sts. 1 & 4; then adds two lines not found in CW's published hymn (or elsewhere in CW's published verse): "Bigotry from us' remove / Perfect all our souls in love, etc." It is possible this addition was sent to Fletcher by CW in manuscript, but it is not found among CW's surviving manuscript collections.

⁴See CW to Fletcher, c. Jan 15, 1772.

⁵A small portion of the manuscript is missing, on the edge along a fold; but the text can be recreated confidently.

⁶See Fletcher to CW, Jan. 21, 1772. While it was never published, Fletcher's manuscript of this reply survives: "Check to Socinianism and Arianism," MARC, MAM Fl. 17.

⁷Fletcher likely had in mind *A Short Defence of the Doctrine of the Divinity of Christ; With some remarks upon a late Appeal to the Serious and Candid Professors of Christianity* ([Leeds:] John Binns, 1772); that this anonymous work was actually by William Ley.

If I send my manuscript to London with you, be so good as to correct it and let it pass through the hand of our brethren who have critical heads and patient hearts. Could you not send me some franks? I might send it by the Shrewsbury coach. I think it might go safer that way.

I shall write to you sometime or other, [if it] please God, an account of my Bethsaida.⁸ Till then pray for us, as I do for you, yours, and Sally [Jr.]. Fare ye all well in the Lord!

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. C. Wesley / at the Foundery / Moorfields / London.”

Postmark: “16/MR.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Fletcher / March 12. 1772.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/42.⁹

⁸See Matt. 11:21; Fletcher is comparing unbelief in his parish to the unbelief Jesus encountered at Bethsaida.

⁹A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 294–96.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Birmingham
March 17, 1772

Dear Brother,

The more you are at the Foundery the better. It is a good spirit which rules in that society.

You have done exactly right with regard to Thomas Maxfield. For the present my hope of him is lost.¹

I am today to meet Mr. [John] Fletcher at Bilbrook. Part of the *Third Check* is printing. The rest I have ready. In this he draws the sword and throws away the scabbard. Yet I doubt not they will forgive him all if he will but promise to write no more.

James Rouquet helped me at Bristol. I neither saw nor heard anything of George Stonehouse. Jane Jenkins is in a right spirit; affliction has done her good.² Mrs. Reeve I had no time for.³

I feared sister Marriott would not recover.⁴ Mr. [Ebenezer] Blackwell's heart is truly softened; but why is *she* afraid to receive the Lord's supper?⁵

If Mr. F. does come, it will be for good. It does not follow: "*You* felt nothing, therefore neither did your hearers."

In haste. Adieu.

Source: published transcription; Thomas Jackson (ed.), *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, 3rd edn., 14 vols. (London: Nichols for Mason, 1829–31), 12:127–28.

¹Maxfield had approached JW about a possible reconciliation, allowing him back in the connexion. But when JW laid out the conditions Maxfield demurred. See JW, *Journal*, Feb. 25, 1772, *Works*, 22:308.

²Jane Jones (1698–1783) married Daniel Jenkins in 1745; she was now a widow, after his death in Jan. See John Murlin to CW, Jan. 18, 1772.

³Mary (Andrews) Reeve (1711–86) was a Quaker, and a cousin of Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor. She married William Reeve (c. 1713–78) in Jan. 1740. William ran a foundry at Crew's Hole, near Bristol. See Vigor to CW, July 16, 1774; and CW to SGW, Sept. 22, 1778. JW spells "Reeves."

⁴Webster (Langdon) Marriott (1722–72), the wife of Thomas Marriott had just died.

⁵Elizabeth (Molland) Blackwell would die on Mar. 27, 1772.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Congleton
March 25, 1772

[[Dear Brother,]]

Giles Ball (as Oliver said) *was* a good man once!¹ I hope we have no more of the sort. There is still a famous one in Bristol.² Now I see why he *could* not join us. Poor Mr. B[uller]!³ I used to conceive better things of him.

I find almost all our preachers, in every circuit, have done with Christian perfection. They *say* they believe it, but they never preach it, or not once in a quarter. What is to be done? Shall we let it drop? Or make a point of it?

Oh what a thing it is to have *curam animarum*!⁴ You and I are called to this. To save souls from death! To watch over them as those that must give account!⁵ If our office implied no more than preaching a few times in a week, I could play with it. So might *you*. But how small a part of our duty (yours as well as mine) is this? God says to you as well as me, “Do *all thou canst*, be it more or less, to save the souls for whom my Son has died.” Let this voice be ever sounding in our ears. Then shall we give up our account with joy. *Eia, age; rumpe moras*!⁶ I am ashamed of my indolence and inactivity. The good Lord help us both!

Adieu! Ἔρρωσθε.⁷

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

Postmarks: “28/MR” and “Congleton”.

Endorsement: by CW; “B[rother] Mar. 25. 1772 / *cura animarum*!”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/38.

¹The comparison with Wheatley may mean that Giles Ball was a preacher guilty of sexual impropriety. If so, he was only a local preacher, never in the *Minutes*. The allusion is to a supposed death-bed statement of Oliver Cromwell that he was assured salvation because he ‘was a good man once’; see *AM* 5 (1782): 149.

²James Wheatley was now living in Bristol, where he died on May 27, 1775.

³See JW to CW, Apr. 26, 1772.

⁴JW means ‘*cura animarum*’, as CW corrects it in his endorsement; ‘the cure of souls’.

⁵See Heb. 13:17.

⁶Virgil, *Aeneid*, iv.569: ‘Come on, act; break off delay’. See also in JW to CW, Feb. 28, 1766.

⁷Whereas JW previously used the second person singular, he switched this time to the plural: ‘May you all fare well’.

From John Worgan¹

Gower Street, Bedford Square [London]
Thursday evening [March 26, 1772?²]

Dr. Worgan presents his best compliments to his very sincere good friend, the Reverend Mr. Charles Wesley. And lest his son Charles may have forgotten the message he sent him, he sends it written: He is *much* more welcome on Sunday evening next to his *Concerto spirituale*, than if he was mitred.³

Address: “The Revrmd. Mr Charles Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Dr Worgan.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/117.

¹John Worgan (1724–90), a prominent London organist, appointed to play at Vauxhall Gardens in 1751. When Worgan heard CW Jr. play on Sept. 28, 1769, he offered to teach him for free; see CW, *Journal Letters*, 441.

²A performance advertised as the first ever “Concerto spirituale,” was staged at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden on Friday, Mar. 27, 1772 (see the *Gazetteer and Daily Advertiser*). Worgan is not specifically listed as a performer at this event or an encore performance (using different songs) a few weeks later. Thus the specific date suggested is uncertain.

³I.e., a bishop.

From “A Bible Christian”

c. April 18, 1772

Dear Sir,

Having observed your Christian condescension in those labours of love so truly calculated for the use of the common people, I presume to beg your fine pen and poetical abilities in behalf of the next class of the creatures of God. I would ask if nature, reason, and religion do not all plead in favour even of the brute creation? Is it not unnatural and inhuman to put them to more pain than is necessary for the service of man? Can reason consent to the making sport with the life and misery of any creature? May not the great law of equity, doing as we would be done to, be extended even to them? May we not suppose ourselves in their place, and thence determine what they may fairly expect from us? Hath not the Lord and God of Christians given injunctions against cruelty towards them, and commanded that they should enjoy the rest of the great Sabbath of our God? Did not the Lord rebuke the prophet for smiting his beast without a cause? Did not the God of mercy mention “the much cattle” as one cogent motive to the divine compassion in sparing the great city?¹ The Scripture saith, “A good man is merciful to his beast.”² And can he be a good man that is not so, if goodness consists in imitating him “whose mercy is over all his works? For the Lord openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.”³

If tenderness, mercy, and compassion to the brute creatures were impressed on the infant mind, and conducted into action according to its slender power, would it not be confirmed in [the] human heart? And might not this early impression be forever engraven there, and through an happy bias diffuse its benevolence to the whole creation?

Does not experience, reverend sir, manifest the sad effects of a contrary education? While children instead of showing tenderness to irrationals are suffered to torment first poor little insects and then every helpless creature which comes in their way? Can it be reasonably expected that they being thus inured to cruelty and oppression even in their tender years, they should relent when they come to maturer years and be susceptible of mercy even to rationals? It cannot. For, I ask, is pity extended to man only because man has reason? If so, those would lose their claim to our compassion who stand in the greatest need of it; namely, children, idiots, and lunatics. But if pity is shown to all that are capable of pain, then may it be justly expected that we should sympathize with everything that has life.

I am persuaded that you, sir, are not insensible of the pain given to every Christian, every human heart, by those savage diversions [of] bull-baiting, cock-fighting, horse-racing, and hunting. Can any of these irrational and unnatural sports appear otherwise than cruel, unless through early prejudice, or entire want of consideration and reflection? And if a man is void of these, does he deserve the name of man? Or is he fit for society? And besides, how dreadful and the concomitant and the consequent vices of these savage routs? Yet such cowards are we grown that scarce any man has courage to draw his pen against them!⁴

Wishing, honoured sir, that your too feeble strength may be renewed, and that to honourable hoary age your pious life may be prolonged, and strewed with blessings to this and the rising generation. I remain,

Your sincere friend,

¹Jonah 3:7.

²Cf. Prov. 12:10.

³Cf. Ps. 145:9, 15.

⁴Everything up to this point (except the title, the use of “dear” in the salutation, and one insertion of “reverend sir”) reproduces a letter to JW, as excerpted in the tenth installment of his *Journal*, published in 1761! Cf. JW, *Journal*, July 16, 1756, *Works*, 21:68–69. The writer is encouraging CW to add his voice to some comments about animal welfare sprinkled through JW’s works.

A Bible Christian

Address: titled “To the Reverend Mr. Charles Wesley.”

Source: published transcription; *Westminster Journal* (Apr. 18–25, 1772), p. 2.

From the Rev. Vincent Perronet

Shoreham
April 18, 1772

My Very Dear Brother,

I doubt not but we both join in constant petitions at the throne of grace for the life and health of our dear absent friend, thy brother [JW]. By all accounts his valuable health is in a precarious state, and unless God provides (as I doubt not but he will) for his people, they will have abundant reason to mourn.¹ May God give thee a double portion of his Spirit, that thou mayest stand in the gap and prevent the flock being led by any who have not true gospel light in the head and in the heart!

My love to thy dear brother. The same attends thee and my dear sister, and all thy family. The divine blessing be with all of us!

Thine most affectionately,

V. Perronet

Source: published transcription; *Arminian Magazine* 8 (1785): 169.

¹Perronet's concern was apparently raised by the effort of some of JW's supporters to raise funds to purchase a coach, so that he did not have to ride horseback (given his current hydrocele); see JW, *Journal*, Feb. 21, 1772, *Works*, 22:308. JW's *Journal* entries in mid-April 1772 show no serious immediate health concern.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Perth
April 26, 1772

[[Dear Brother,]]

I meant Mr. Buller.¹ I have not been at Leeds, so I can give you no account of the matter.

I find by long experience it comes exactly to the same point to tell men they shall be saved from all sin *when they die*, or to tell them it may be a year hence, or a week hence—or any time but *now*. Our word does not profit, either as to justification or sanctification, unless we can bring them to expect the blessing *while we speak*.

I hope Fox is in peace.² But he had no business there. I suppose the madman was another of the name. I am glad you have done justice to Mrs. Blackwell's memory.³

I do not believe either brother Wildman or any other spoke those words.⁴ I cannot believe it at all, unless you or brother [Alexander] Mather heard them. Many tell you tales of that sort which are not true at all.

Your business as well as mine is to save souls. When we took priests' orders, we undertook to make it our *one business*. I think every day lost which is not (mainly at least) employed in this thing. *Sum totus in illo*.⁵

I am glad you are to be at Bristol soon. To whom shall I leave my papers and letters? I am quite at a loss. I think Mr. [John] Fletcher is the best that occurs now.⁶

Postmarks: "AP/27," "1/MA," and "Perth."

Endorsement: by CW; "B[rother / Apr 26. / 1772 / alw[ay]s active."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/39.

¹Explaining his comment on "Mr. B." in letter to CW, Mar. 25, 1772.

²CW's letter, to which JW is responding, is not known to survive. This leaves it unclear whether the reference is to John Fox, a man once active in the Foundery society, who left in support of George Bell (see JW, *Journal*, Jan. 28, 1763, *Works*, 21:403).

³When Elizabeth (Molland) Blackwell died on Mar. 27, 1772, CW composed an extended funeral hymn. See MS Death of Elizabeth Blackwell; and in MS Funeral Hymns (1756–87), 48–57.

⁴Brother Wildman was a member at the Foundery, and in a band; see Thomas Coke to JW, Dec. 15, 1779.

⁵"I am entirely occupied with it."

⁶The remainder of the page, where JW's closing would appear on one side, and the address information on the other, is missing.

From an Unidentified Correspondent

Broadway [Worcestershire?]
May 22, 1772

Dear and Reverend Sir,

I should not presume to write to you again, after so long silence, did I not believe that what I have to communicate will give you pleasure. I know you will rejoice to hear of the blessed change God has wrought in my soul. O the amazing love he bears to sinners! That I, even I, after so long resistance and despite done to his Holy Spirit, should be brought to experience the riches of his mercies in Christ Jesus! I find indeed that “nothing is too hard for the Lord.”¹ He is still mighty to save, and strong to deliver. I am astonished when I reflect on the goodness of God in thus softening my hard, rebellious heart, and bringing me to a sight and sense of my sin and misery! How was I still drawn on by the Spirit of grace, notwithstanding my many oppositions to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness!

O what joy flowed at that instant into my soul when I could say by the Holy Ghost, “My Lord and my God!”¹ I know that thou not only died upon the cross for the sins of the whole world, but for me in particular. And that I feel, by the application of thy atoning blood, the heavy burden of my sins removed. And that I am through faith in thee freely justified in the sight of God, restored to his favour, and adopted into his family. This clear evidence of my being released from the bondage of sin and restored to the glorious liberty of the children of God filled me with joy unspeakable and full of glory! My soul was full of divine consolation and holy transport, which lasted all that night and part of the next morning; when the enemy threw a cloud over me by suggesting I was deluding myself with false happiness. But glory be to God, I had light given me to see the temptation, and power to resist it. “The Son of righteousness” arose on my heart with redoubled lustre;² by which I was timely delivered from the snare laid against me.

Since this glorious manifestation of God’s pardoning love to my soul I have experienced many outward trials, in inward temptations. But blessed by God, I am not left to my own strength. His everlasting arms are still beneath me, whereby I am supported in every time of need. I found it a great trial indeed, and difficult to overcome, when I was told I should bring a disgrace upon the gospel by having preaching at my house. But from this also hath the Lord delivered me. He knows that my intention in it was simply with a view to his glory and the good of my poor neighbours, whom I was desirous of being brought to a sense of their danger by the same means that I was. And I have faith to believe that many will be converted and live.

They are very attentive to Mr. [John] Murlin’s and Mr. Pawson’s doctrine,³ and express in general great concern at their leaving them so soon.⁴ O that you would permit me to make a request in their behalf, that in compassion to their weakness you will intercede with your brother for the above gentlemen to stay another year on this round; as I have great reason to hope their labours in the place “would not be in vain in the Lord.”⁵ If this request can be granted, it will lay us all under great obligations to you.

¹Cf. Gen. 18:14.

¹John 20:28.

²Cf. Mal. 4:2.

³John Pawson (1737–1806) became an itinerant preacher in 1762 (see JW, *Works*, 10:294) and served faithfully from that point. See *DEB*, 860–61; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 267–68.

⁴Murlin and Pawson were assigned to the Bristol circuit at the Aug. 1771 Conference; see JW, *Works*, 10:386.

⁵Cf. 1 Cor. 15:18.

There is one stumbling block in our way here which I must entreat your advice about the removal of, being fearful if it remains it will be of much hindrance to the work. After Isaiah Gregory had preached here, two Sundays following he sent his brother Jeremiah.⁶ And they have ever since preached here once a fortnight alternately. But the people can by no means receive Jeremiah. They declare they will come to hear him no more. I am tender how I say anything against any person, but he seem to be wholly unacquainted with that humble mind that was it Christ, and without which we cannot be his disciples. Both his preaching and conversation are⁷ full of his own wisdom, not the wisdom of God. Indeed, he makes such an affectation of learning, and brings in so many hard words, that his sermons are quite unintelligible. You will have the [...]

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/146 (incomplete).⁸

⁶Neither of the Gregory brothers appear in the *Minutes* as itinerant preachers. They would have been local preachers in the area.

⁷Orig., “is.”

⁸For 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 Fletcher

[Madeley]
Last [of] May [May 31, 1772]

My Very Dear Brother,

Where are you? You send me no directions. Your brother is in Scotland and you are as in the land of forgetfulness. You know that Mr. Hill's is come out, 151 large pages. In the first paragraph he complains of my unhappy spirit, and charges me with sneer, banter, sarcasm, notorious falsehood, calumny, and gross perversions, pen dipped in gall.¹ He must be answered, or St. James's religion and your brother will suffer much. You must procure the book and give it the perusal. I have already answered it in part.² Could I send the manuscript to you or to [William] Pine, as I did that of the *Third Check*, under cover [of] Laroche, Esqr.?³

Mr. Rowland Hill is printing against us, and going to declare off and shake us as heretical vipers.⁴ Mr. [Martin] Madan corrects him. You must do so by me.

I wish the additions to the *Third Check* had past through your hands. I fear they will lay us open to the lash. What I say about "we merit" and Mr. Madan, has nettled him.⁵ I received a very pretty letter on the occasion from him. I think the quotation will fairly prove what I brought it for—viz., that the word "merit" may improperly, and yet without heterodoxy, be used by Christians. Mr. Hill has already answered the *Third Check* by these words: "If you answer the first edition of my *Letters*, I will look upon it as no answer at all."⁶

I shall be glad of your immediate directions, reproofs, warnings, checks. And I beg your instant prayers. I think you and your brother should interpose, they are so hot. What think you of the "Farrago"?⁷ Mr. Hill in a private letter says, "I have just suppressed a poem against Mr. Wesley so much the more cutting as the severest expressions are taken from that ludicrous medley called *Hymns on Everlasting Love*.⁸ *Furor arma ministrat*."⁹ Did Britain die in the Lord?

God bless you and strengthen you, is the prayer of
Your helpless nothing.

¹See Richard Hill, *Review of All the Doctrines Taught by the Rev. Mr. Wesley; Containing a Full and Particular Answer to a Book entitled A Second Check to Antinomianism*, 2nd edn. (London: Dilly, 1772), p. 6.

²Fletcher's full response would be published as *Logica Genevensis; or a Fourth Check to Antinomianism: In which St. James's Pure Religion is defended against the charges, and established upon the Concessions of Mr. Richard and Mr. Rowland Hill* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1772).

³Sir James Laroche (1734–1804).

⁴[Rowland Hill,] *Friendly Remarks Occasioned by the Spirit and Doctrines contained in the Rev. Mr Fletcher's "Vindication," And more particularly in his "Second Check to Antinomianism" To which is added a Postscript occasioned by his "Third Check"* (London: E. and C. Dilly, 1772).

⁵See Fletcher, *Third Check*, 68.

⁶Cf. Richard Hill, *Some Remarks on a Pamphlet Entitled "A Third Check to Antinomianism"* (London: Dilly, 1772), p. 3.

⁷Hill, *Review of All the Doctrines ...; to which is added a Farrago*, 2nd edn. (London: Dilly, 1772), 106–47. Cf. CW's "After reading Mr Hill's *Remarks and Farrago Double Distilled*," in MS *Miscellaneous Poems*, 24.

⁸I.e., CW's two volumes of anti-Calvinist *Hymns on God's Everlasting Love* (1741–42).

⁹Virgil, *Aeneid*, i.150; "madness lending arms" (Loeb).

J. F.

My love and respects to all your household and Sally [Jr].
I have got rid of my Birmingham publisher by sending him £10 and 6 shilling.
Remember your promise about the treatise on original sin.¹⁰

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. C. Wesley / at the New Room / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Fletcher / May 31. 1772 / fearless, humble.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/44.¹¹

¹⁰Fletcher, *Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense* (1772).

¹¹A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 296–97.

From the Rev. Dr. Thomas Ford¹

Albemarle Street [London]
June 6, 1772

Indeed my dear friend, your letter came very safe to hand, and upbraids me with its date.² I know not what to say to you all now by way of atonement. For though I have again been disappointed of ecclesiastical preferment since I last saw you, yet that is no alleviation of my trespass. I wish you could have greeted me with the title of “Rector of St. Peter [le Poer] parish, Broad Street,” which Dr. Burton, who stepped into a certain stall at Exeter would have generously resigned to me.³ But the Chapter of St. Paul’s, who are the patrons, would by no means consent, for a fault which will mend every day: my age. This I whisper in your private ear of secrecy. Surely God sees it best for his service that I should not go where I like to go, and therefore I thank him. I have not a murmur rising against his providence, who will make all things work together for good.

I can send you no further account of myself but that Mr. [John] Fletcher’s third book has convinced me a man may go to heaven without believing in Calvin.⁴ The tree is known by its fruits; and I think verily there is no greater proof that this persuasion cometh not of him that calleth us than if it destroys peace upon earth and good will towards men. What a sour lesson which makes men more bitterly against their Christian opponents than they were in the state of nature against their most avowed foes! *Tantaene animis caelestibus irae?*⁵

I have been frequently with Lady Robert Manners since you went. She called upon me the other Sunday to take me to Stockwell. I believe she loves all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. She has a great affection for you. Though it appeared by many hints dropped in conversation that the Calvinists are for keeping everybody to themselves.

You have heard of the fatal fall Lord William received.⁶ As he was mounting a young horse within a few yards of his own door, his spur pricked the horse, which reared up and threw him upon his head; so that he survived but a few hours.

Mrs. [Maria] Littlehales went into Essex almost as soon as you left us. The Countess [of Huntingdon] received me graciously, but not a word about you or the controversy which she has raised. I was surprised she tolerated my prudence, and caution, and fear of men so much; especially as she was so high in her commendations of Rowland Hill, who has been preaching here. He is, as you may imagine, much followed; and seems to aim at popularity and to copy the only exceptionable parts of Mr. [George] Whitefield’s delivery—and that awkward enough. He is unconnected, injudicious, and often indelicate. But it goes down, for the people of London will swallow anything. He may do much good in his circuits,

¹Rev. Dr. Thomas Ford (1742–1821) received his MA from Christ Church, Oxford in 1765, and his LLD in 1770. He served for 47 years as vicar of Melton-Mowbray, in Leicestershire, and chaplain to Archbishop Secker. See John Ward, *Sketches of Wesleyan Methodism in Melton Mowbray and the Circuit* (Melton Mowbray: J. Towne, 1874), 9ff.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Rev. Dr. Daniel Burton (c. 1705–75), rector of St. Peter le Poer since 1751, was named a prebend of Exeter Cathedral in Apr. 1771.

⁴I.e., Fletcher, *Third Check*. Ford’s father, James Ford (1717–95), who had treated CW at Bristol, was now physician of Queen Charlotte and a supporter of both Whitefield’s Tabernacle and Lady Huntingdon’s connexion.

⁵Virgil, *Aeneid*, i.11; “Do heavenly spirits have such anger?”

⁶William Manners (1697–1772), the brother of Lord Robert Manners.

but I fear he turns your professors here aside, and more go to be entertained with his oddities than to be edified with his wholesome precepts.

I ought to thank you in behalf of my desolate kinsman, to whom you showed great kindness. He is now upon the point of leaving your city for Nottingham, where he will not be kept so much under, but thrive upon his abilities.

You say nothing of your family, so I hope they are all well and that his native air makes my dear little friend grow strong and find his appetite.⁷ I pray God keep you and Mrs. Wesley in perfect health and blessing. May you see all your fervent prayers for your children accomplished. I know they lie nearest your heart and I hope they will ever be a comfort to it. I often think of you and have great expectations of being with you in August.

I can only add how sincerely I desire to be remembered by you as
Your grateful friend and affectionate brother,

Tho. Ford

The enclosed is to my dear friend Sammy.

Address: “To / The Revd. M[remainder missing].”

Endorsement: by CW, “Dr Ford June 6. 1772 / of the bitter Calvinists.”⁸

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/70.

⁷Ford was particularly close to CW and SGW’s son Samuel; the enclosure mentioned is not known to survive.

⁸CW wrote in shorthand under the endorsement: “[[To Dr. Ford Bristol June]] 23. 1773.” This was the beginning of his shorthand record of his reply, but the remainder is missing (like the address).

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
July 5, 1772

My Dear Brother,

I thank you for the letters you have lately sent me.¹ Your loving directions are reasonable. You asked me in one of them how I found myself the Sunday before. Your question surprised me so much the more, as I had spent some time that day in wondering how I was inwardly loosed, and how prayer and praise came from a much greater depth than usual in my heart—which, glory be to God, hath in general remained with me ever since; together with greater openings of love and clearer views of Christian simplicity and liberty.

I thought I was merely indebted to the Lord's love for this enlargement. But I am still more thankful that he would have my gratitude pass through the channel of brotherly love by which his bounty came down to me. I desire then you will add thanksgiving to prayer.

I know not how to keep pace with Mr. Hill. He writes me word in a private letter that he has answered the *Third Check* and that the answer has been published some time in London.² It is well. I may kill three birds with one stone by answering his *Review*, his reply, and the letter of his brother [Rowland], which is also published.³ My plan is to attack antinomianism and Calvinism with the weapon [that] Mr. Hill grants a second justification by the evidence of works in the day of judgment. And to show that upon his own concessions the [1770] *Minutes* and our legality are fully established. I show that our Church is not Calvinistical and exceeds Mr. Wesley in legality. I give an extract of Flavel's treatise against antinomianism.⁴ I wrest the 17th Article from the antinomians, and show the ground of Calvinism.⁵ I hope it will be a close check to antinomianism. God direct me! I think your brother will best answer the "Farrago."⁶

I beg you will take care, in going once more over the tract on original sin,⁷ not to let pass anything representing the law as covenant of wrath opposed to the gospel. I am now sure that the Mosiac dispensation was nothing but gospel in embryo. I think the law can be fulfilled evangelically by love, and that this fulfilment is Christian perfection. On this plan I shall proceed in my treatise on that subject. Be so good therefore as to expunge whatever is contrary to it.

I am cut short by the bearer, who wants to be gone. The Lord fill you full of himself and help me to hop after you in his ways. I am glad to hear your brother is better. I had a few lines from him where he says nothing about a bad state of health.

¹No letters of CW to Fletcher in June or early July are known to survive.

²Richard Hill, *Some Remarks on a Pamphlet Entitled "A Third Check to Antinomianism"* (London: Dilly, 1772).

³See Fletcher to CW, May 31, 1772. Fletcher's answer was *Logica Genevensis; or a Fourth Check to Antinomianism: In which St. James's Pure Religion is defended against the charges, and established upon the Concessions of Mr. Richard and Mr. Rowland Hill* (Bristol: W. Pine, 1772).

⁴Fletcher, *Logica Genevensis*, 47–48, quotes John Flavel *Planelogia; a Succinct and Seasonable Discourse of the Occasions, Causes, Nature, Rise, Growth, and Remedies of Mental Errors* (London: Thomas Cockerill, 1691), [9–10].

⁵Article 17 treats predestination; Fletcher addresses it in Letter XII of *Logica Genevensis*, 185–217

⁶I.e., Hill, *Review of All the Doctrines* (1772), 106–47; where he compiles quotations from JW's various publications in parallel columns, arguing that JW contradicts himself on each point cited.

⁷Fletcher, *Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense* (1772).

My Christian love to all in your house and heart farewell.
Yours in Jesus,

J. Fletcher

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. Charles / Wesley at the Room / in the Horsefair / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “July 5. 1772 / Fletcher reached / undaunted.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MAW Fl, 36.1.⁸

⁸A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 297–99.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Dewsbury
July 10, 1772

[[Dear Brother,]]

If I can meet with Mr. Hill's book at Leeds tomorrow, perhaps I may write a little before the Conference.¹ I am glad Mr. Davies has been with you.² But he must not assist you for nothing. If he joins heart and hand, he should have seventy pounds a year.

My journeys lie thus, if God permit: Monday, August 10, Sheffield; Tuesday, Burslem; Wednesday, Salop; Friday, The Hay; Saturday, 15, Brecon; Tuesday, 18, Haverfordwest; Tuesday 25, Swansea; Saturday, August 30, Bristol; Monday, September 1, Cullompton; Saturday, 13, at Bristol again. I am able to stir a little still. Indeed, I find myself no worse in any respect.

In these fifty years I do not remember to have seen such a change. She is now *χαρίτων μία*, *tota merum mel*.³ Finding fault with nobody, but well pleased with every person and thing!

I believe if you had applied warm treacle to the bruised parts, you would have been well in eight-and-forty hours.⁴ Let us work today! The night cometh!⁵

A little you will pick out of Dr. [William] Boyce's fine music for the use of our plain people.

My sister Kezzy was born about March 1710.⁶ Therefore you could not be born later than December 1708.⁷ Consequently if you live till December 1772, you will enter your sixty-fifth year.⁸

Peace be with you and yours!

[[Adieu!]]

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

Postmark: "LEEDS."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Brother July]] B[rother]. July⁹ 10. 1772 " and "*χαρίτων μία* ... [[his wife changed]] / [[my age]] 65 / or 62 [[Kez]]."

Source holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/40.

¹I.e., Richard Hill, *A Review of All the Doctrines Taught by the Rev. Mr. Wesley* (London: Dilly, 1772). JW replied in *Some Remarks on Mr. Hill's 'Review'* (1772), *Works*, 13:433–87.

²Orig. 'Davis'. Rev. Edward Davies (c. 1736–1812), who was currently in Bristol, seeking a more adequate living. JW and CW were soon recruiting Davies as an ordained helper in London. But he desired too much support, and his relationship with CW soured over a transaction involving a mare. See CW, *Journal Letters*, 422–33.

³'One full of graces, honey quite unmixed.' JW is referring to his wife, Mary.

⁴This is the first treatment recommended for bruises in *Primitive Physic*. CW had recently fallen and been bruised; see CW to Joseph Benson, July 25, 1772.

⁵See John 9:4.

⁶I.e., March 1709/10 (old style). The exact date of her birth is unknown.

⁷CW was born Dec. 18, 1707. He typically underestimated his age by two years. Cf. Frank Baker, 'The Birth of Charles Wesley', *WHS* 31 (1957): 25–26.

⁸Added in CW's hand: 'Or, according to sister Pat's account, my 62nd'. Pat [i.e., Martha (Wesley) Hall] was wrong.

⁹CW had written [[Brother July]] in shorthand, then expanded as shown above.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
August 5 [1772]

My Very Dear Friend,

I should have been glad to have seen you. But I am not sorry Mr. Davies did not come at present,¹ as I wanted to get rid of our controversy, or of my share in it, before I leave my study. Not that I have here particular helps. But when I am out I cannot find time to write, and my answer to Mr. [Richard] Hill should be out. I have sent what I have written to your brother for his corrections or suppression. I hope to meet him at Shrewsbury next Wednesday, where he will give me his directions. I have a letter from Mr. Hill, who says if I answer him, he will answer me in your brother's own words. But I hope your brother will shut his mouth in his answer to the "Farrago"—for that he takes upon himself.²

There is, I find, an order from dear Lady Huntingdon that I shall not preach in her chapels. I have as yet seen neither Mr. Hill's answer to the *Third Check*, nor his brother's animadversions upon the *Second*.³ The first performance is (they say) good humoured; the second very sensible, polished I think by Mr. [Martin] Madan, who does not strike but whet the sword.

I designed Mr. Hill a letter to prove that we may, as "men of sense and men of honour, subscribe to the 17th Article and disbelieve his election."⁴ The subject has swelled under my pen. I have not yet gone through it. Something like this, well executed, might under the appearance of a defence carry war into the enemies' territories—and either shame the Calvinist clergy or prevent some from following them into their peculiarities. Another letter I had begun to enquire into the grounds of the propensity which professors show to embrace Calvinism. If I had light and wisdom to execute the plan of it, I hope it might soften or undeceive some of them, and at the same time warn others.

I still want a fountain of power, call it what you please. "Baptism of fire," "perfect love," "sealing," I contend not for the name. And yet I find that my view of gospel liberty, I mean the liberty of holy love, clear[s] up. But my heart does not keep pace with my head, and my mind does not remain fixed in one point. In short, I want to be established. But I want it not enough to pray with the importunity of the widow.⁵ Were the Son of man to come, he would complain that he did not find that faith in me which he wants to make him room. May I pray for this faith, till with this faith I can pray and obtain all I want. Help me by your prayers, directions, and example, as you do still by your hymns. Send me a set of your two volumes⁶ in the packet of the proofs which Mr. [John] Southcote will send me, and I shall pay you the money at the first opportunity. I thank you for your correcting the proofs of my treatise. I hope you are not tired of doing it. I give you carte blanche to alter the manuscript. Upon second thoughts, I think the man jumping into the quart bottle may be best left out, because I cannot properly attest the folly of the

¹Likely CW had suggested that Rev. Edward Davies (whom he met recently in Bristol) come to Madeley to fill in for a while for Fletcher, so that Fletcher could go to Bristol and help shepherd his publications into print.

²JW's answer to Hill, *Review of All the Doctrines* (1772), 106–47, appeared as *Some Remarks on Mr. Hill's Review* (1772), *Works*, 13:433–87.

³Hill, *Some Remarks on ... "A Third Check"* (1772); and Rowland Hill, *Friendly Remarks occasioned by the Spirit and Doctrines contained in the Rev. Mr Fletcher's "Vindication," and more particularly in his "Second Check to Antinomianism."* To which is added a postscript, occasioned by his "Third Check." (London: E. and C. Dilly, 1772).

⁴I.e., Letter XII in Fletcher, *Logica Genevensis*, 185–217.

⁵See Luke 18:1–8.

⁶Likely CW's two-volume *Scripture Hymns*; or the two-volume *HSP* (1749).

fact; though I remember that when I came to England, London was full of it.⁷ Take it off, and whatever else is not *ad rem*,⁸ or lays the truth open to objections.

I could the more rejoice over your narrow escape by the fall from your horse, as I bore the marks upon my forehead and cheeks and arms and breast of one in which the providence of our good God appeared wonderfully in my preservation. Lord let us be spared to show forth thy praise! I embrace you and yours in the Spirit. Give my love to them. And may God give us so much of his, that out of the abundance of our heart we may look, write, speak, and act all the day to the glory of our common head and common heart

Adieu.

J. F.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. C. Wesley / at the Room in the / Horsefair / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "Fletcher / Aug. 5. 1772 / writing on the Articles / on the temptation to Calvinism."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/45.⁹

⁷Fletcher is referring to a famous hoax. In Jan. 1749 a man rented a theatre in the Hay Market in London and advertised that he would stuff himself into a quart bottle on the night of Jan. 16. The theatre sold out to a gullible crowd, but rather than perform the man absconded with the money. See *Gentleman's Magazine* (Jan. 1742), 42; and *London Magazine* (Jan. 1749), 34–35.

⁸"to the point."

⁹A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 299–301.

From Maria (Hill) Littlehales

West Hatch [Essex]
August 10 [1772]

Dear Sir,

You cannot conceive the pleasure your letter gave me.¹ I rejoice to hear you are all well and have not forgot us. I am sure I never shall forget the many happy hours I spent with your family. Mr. [Baker John] Littlehales never writes to anybody, even upon business, unless it is something very particular. I have often debated with myself whether it would be improper to answer the line you sent him,² and concluding at last it would be impertinent, I gave up all thoughts about it. Mr. Wyatt showed me two or three letters he had from dear Charles [Jr.].

I have read (you may be sure) Mr. [Richard] Hill's of Mr. [John] Fletcher's books. What an insignificant thing is the former—especially what he calls a “Farrago,” where to prove that Mr. John Wesley contradicts himself he brings in an assertion of Mr. Toplady's.³ Who will believe him?

I am very glad to hear your brother is likely to be still a blessing to the world. May he who giveth wisdom liberally pour out his Spirit more abundantly on him, and enable him ever to put to silence the ignorance of foolish men by well doing! Yesterday I had an opportunity of bearing my testimony to his worth in a company of rigid Calvinists who, to say the truth, were abusing him. Oh that there was more love among Christians; that there was more in my heart of that love that passeth knowledge, which whoever is possessed of enjoys unspeakable happiness indeed. Sir, when I find myself without this, I mourn after it and long for its return. I hope you will pray for me, that I may daily experience more of its power on my life and tempers, till I come to the full and never-ceasing enjoyment of it in heaven.

Forgive me for taking up so much of your time. I know not how to leave off but will detain you no longer than to assure you I pray for all the blessings of time and eternity on you and yours, and to assure you I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your obliged and sincere friend and servant,

Maria Littlehales

Laura has not heard from Miss [Sarah] Wesley.⁴ Mr. [Samuel] Arnold has put two very pretty little tunes to two of the Scripture hymns for her.

I fear Lord Robert Manners is not expected to live long.⁵

Endorsement: by CW, “Aug. 10. 1772 / M Littlehales / discreet, cordial.”
Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/72.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²This letter is not known to survive.

³Rev. Augustus Montague Toplady (1740–78) was converted in 1755 by a sermon preached at Coolamain by James Morris, one of JW's preachers. A couple of years later he and JW began to correspond. Toplady soon aligned with the Calvinist Methodists, pursued his BA at Trinity College Dublin (BA, 1760), and become a strong critic of JW's Arminianism.

⁴Her daughter Elizabeth Laura Littlehales.

⁵Whatever his current ailment, Lord Robert Manners lived ten more years.

From the Rev. Edward Davies¹

[Coychurch, Wales]
c. August 15, 1772

I am exceeding sorry at your repeated disappointments and misfortunes, and much more so when I find it out of my power to relieve you in sending the mare immediately. And what grieves me more, I am apprehensive she will not be with you before the latter end of the month, of the 1st or 2nd of September. When she comes, she will fully please you I believe. She will never throw you down; for I never rode so sure and so safe an one.

Source: excerpt in CW manuscript for records; MARC, DDCW 7/111, p. 2.

¹CW had loaned Rev. Davies a mare, and a debate between the two emerged when she was not returned. For the full account, from which this excerpt is drawn, see CW, “The Case of Edward Davies,” *Journal Letters*, 422–33.

From Joseph Benson

Newcastle
August 26, 1772

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

You see you have leaned upon a broken reed when you depended on me for an account of the Conference. In excuse for my conduct in this particular, I might observe that there was so much temporal business to be transacted that there was little or no time for anything spiritual. And therefore I had nothing to transmit worth your notice; nothing but what you will see in the *Minutes*.¹ I assure you sir, though I was pleased to see so much harmony and love among the preachers, and so much esteem and affection discovered by them all to your brother [JW], yet it was a very tedious and unprofitable time to me. I greatly wish for my part that it could be contrived to transact the temporal matters by the Assistants alone, before the other preachers arrived, that there might be time for discussing some points of importance and mutual edification in faith and love. Surely it might be made a time of much spiritual advantage to all that attend. Whereas at present I see no end it answers with respect to the majority at all.

I spent some time before and after Conference at Hull, much to my satisfaction. God, who can work by whomever he will, was graciously pleased to bless my labours amongst them. The Countess [of Huntingdon] had sent a student thither who, preaching (in an Independent chapel) on the same evenings and at the same hours, had drawn away many of our people.² Hence the congregations at our house had been very thin, and as cold and indifferent. They were drinking in the most dangerous of the Calvinistic principles and, though already fallen from grace, persuaded they could not fall. I have reason to think, however, the Lord has revived his work. The congregations are increased and the fire kindled, I trust, in many hearts. To him be the glory!

Oh that his Spirit were poured out upon all flesh! Upon the Methodists in particular. Oh sir, we are a fallen people! We have, many of us, left our first love. At Newcastle things are in a poor condition indeed. The work of God has long been at a stand. The society is diminished and few have come to preaching. I believe one great cause has been too much of preaching. They have had it every night and morning (save Saturday) this 30 years. The work of life is too cheap among them. One cannot indeed suppose they can attend every night, especially persons in business. I should hope it would be a means of enlarging the congregations and of reviving the work to have less preaching.

Dear sir, pray for us, that God may be with us and cause his word to run and be glorified. And favour me with your advice. I have need of it. I am a poor, ignorant, and inconstant creature! But [I] trust I am enabled, through the Spirit of Jesus, to live to him and for eternity. I do long to spend and be spent for him. It is sweet to be employed for God, but more so to lay at his feet. I am

Your obliged servant,

J. Benson

I find myself less than ever concerned about the praises and censures of men. But I labour to be accepted of him. As I do not expect to be a long liver, I wish to live well. My respects to Mrs. Wesley and love to your children. Do write soon.

Address: "The Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley / at Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "Aug. 26. 1772 / Benson / unedified at the Conference / renewing the flock at Hull / complaining of the *dead* M[ethodis]ts."

Source: holograph; MARC, PLP 7/6/3.

¹See JW, *Works*, 10:404–15.

²The student was named John Harris; see Alan Harding, *The Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 64, 102.

From John Collinson¹

London
September 11, 1772

Reverend and Dear Sir,

You can weep with those that weep. But I am too much affected to detain you with ceremony. My children are dead.² We suppose they received the infection of the small pox and whooping cough at the same time. We did not fear the small pox. But as soon as we found them in danger of the cough from some children at Dulwich, we brought them to London. It was too late. The small pox were favourable, and injured us only by weakening the constitution. The cough became violent as the other disorder left us. The children were not able to withstand it. We sent the girl into the country, and kept the boy at home. All was vain. The convulsions put an end to the unequal conflict. Our youngest only remains. He has had the small pox without being sick. But we know not yet whether he has the cough or not. The two lovely innocents are to be buried together tomorrow evening.

The Lord is righteous, but I have sinned and have provoked him to anger. Is it not true that the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge?³ I know of no instance mentioned in Scripture of the death of children but as a punishment for sin. Some people say "they are taken away from the evil to come."⁴ And it is true they are exempt from human miseries. But can we suppose they lose nothing by an early death?⁵ They are dismissed [from] the field before the contest begins; can they then share a victor's crown?⁶ It has been said that if they had been tried, they might have fainted in the day of battle. But why should we admit of a suspicion so injurious to their memory? During their stay they acted well their part; we will therefore presume,⁷ as appearances were strongly in their favour, that if they had lived to mature age they would have adorned their Christian profession.

How idle are our conjectures!⁸ Who can tell the manner in which departed spirits exist? Are they ignorant of all things done under the sun? Or do they know the melting sorrow which their mourning friends feel on account of their absence? Do the capacities of children enlarge and mature in a separate state? Or are they children forever? Are the following (I think consolatory) lines true?

... The wintry blast of death
kills not the buds of virtue; no, they spread
beneath the heavenly beam of brighter suns.
Through endless ages, into higher powers.⁹

¹John Collinson, a hatmaker in Southwark, was one of the men named by JW in 1766 to a committee for reducing debt on chapels in the connexion (see Collinson, et. al. to JW, Feb. 5, 1768); in 1792 he was named a trustee of City Road chapel (see Stevenson, *City Road*, 250.)

²Eleanor Collinson and John Joseph Collinson were both buried on Sept. 12, 1772

³See Jer. 21:39.

⁴Cf. Isa. 57:1.

⁵This sentence is underlined, likely by CW.

⁶The last clause in this sentence is underlined; again, likely by CW.

⁷"Presume" is underlined, likely by CW.

⁸This sentence is underlined, likely by CW.

⁹James Thomson, "The Summer," ll. 581–84.

I have not yet said anything in praise of my children. I forbore to do it during their lives; but as they are dead I may, without offence, do them justice. The girl was amiable and pleasant; the boy, grave, manly, and active. I only speak the language of all who knew them. They were lovely in their lives, and in their deaths are not divided. One of our friends lately said he could almost envy me on account of my children. alas! Who on that account will now envy the afflicted?

John Collinson

We are, thank God, pretty well; as is Miss Dale,¹⁰ and join in love to you, Mrs. Wesley, and family.

Address: “The Revd. Mr. Chs. Wesley / Bristol.”

Postmark: “11/SE.”

Endorsement: by CW, “[Collinson both dead! / Sept]] 11. 1772” and “Collinson’s children / dead Sept. 11. 1772.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/114.

¹⁰Margaret Dale (c. 1744–77), who had been helping administer the Orphan House in Newcastle, was spending some time in London, visiting her sister Mary (Dale) Collinson. See Dale to JW, Jan. 1, 1772.

From Lady Mary (Degge) Manners

Ealing
September 14, 1772

We are returned to this place with fresh cause of thankfulness. Our daughter seems perfectly restored to health, and her strength much increased.¹ I cannot get quite free from this disorder in my eye; but it is at times much better, and [I] have again put myself under Mr. Bromfeild's direction in the use of outward means to remove this complaint.² It is very uneasy to me and I am at times ready to murmur.

I have no doubt of the reality of forgiveness being experienced.³ Nay, I think there is no serving God in an acceptable manner till this is believed, because we cannot love him till we know he has first loved us. What distresses me most is the fear of deceiving my own soul in this important matter, as I have seen many mistake their own heated imaginations for the working of the Spirit of God. Sometimes I have been filled with love and joy in the ordinances, or in reading the word. But I am so much afraid of these dangerous delusions I have seen that [it] has immediately made me doubt the reality of my own feeling. And this keeps me in sinful doubts and unbelief, both which I know to be dishonourable to God as well as a great hindrance to my self. It is not in my power to believe. Faith is the gift of God, and it is this I want. Lord help my unbelief. An assurance of my interest and union with Christ would comfort me under all I have to meet with, and would make the morrow more indifferent to me, which I cannot at present help thinking of with pain, as I have a fresh proof of the dreaded event.

In about a month we purpose going into Lincoln. Our minister goes on very well.⁴ I am the better pleased that Satan still thinks it necessary to keep all his engines at work to frustrate his labours. I trust he is with us that is stronger than all that are against us. And as it was evidently the Lord that sent the message there, I do not doubt but their numbers who believe will increase. We have all the persecution that they have the power of abuse, etc.; and they still continue to disturb them of those evenings he holds private meetings. Yet his enemies confess they have nothing to lay to his charge but that he is mad; and such stuff ought not to be suffered to be preached, but he ought to be hanged and burned. This is [the] saying of some of those (who we must suppose for love's sake) have solemnly sworn to preach and to defend the very same doctrines they rail at. This shows the spirit of their father, and what they would do if they had the power. Oh that I was worthy of this honour, for I am far from knowing I should stand if that was really the case.

My eye tires. I must hasten to conclude. Mrs. [Martha] Gumley went from here, before we came, to Chertsey, and sent a letter that she was going the next day for Bath. But some letters have been returned from there, and I have heard nothing from her though I have written there. Perhaps you may know when she comes. Lady Huntingdon will, I believe, be with you soon, as I understand Lady Fanny Shirley is going fast.⁵ This will bring Lady Huntingdon from Sussex.

Remember me before the throne of grace. I am very helpless and have need of much teaching. But this time I suppose your brother and Dr. [Thomas] Ford have left you. My kind love to your partner from

¹Mary Manners Jr. was born in 1756.

²William Bromfeild (1712–92), a surgeon, was the founder of Lock Hospital in London, where Martin Madan (an organist and friend of CW) was chaplain.

³She is apparently responding to a question in a letter from CW (not known to survive), after CW learned in a letter from Maria (Hill) Littlehales of Aug. 10 that Lord Robert Manners was ill.

⁴If she means the minister of the parish church near their estate in Bloxholm, Lincolnshire, Benjamin Kay (d. 1793), had been curate there since May 1771.

⁵Frances Shirley (1707–78), the step-sister of LH's father, would recover and live six more years.

Your truly affectionate,

M. Manners

Endorsement: by CW, “persecuted Lady R[obert] – on Forgivin[g] / Sept. 19. 1772.”
Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 1/85.

Rebecca and Thomas Waller to Samuel Wesley (son of CW)¹

Hereford
September 22, 1772

I am very much obliged to my dear cousin Sammy for his kind letter, which afforded us all great pleasure. I dare say your brother [CW Jr.] was highly entertained at Gloucester. Mr. Taswell saw them there and says that my uncle [CW] looked very well, and cousin Charles is grown very much. My aunt Beck is still very poorly,² and my brother [Thomas] has had a very severe cold. We hope your mama [SGW] is better. My brother would write, but as I do is unwilling to put you to the expense. We are again to return to Islington, which my mama is very glad of. Papa has taken lodgings opposite our old house. My cousins long to see you. Pray give my duty to my uncle and aunt Wesley, and love to your brother and sister [Sarah Jr.], and tell her I shall soon expect a letter.

I am your affectionate cousin,

R.W.

Remember me to Prudence [Box]

[Overleaf, in another hand]

As there is a half sheet of paper spare, I could not help making use of it to tell my dear Sammy how much I love him, though am not quite pleased with him for writing to his cousin Becky before me, yet suppose your reason was because she was a young lady. Talking of a young lady, I think that Miss Sally would do very well for your love. She is, I can assure you, a very clever little girl, and though not quite three years old, is very entertaining. Has your sister received Miss Heron's letter yet? If she has, she must (if she intends answering it) write directly, by directing it to Miss Heron, at Mr. Waller's, Lovell Court, Paternoster Row. But it must be directly, as there is a ship just going out. Jack thinks he should like you vastly when I tell him that there is not one of his plays but which you would learn.³ Now for a little apology for this horrid scrawl, which I am sadly afraid you can't find out. But if I tell you that I shall write better the next time, hope you will excuse it. The reason was my sister took my pen. Now I must entreat of my dear little Samson to answer this (though it hardly deserves one). But pray do, and you will oblige.

T[homas]. W.

Address: "Master Samuel Wesley/ Charles Street / Bristol."

Postmark: "Hereford."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 15/1a.

¹Rebecca Waller (c. 1757–93), the second child of James and Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller, and the same age as CW Jr.

²Rebecca Gwynne

³John Price (b. 1756), the son of Hugh and Joan (Gwynne) Price of Hereford.

From Joseph Cownley

Newcastle upon Tyne
October 30, 1772

Very Dear and Honoured Sir,

I am greatly obliged to you for your kind remembrance of [me],¹ and I intended to have acknowledged the favour from Leeds. But being very ill all the time I was there, it prevented me. I am a little better now, having a constant pain in my head night and day, attended with great lowness of spirits, which I expect nothing will cure but a churchyard sweat. Pray, my dear sir, it may be sanctified to me, that I may improve by it in the inner man.

I am only beginning to be a Christian. But oh what mountains are in the way. Yet everything is possible to him that believeth. It must be so, because he that cannot lie has said it. Lord give me the faith that receives the promise. I see nothing to be desired in comparison of being like our Head and Pattern; and am deeply convinced that, as I cannot walk as he walked, so neither can I partake of his peace and joy if I have not the same mind, the same spirit, that was in him. In him only I see the man altogether after God's own heart. The man he made in the beginning. The man in whom he delights and over whom he rejoices. Lord conform me to the image of thy dear Son, that I may see thee and live forever. I trust I follow him, but it is at too great a distance. Oh that he would call me to him and say "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt."² I long for his salvation, for the fulfilment of his great and precious promises whereby all that truly believe are made partakes of the divine nature.

I do, my dear sir, bear you upon my heart and remember you in my feeble prayers. May the Lord abundantly bless you in your own soul and bless your ministry. May he bless your dear companion and bless your offspring with all that is good for soul and body. Be in no fear for Joseph Benson. I promise you he shall receive no hurt from me. It was not the Church [of England], but her treacherous sons, that I was bitter against; and even that has long been at an end with me. I assure you I have not the least ill will to my old mother. On the contrary, it would rejoice my heart to see her the praise of the whole earth.

I shall esteem it a very great favour if you only now and then let me know—though I own I am not worthy of it—that you do not forget

Your ever affectionate son and servant,

Jos. Cownley

Many here and here about would rejoice to see you only and receive your blessing. My companion [Suky]'s, brother [Christopher] Hopper's, [Michael] Callender's, Errington's,³ and sister Proctor's⁴ duty to you, and our most affectionate respects to Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley.

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

Postmark: "3/NO" and "Newcastle."

Endorsement: by CW, "Oct. 30. 1772 / Cownley, poor reconciled / to ye Church / [[received Nov.]] 7."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/75.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Matt. 15:28.

³Matthew Errington (1711–88) was now JW's book steward at the Orphan House in Newcastle.

⁴Rebecca Proctor (d. 1790) was assistant in the Orphan-House in Newcastle.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Colchester
November 4, 1772

[[Dear Brother,]]

Nay, there was some ground for that report, for I did *dream* that I was robbed.¹ True, it was twenty years ago. But you know that is all one.

The connexion is well proved in the *Fourth Check*.² Mr. Knox's letter is ready for the press.³ But give your dear friends a little time to chew upon Mr. Fletcher, else you may overload their stomach.

There is no danger of my writing anything yet. I have just made my tour through Oxfordshire, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex. But Kent, Sussex, and Hertfordshire still remain to be visited. Only the visitation of the classes (a fortnight's work, which begins on Monday) must come between.

I have an exceeding loving letter from James R[ouquet] in answer to my plain one. So if it did him no good (but possibly it might), at least it did him no harm.

If we duly join faith and works in all our preaching, we shall not fail of a blessing. But of all preaching, what is usually called "gospel preaching" is the most useless, if not the most mischievous—a dull, yea or lively, harangue on the sufferings of Christ or salvation by faith without strongly inculcating holiness. I see more and more that this naturally tends to drive holiness out of the world.

Peace be with your spirits!

[[Adieu!]]

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

PostmarkS: "5/NO" and "Colchester."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Brother November⁴]] 4. 1772 / of gospel preaching."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/41.

¹The letter to which JW was replying is not known to survive.

²JW had seen the galleys of Fletcher's *Logica Genevensis; or a Fourth Check to Antinomianism*, which was dated as finalized Nov. 15, 1772.

³It is unclear what letter is intended; none was published under JW's hand.

⁴This was also added by CW later in abbreviated longhand.

From Lady Mary (Degge) Manners

[Ealing]
November 7, 1772

I can no longer refrain sending you a few lines. My eye has been very bad, [William] Bromfeild forbids me to use it. I have lately followed this advice more than I did before. He gives me hopes that it is recovering. As he persists that the cause is a sharpness of blood, I am taking [Peruvian] bark, etc. to correct it. Writing is particularly troublesome to me.

Notwithstanding the meeting of Parliament, we purpose going into Lincolnshire the 17th or thereabouts. Our house in town is full as bad as last year and we cannot get into it. It matters little where we are, if we have the presence of the Lord with us. It is a sense of this I want. I know not how to stand troubles without, and fears within perplex me. My eye is this moment led (on my Great Bible¹ as it stands open) to the 32nd chapter of Jeremiah, verse 27. "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for me?" My poor heart replies, "No Lord, nothing; not even to create me anew." There is comfort in this verse.

Do you know Mrs. Powys is in a dying state, or perhaps gone by this time?² [She] has suffered violent bodily pains, but is inwardly supported. The last accounts were that humanly speaking it was impossible she should recover. She was perfectly resigned either to live or die, having the peace of God ruling in her heart. He is in great anxiety, as he sometimes entertains hopes. The physicians say he must come immediately to Bath, as the agitation of his mind has much hurt his bodily health. I suppose as soon as she is released his friends will get him to those waters.

I met Lady Huntingdon at Mrs. [Bridget] Carteret's. She has been fully employed with the young men.

I must conclude desiring an interest in your joint prayers. You know my wants, and what a poor creature I am. Pray hard for me.

M. M.

Direct in town [London]. If we are gone, it will be sent.

Endorsement: by CW, "L[ady] Rob[er]t [Manners] comforted Nov. 7. 1772 / M[rs] Powis going."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/612.

¹The first English translation authorized in England, published in 1539.

²Maria (Pole) Powys (1721–90) would recover, while her husband Thomas Powys would die in 1775. She became the second wife of Rowland Hill, 1st Baronet (1703–85) in 1776.

Millbery (Gilby / Butterfield) Foottit to Samuel Wesley (son of CW)

London
November 22, 1772

My Dear Little Friend,

It was no small pleasure to me when I received the account of your brother's intended journey to London. But how was it abated when I found my hopes likely to be disappointed of seeing your Mamma, sister and yourself. I am obliged to you for your affectionate enquiry concerning my arm, which is but weak, and myself in the whole but indifferent. Mr. [Harrison] Foottit found fault at the letter's being sent to me when he claims the greater intimacy. I asked him to write for me. He says, this hand is sooner read than wrote, and if any pleasure is to be found it is chiefly by writing to those one loves. It was needless to use much entreaty so I left him to follow his inclination. However as you did not leave his name out amongst others, he desires his love to be remembered to you.

From your affectionate friend,

M. Foottit

P.S. Remember me to Prudence [Box]

Address: "To Masr. Sam. Wesley."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 15/1b.

From Maria (Hill) Littlehales

Greek Street [London]
December 1, 1772

Dear Sir,

Since I had the pleasure of receiving your last *quieting* letter, we are moved to London for the winter.¹ I have been a good deal with Mrs. J[oseph] Littlehales, who was brought to bed of a daughter last week.²

There has been so much preaching in London by Lady Huntingdon's young men that the grand controversy seems to be forgot and the conversation wholly engrossed by that subject—some approving and some disapproving. I think the Calvinists are dividing into *regulars* and *irregulars*.³ Many are very angry with Mr. Piercy who some time ago were really fond of him.⁴ I differ from them, for I think a person who is like him, devoted to his blessed Master so as to give up fortune, country, parents, and perhaps life itself, for the sake of fulfilling his last command of preaching the gospel to every creature, gives undeniable proof of being Christ's disciple and ought to be valued and esteemed by all Christians.

If you had heard what passed at Mrs. [Bilhah] Aspernell's, you would not blame her. She said nothing but what was forced from her. I am sure if I could believe perfection attainable, I should have supposed her possessed of it. She showed so much love and tenderness, so much meekness under provocation, and had the appearance of so entire a devotedness of heart as I hardly ever saw in any creature. Such is the person that your excellent friend refused to join with in prayer. I was all amazement!

Mr. [Baker John] Littlehales joins me in love to all your family. He wishes to have some genuine Bristol water, and begs the favour of you to send him two dozen when it is convenient. We sent you a hamper by the coach last week. I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate humble servant,

Maria Littlehales

Laura hopes to hear from Miss Wesley.⁵

Endorsement: by CW, "Dec. 1. 1772 / vindica- / ting s[ister] Aspernal / M. Littlehales."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/69.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Martha Elizabeth was baptized Dec. 24, 1772, daughter of Joseph Laurentius Littlehales (1750–1804) and his wife Margaret (Gascoigne) Littlehales (d. 1819).

³I.e., those that seek ordination and a living in the Church of England, and those who do not.

⁴William Piercy (1744–1819), who had been ordained in the Church of England and served as curate of West Bromwich, had moved to London to assist Martin Madan at the Lock Hospital chapel and preach in Whitefield's chapels. In Aug 1771 he was persuaded by LH to lead a group of her students to Bethesda, Georgia, to work in the Orphan House bequeathed to her by Whitefield.

⁵Elizabeth Laura Littlehales and Sarah Wesley Jr.

From John Nelson

Huddersfield
December 5, 1772

Dear Sir,

This with my duty to you and earnest prayer for you and yours. I do not know that one day passes without you being brought to my mind. But you have reason to think otherwise, for I find the letter I sent by a private hand was not delivered to you. But my soul is united to yours as much as ever, and there is no letters so cheering to my soul as yours.

But I have had many trials since I saw you, for my wife [Martha] hath not had one week's health for above four years, so that she is almost like a skeleton, and cannot help herself. But she is happy in her soul in the midst of pain and weakness. And my granddaughter that looked to her is dead of a consumption, and she laid nine months badly, but died praising the Lord. But I was obliged to keep one to wait on them, and to sell my young horse to pay them and the doctor. And I bless God that I was able to pay as far as I did. I find my soul in peace, and the Lord doth yet convert sinners by his word, and many hath died in triumph of faith lately. Our brother John Beamand of Kirkheaton finished his course about six weeks since, after ten years' affliction, in full triumph. He died of a fistula, and died as by inches. He had known the Lord to be his God and Saviour for near one and thirty years, and he was never known to slack his pace or to change his sentiment in all that time. I was with him a few days before he died, and I felt the Lord present with him. And he said "I have fought the good fight. I have kept the faith that God wrought in my heart above thirty years ago. My God hath kept my soul in peace in the midst of racking pain and want through my long affliction, and without murmuring. And he hath prepared me for an eternal inheritance." He exhorted the class that he had care of to keep in the way God called them in, and but few children cry so tenderly for a father as the people of that society did for the loss of him when I went to preach his funeral. Mrs. Crowder died near the same time. She had been a pattern to all about her in patience and good works. And she lived above a year under the afflicting hand of God, and praised him with her last breath. And a man that had persecuted his wife for more than thirty years we have reason to believe is escaped and gone to Christ through the prayers of his wife to God, heard for him.

O sir, I long to see you and all my friends there, and I desire you and all to pray for me and mine.
From

Your son to serve,

John Nelson

Address: "To thee Ret. Mr. / Charles Wesley at thee Room / in thee Horse Fair in thee / City of Bristol."

Postmark: "8/DE" and "Huddersfield."

Endorsement: by CW, "[[John Nelson December]] 1772 / happy deaths."

Source: holograph; MARC, PLP 78/53/9.¹

¹A prior transcription was published in Laycock, *Haworth*, 300–01.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Shoreham
December 15, 1772

I have scarce had a day yet in London, except Sundays and the time of visiting the classes. Dr. [Thomas] Ford has never come near me. Nor hardly near Billy Ley. I am afraid *evasit, erupit*.¹ I have wrote to Mr. [John] Fletcher today. As Mr. [Richard] Hill is to fall upon me next, Mr. Fletcher will have a little time to breathe, and probably a little more while Mr. Hill is digesting my reply.² For whom I think we shall, between us, find work for some time.

Why you will not set shoulder to shoulder, or you could say something about the Church.³ But two are better than one. If we live till August, stand by me and we will put the matter home.⁴

I believe we can depend on the Captain concerning America.⁵ He has been long enough with you. Send him to us.

I often cry out, *Vitae me redde priori*!⁶ Let me be again an Oxford Methodist! I am often in doubt whether it would not be best for me to resume all my Oxford rules, great and small. I did then walk closely with God and redeem the time. But what have I been doing these thirty years?

My love to all.

Adieu!

Source: published transcription; Jackson (ed.), *Works of ... John Wesley*, 3rd edn., 12:130–31.

¹Cicero, *In Catilinam*, ii.1, “[He has] got away, broken out.”

²JW, *Some Remarks on Mr. Hill’s “Review”* (1772), *Works*, 13:433–87.

³CW had expressed concern that the Church of England was being identified as Calvinist in the current debate.

⁴See JW’s similar exhortation in his letter to CW of May 30, 1773.

⁵Captain Thomas Webb, originally of the 48th Regiment of Foot serving in North America, was converted in Bristol while visiting England, introduced to the Methodists and had recently been accepted as a local preacher by JW. On his return to North America he became a “traveling apostle” for Methodism. See Vickers, *Dictionary*, 376–77.

⁶Horace, *Epistles*, I.vii.95, ‘Give me back my former life’.

From the Rev. Edward Davies

[Coychurch, Wales]
c. December 20, 1772

In his answer he told me, “He would gladly send me my mare, but that she was lame.”
[And] he mentioned an impossible condition: ‘If he was *sure* Mr. Fletcher would succeed my brother.’

Source: CW manuscript transcription for records; MARC, DDCW 7/111, p. 2; and excerpt in MARC, DDCW 1/64 (CW to JW, Jan. 19, 1774).

1773

From the Rev Edward Davies

[Coychurch, Wales]
c. January 15, 1773

But not long after he surprised me with another letter, “that he would no longer confer with flesh and blood, or fear to disoblige Lady Huntingdon, but was resolved to follow his conscience and come among us.” I replied, that his fear of her Ladyship was a new objection, which he *ought* maturely to consider and not rashly disoblige his benefactress. I told him the hour I should set out for London, not inviting him to accompany me, not expecting or desiring it.

Source: excerpt in CW to JW, Jan, 19, 1774 (MARC, DDCW 1/64).

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
January 16, 1773

My Very Dear Brother,

I just took the advantage of a moment, when I wrote last to Bristol, to thank you for all you care and diligence in correcting both my manuscripts and the press.¹ The last *Check* is undoubtedly better printed than the others. Now receive my more leisurely thanks for all your waste of time about my poor unhappy publications. God grant you may never be the worse in your soul for this labour of patience and love!

I call my publications “unhappy” because they answer an end diametrically opposite to that proposed. A candid friend says to me, in a letter from Bristol, “one thing I will tell you with concern, that your *Checks* have made hundreds if not thousands of Calvinists.”

At this rate I have great reason to fear lest my *Appeal* will make hundreds of infidels, and I ask whether it will be expedient to publish it.² Since so contrary an effect follows from my attempt to defend the second gospel axiom,³ I doubt I shall not be more fortunate in my attempt to defend the first.⁴

I find I am now called to practice the doctrine of the [1770] *Minutes*. The best way this [is] to defend it. It is easier to speak for good works than to do them. May our good Lord help me do the one better than I have done the other! I see particularly the indispensable necessity of the works of self-denial mixed with faith. Last Sunday I spoke upon those words, “If ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye through the Spirit mortify, . . .”⁵ Methought that we are fools and knaves at once if we recommend or follow any other way than that of the cross and the crucified. If the practice of his doctrine does not duly take place, our profession, and Methodism, will dwindle into nothing. Oh for the discipline of the Spirit and the cross within our own breasts, our own houses, and through our societies!

If the Calvinists run away with crowds of easy professors, may we be instrumental in saving ourselves and some part of the wreck! Would you believe it, my own nature rises as much against the doctrine of the *Checks* as the warmest Calvinists may have done. And I must as much fall out with carnal self to stand to it, as I have done with our brethren who have sworn the destruction of the second axiom. Help me herein by your example, precepts, and prayers.

Should I write again, I am in doubt which of my three tracts to go to first. That against the Socinians, that upon the 17th Article, or that on Christian perfection.⁶ I would rather choose the last, if I did not desire to stay till I experience the thing. I have but one doubt. Perfection is nothing but the unshaken kingdom of God—peace, righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost;⁷ or by the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Now query: Is this baptism instantaneous, as it was on the day of Pentecost; or will it come

¹See Fletcher to CW, Aug. 5, 1772.

²Fletcher, *Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense* (1772); while dated 1772, this work apparently was published first in early 1773.

³“Our damnation is of ourselves.” See Fletcher, *Vindication* (1771), 17.

⁴“Our salvation is of God.” See *ibid.*

⁵Rom. 8:13.

⁶Fletcher wrote a manuscript “Check to Socinianism and Arianism” (MARC, MAM Fl. 17), but it was never published. His tract of the 17th Article eventually appeared in a much modified form as *The Doctrines of Grace and Justice, Equally Essential to the Pure Gospel* (London: Moore, 1778). His treatise on Christian perfection appears as *The Last Check* (London: R. Hawes 1775).

⁷See Rom. 14:17.

as a dew gradually. Nothing can set me clear herein but my own experience. And suppose I was clear by my own experience, would this be a sufficient reason to fix it as a rule for all believers?

If I consult reason, it seems to me that perfection is nothing but the acts of holiness, faith, love, prayer, praise, and joy so frequently repeated as to be turned into easy delightful habits. If I consult Scripture, I rather think it is nothing but the Spirit dwelling in a believer, in consequence of an instantaneous baptism. I should be glad to be fully taught of God in this point; not only not to set any one upon a false scent, but to seek the blessing properly myself. Because if the instantaneous baptism is absolutely necessary, it is absurd to repeat fruitless acts in order to form an habit which the Holy Ghost alone can instantaneously infuse; and on the other hand, if I may so gradually improve my talent as to attain the perfect habit of holiness, it is enthusiasm to look for its being immediately infused.

In general [remainder missing].

Endorsement: by CW (on first page), “Jan. 16. 1773 / Fletcher.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/46.⁸

⁸A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 301–03.

From John Hurst¹

Hanging Heaton²
January 31, 1773

Sir,

Whereas you desired to know thee particulars of the case of Elizabeth Hurst, I being her husband's brother and class leader, and he present while I am writing, I shall give you as brief an account as I can.

In the year 1761 it pleased God to convince her of sin. She closed(?) in with the conviction, and joined the Methodist society, and soon after found the Lord. And she walked orderly and kept close to God in private prayer and had sweet communion with the Lord for about 10 years—and not often either [a] cloud or doubt. But she begun almost to idolise her children. I reprov'd her for it several times. For one year she was harassed with doubts and fears. And on the 31st of August 1772 she went with her husband to our public meeting. When they got home my brother said "We have had a very good meeting tonight." She answered, "To you and some more it hath been so; but there is no good for me." Then her husband went to pray with her. And when he had done, she began to pray, but soon stopped and cried out, "Alas Alas I cannot pray." Her husband prayed for her again, but she continued five days as one in despair.

September the 5th her husband, being tired with hard work, after prayer went to bed. She brought the young child to him, and soon fetched it back. He fell asleep, and when he waked found neither wife nor child. But getting up he found her on another bed in her cloths. When he could get her to speak she said, "After you fell asleep I was in great distress and cried to the Lord for mercy." She said on a sudden she thought she heard a great noise under the parlour window, and on a sudden found herself carried away to the borders of hell and begun to sink into the pit among the damned, where she saw thousands in torment. And there she was reprov'd for the same things my brother had reprov'd her for—that was, setting her affections more on her children than on the Lord. And [she] thought she sunk deeper and deeper, and the flames were more and more fierce. In this distress the Lord Jesus appeared, as from behind a curtain, and said to her, "*Give me thy children* and I will help thee out of this place." She replied, "Lord, all but my sucking babe." Then the Lord withdrew from her and she sunk deeper still. Soon after he appeared again. Then she said "Lord take them *all*, for thine they are." He still hid his face for a few moments, then took her by the hand and brought her out. As she was coming out she saw an neighbour come tumbling into hell, as it were neck and heels together, and according to appearance he died at that very time. He went to bed drunk and was found dead in the morning in the very posture in which she had seen him come tumbling into hell.

When she was brought into heaven the first thing person she saw was my late wife, her sister-in-law, who died happy about ten months before. The next that she knew was Paul Greenwood, and she said his face shone like a beam of the sun. And she saw several of our preachers in glory, as well as the people, but did not name them. She saw likewise the mansion of Mary [Bosanquet?], yet alive. She desired to see Mr. John Wesley's place, but was not permitted; she thought it was for fear the people should idolise him. But she was showed the place of John Nelson, and she thought it was as high a place as any she saw among all the glorified in the regions of bliss. So we fear he hath not long to help us on in our way thither.

She begged of the Lord to let her stay there, but he said not, so thou must go back for a few days and this shall be thy place.

¹John Hurst identifies himself as a Methodist class-leader, writing for his brother Joseph. The letter was conveyed to CW by Isaac Duckworth (see Apr. 11, 1773 below). It is not clear if Hurst prepared it for CW and asked for it to be forwarded; or if he was addressing Duckworth himself.

²Near Batley, Yorkshire.

This was on September 5th, and she took her bed the next night and died the eleventh. The day after she had seen these things she was very happy and in perfect peace. I went to see her that night myself and I said, “Sister do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?” She said, “Yes, verily I do.”

This is as simple narrative as I can give, both from my brother Joseph Hurst her husband and myself John Hurst, that owns myself as

A son in the gospel.

N.B. With regard to what she saw in that vision, she confirmed the whole to her death.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/54.³

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

From Samuel Franks

[London]
February 5, 1773

Dear Sir,

In your note concerning the maps you said “portable” *only*. I sent *your* note to Mrs. Spilsbury’s because I would not have any mistake, and have got her receipts.¹ She is quite willing to exchange them, so there need be no loss.

I have seen Mrs. [Millbery] Foottit’s apartments. The parlour and a chamber either backward or forward. She shall charge you at 10 shillings, 6 pence per week. If only you and your son come, I think it will suit. She also thinks so, and says *care* of you both on her part shall not be wanting. Her first floor is a guinea a week. She says for occasional dining there will be no disagreement; she would not *fix* a price. The house is genteel, in a very large, airy, handsome street; the third from Hanover Yard, Oxford Row. It is called Newman Street No. 65. It is about 10 minutes’ walk from thence to Mary[le]bone.

According to your desire, I showed your brother [JW] my letter. He said in answer, “Certainly we cannot spare Betty. Tell him also I don’t believe he has any design to come.”

If you have not already, please to draw on me at sight for £35, as advised before. I suppose Mr. [William] Pine told you I had discovered the mistake.

If you postpone coming ever so long, I am not at all conscious of being the cause thereof. I am no steward, and have scarce any influence respecting most of those particulars you write to me about. If I had, [I] would exert myself in making everything as agreeable to you as possible.

Please to return the maps the first opportunity, and write very circumstantially what sorts.

I remain now debtor to you.

Books as under:

1259 *Epistles to Mr. Whitefield*
100 *Elegies*
189 *Trinity Hymns* bound
38 ditto unbound
29 sets *Scripture Hymns* bound
8 *Notes New Testament* unbound
9 sets *Poems*, 3 vols. unbound
714 *Hymns on Death*²
600 ditto I sent Mr. Southcote, who is accountable to you for them.

The hymns are paid for; I mean the printer is paid for the death hymns, and the hymns sold have paid me again. I have paid Mr. Rogers 4 shillings, 6 pence for your gloves, which begins our fresh account.

Mr. [Harrison] Foottit and partner, Mr. McNeath, my wife [Sarah], sister [Elizabeth] MacDonald, Betty, etc. join in love; also to Mrs. Wesley and all the children. “Still may *his* love point out your way.”³ Dear sir, always remember me in your prayers. I have great need of every help. I remain,

¹(Wright) Spilsbury, Mary (d. 1773), widow of Thomas Spilsbury (d. 1741) and mother of Jonathan, John, and Thomas Spilsbury, all involved in printmaking in London.

²In order, CW, *An Epistle to the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield* (London: J. & W. Oliver, 1771); CW, *An Elegy on the late Reverend George Whitefield* (Bristol: Pine, 1771); [CW,] *Trinity Hymns* (1767); CW, *Scripture Hymns* (1762); JW, *NT Notes*; JW (ed.), *MSP* (1747); and [CW,] *Preparation for Death, in Several Hymns* (London, 1772). CW got a portion of income from *MSP* and *NT Notes*.

³Cf. Paul Gerhardt (trans. by JW), “Living by Christ,” st. 15, *HSP* (1739), 159.

Your affectionate servant,

Samuel Franks

Address: "To / The Revd Mr Charles Wesley / at the New-Room / Bristol."

Postmark: "5/FE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Feb. 5. 1773 / Franks acct. / of my books."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP# 1/30.

From an Unidentified Correspondent
(on the death of Mary Pollard)

[Bristol]
[c. February 20] 1773

Dear Sir,

Our deceased friend (as you well know) was many years a mourner, sometimes indeed with a degree of hope, at other times she seemed shut up in unbelief.

About two years ago she was seized on a sudden with a fit of illness that confined her to her bed. When it pleased the Lord greatly to alarm her fears, death and judgment were set before her with all the horrors of meeting an incensed God without a saviour. And to add to her distress Satan, that busy foe, suggested that on such a day and in such an hour she should die and eternally perish. This temptation she kept to herself in the utmost torture of mind. In the meantime several of our friends visited and prayed with her, whom she heartily thanked for their concern but did not believe anything would avail for her.

Till (watching the moments as they fled) at length the hour was past. Then hope began to revive. She cried out, "Now Satan I know thou art a liar." And from that time she believed the Lord would not take her hence till she had seen his salvation. Soon after [was] her confinement in her late illness. She thought it would be for her end and often said, "I know I shall not be long here." Her sister asking her, "Are you willing to die?" she answered, "How can I be willing to die when I do not know God?"

Her weakness increasing, the conviction of her guilt and misery also increased, and the burden of unbelief under which she groaned. In constant earnest prayer she besought the Lord for mercy. And though for a time he seemed as one that heard not, yet she feebly trust in him; at the same time wondering that she could, since she did not know him.

This evening, five weeks [ago], as her sister and another were sitting and talking together in her room, she (who could not hear, and I hardly think knew they were there) broke forth in these words, "My Saviour and my God!¹ Now I *know* thou are mine!" She again and again repeated, "My Saviour and my God," and added, "I prayed unto thee that thou would not take me before thou had made me ready. Now thou will soon come and fetch me. Thou wilt not leave me long here. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly!"² With many other like expressions of communion and fellowship with her saviour that lasted for some time. After which one present said to her, "Well my friend, *now* you can *believe*." "Yes," said she, "when the Lord works, who can let³? It is not in man, but of God and free grace." She was all the night very comfortable and [the] next day, telling those who came to see her what God had done for her soul. Often repeating these words, "I have found my saviour, and I will never, never let him go"; and "If such a wretch as I have found favour, let no one despair."

A day or two after she seemed a little clouded, and said, "I was self-confident, and have lost my saviour. Pray for me." Desiring to be kept quiet, that none might disturb her, she lay for hours as if asleep. But when asked, would answer, "No, I am not asleep so often as you think." We could not discover her to be in any deep distress, only the siftings of Satan.⁴ For when asked by anyone how she was, [she] replied, "I am going to my Father's house." And so strong was her desire to die that she often refused any refreshment. "Why," said she, "will you give me things to keep me here? Let me alone. I want to be gone." A degree of impatience she then felt, which afterward gave her great concern. Very little complaining was heard from her—only, now and then, "None know what I suffer."

¹See Ps. 42:5.

²Cf. Rev. 22:20.

³*OED*: to hinder or prevent.

⁴See Luke 22:31.

Some days before her death the outward man seeming a little to revive, she expressed a sorrow lest she should recover, saying, “I thought that I was going to my Father’s house, but I am coming back.” She soon after found her mistake, for being asked by one who sat up with her how she did, [she] answered, “I am going home.” The person said, “Where is your home?” “In heaven,” said she, “and do you pray and come after me.” To several other persons she said, “Prepare to meet your God.” And to one [she] added, “before the evil day come.”

As her dissolution drew near, the pains of death came on so violent that every nerve shook, and even the bed under her. In this time of trial her cry was, “My God and my Saviour help me. Help me. Help me out. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.” The for several days she lay as the passive clay, her speech failing, till breathing her last, she was taken to the paradise of God.

Endorsement: by CW, “Blessed Mary Pollard / released 1773.”⁵

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/119.⁶

⁵Mary Pollard (c. 1714–73) was buried in Bristol on Feb. 15, 1773.

⁶For a digital copy and “as-is” transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

Thomas Waller to Sarah Wesley Jr.¹

[Islington]
February 22 [1773²]

I am much obliged to dear cousin Sally for her kind letter,³ and hope I shall have another soon, as it always gives me great pleasure to hear from you. You cannot be angry with me for this, I am sure.

Now for something that I think may please my cousin. What shall it be? First and foremost, I must give Miss Chalkhill's⁴ compliments (who is sitting just by me, a-reading that fine play *King Lear*), and that she is much obliged to your for your many kind letters you promised you would write to her. She has been but very poor and is very poorly now, but hope[s] she will soon be better.

I cannot help pleasing myself with the thought of seeing your papa and my uncle [CW], your brother and my cousin [CW Jr.], soon. I wish you were all a-coming up, but what cannot be cured must be endured, as the saying is.

Our Betty is at last married.⁵ We have not seen her since. I hope she may do well in that state, as I believe she is very deserving of it.

Dear me, what a sad thing have I done! Why what is that? I will tell you. You must know then that I ha've gotten⁶ too large a sheet of paper from my barren head. <So that> you must excuse it if the rest is filled up with <nonsense,> which no doubt but it will be. Well then, I <write> nonsense, and even that sometimes is no[t] hard to <make> sense, so that I think I have brought myself <...> pretty hole. I have one thing left yet, and that <...> in your letter, and among some of your questions. <And> first, I don't doubt but dear Sammy is quite <sick?> of music. Second, we have not seen the <...>. Third, why now this is rather hurting for me to an<swer..> As you beg I would, I must. Then you must know <that> at this dear time of day we are very glad to p<rovide?> with lodgings. But I assure you they are very good. Now as to the fourth question, I think you are ra<ther> affronting to ask me for a direction, when I thought I had given you a very good one the first time. And to think I was of such little consequence. But if you cannot tell without my telling you quite place, look. That's enough I assure you.

I now think as I am come near the end of this side [I] will not give you the trouble of turning over leaf. So believe me to be

Your affectionate cousin,

T. W.

Excuse all faults. My aunt Beck [Gwynne] is better. We all join in love and duty as due.
10 o'clock Monday night. Compliments [to] all enquiring friends. That's all.
Miss C[halkhill] has not done [with] her play yet. Write me as long a letter as this next time.
I say no more, so good night.

Address: "To / the Hon[oura]ble Miss Wesley / Charles Street / Bristol."

Postmark: "23/FE."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 22/59.

¹Sarah Jr. and Thomas Waller had become close friends. See, for example, the poem she wrote for his birthday in 1774, New Room (Bristol), NR2002.6.1.837.1.

²Year established by visit of CW and CW Jr. to London in Mar. 1773.

³This letter is not known to survive.

⁴A playful name for his sister Rebecca Waller.

⁵Betty was a maid for the Waller family.

⁶A portion is torn from the right margin, affecting 2–3 words in several lines.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
February 28, 1773

Dear Brother,

I have room for a few lines of thanks for your last. The battle waxes hot. Let us pray hard for faith working by love. I have not seen Mr. Toplady's book,¹ but Mr. Hill extols it and I guess at its contents. Our friend [James] Ireland, who begins to see the evil of Calvinism, desires me (*entre nous*²) to fight it out till I win the field or am beaten out of it. When I shall see your brother, I shall give him my sermon upon the first axiom to read,³ and if he approves it as guarded according to the [1770] *Minutes*, I shall desire him to give me his public imprimatur; and if you are brothers in heresy, I shall request the same favour of you. I lay by my treatise on perfection to face Mr. Hill and prepare my next check called *An Equal Check to Pharisaism and Antinomianism*.⁴ The Lord God check both in our hearts and in the hearts of the people, so shall we enjoy Christian perfection. Pray for, and direct

Your affectionate brother and servant,

J. Fletcher

My Christian love to Sally [Jr.], Mrs. Wesley, and Charles [Jr.].

Address: "To the Revd. Mr. J. or C. Wesley / at the Foundery / Upper Moorfields / London."⁵

Postmark: "3/MR."

Endorsement: by CW, "Fletcher Feb. 28. 1773."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/47.⁶

¹See Fletcher to CW, Apr. 20, 1773.

²"between ourselves."

³I.e., on "Our salvation is of God" (see Fletcher, *Vindication* [1771], 17). Fletcher means the sermon on Rom 11:5–6 that appeared in *Equal Check*, 29–89.

⁴Fletcher, *An Equal Check to Pharisaism and Antinomianism—Part the first*. (Shrewsbury: J. Eddowes, 1774).

⁵The first two pages of the letter were addressed to JW, and can be found in the collection of his in-letters.

⁶A close transcription of this double letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 303–04.

From Isaac Duckworth¹

Bradford
Easter Sunday [April 11] 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am still willing to let you know that [I] am in the land of the living. And thanks be to God, I feel my soul is alive to him. Sir, you are often in my mind, and [I] could and doth often wish to see you. But this must be when the Lord will. But let not our love to each other grow less. But oh may our love to God increase. Then doubtless we shall love one another.

My brothers and sister join with me in duty and love to you.² My eldest brother has been much afflicted this winter by an impost[ume] in his head, which broke inwardly and discharged itself at his left ear. But he is better. While he was bad the whole care of our business and family lay upon me. But he is much recovered again.

I hope you do not forget me. Indeed I do not, nor I cannot forget you. The work seems to prosper much in these parts, and a great many are added to our society this year in Bradford circuit, and a great many is gone to glory. Brother Otley, one of our preachers, has two funerals to preach this day at Bradford.³ One for Sarah Tettley, aged 15 years. The other, Mary Garnet, aged 19 years. They both died very happy. Oh that my last end may be like theirs.

And now sir, please to let me have a line from you soon. Please to give my duty and love to Mrs. Wesley, to Master Charles [Jr.], to Miss Sarah, and to all friends. And now, sir, may peace, peace, peace be with you forever. Amen and amen. This from

Your unworthy but loving son and servant,

Isaac Duckworth

P.S. The remainder of this is an account of Elizabeth Hurst, who lived and died near Birstall.⁴ Mrs. [Mary] Bosanquet joins with me in duty and love to you, and would be glad to have a line from you. So no more at present but love.

Farewell in the Lord.

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

Postmark: "15/AP" and "BRADFORD."

Endorsement: by CW, "Isaac April 11. 1773 / triumphant deaths / vision!"

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/54a.⁵

¹Through most of the 1760s Duckworth offered himself as a servant to the Methodist cause, in particular accompanying CW on journeys and helping care for the family in Bristol. He had now returned to his familial home near Bradford, Yorkshire, taking a prominent leadership role in the Methodist society until his death.

²A brother James and a sister Sarah had converted to Methodism in 1749, at the same time as Isaac Duckworth.

³This was a local preacher; there was no itinerant of such a name at the time.

⁴See the letter of John Hurst, Jan. 31, 1773, which Duckworth was forwarding to CW.

⁵For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:
<https://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/services/digitisation-services/projects/rapture-and-reason/>

From John Pawson¹

Bristol
April 12, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I expected a line from you by Mr. Rankin, but was disappointed.² I suppose I need think no more about Mr. Lester.

Our friends here have been exceedingly generous respecting America. Captain [Thomas] Webb collected about £13 in the congregation, and Miss [Elizabeth] Johnson about £17. But the far greater part of this was thrown away. Many were exceeding kind to poor brother Shadford, and indeed he wanted assistance.³ The other was richly provided for before he came here.⁴ They sailed from Pill last morning, and seemed all in good spirits. May the good Lord preserve and help them.

Our dear brother Haddon of Bath died in great peace on Saturday, the 3rd of this month.⁵ He bore his affliction with remarkable patience all the way through. [He] was often comfortable, but never enjoyed a clear sense of pardon till about a week before he died, when he said to a friend, “I do firmly believe that Jesus died for me, and I could not say this a little time ago. It seems to me that I have faith enough to go up into the clouds to meet him.” After this he continued happy in the general till the day on which he died. There was nothing very extraordinary till everyone present had given him up, expecting to have heard him speak no more in this world. But to their utter astonishment, he awoke as out of sleep and appeared as a giant, refreshed with wine. Being raised up in the bed, he looked (says a friend who was present) like an innocent transported child, crying out in a rapture of joy, “O blessed Lord. My blessed Jesus! Hallelujah? Hallelujah? O how happy this is. I have been upon Mount Sion. What a mercy it is that my senses are so perfect, that I may not offend my blessed Lord. For nothing that defileth can enter into heaven. There is Jesus! There are the angels! Can’t you see them? There is another come now. O how happy this is! Hallelujah! Hallelujah? Sing hallelujah! What a publican! A publican happy! A publican going to heaven! It ought, it ought to be put in the newspaper! Tell Mr. B.” (the landlord at the White Lion, with whom he had lived as a servant formerly, and who had earnestly laboured to make him drunk

¹John Pawson (1737–1806) became an itinerant preacher in 1762 (see JW, *Works*, 10:294) and served faithfully from that point. In 1773 he married Grace Davis (1743–83) of Bristol. In 1785 he married Mrs. Wren of York, and was ordained by JW for the work in Scotland; but he was told to discontinue offering the sacrament when he returned to England in 1787. He served as President of Conference twice in the years after JW’s death. See Vickers, *Dictionary*, 267–68.

²Thomas Rankin (1738–1810), a native of Scotland, lived for a brief period in South Carolina. On his return to Britain he was converted and began preaching independently in 1759. He became a traveling preacher within JW’s connexion in 1761. From 1773–78 he was back in North America as “general superintendent” of the lay preachers JW appointed to this realm. He completed his career back in London. See Jackson, *EMP*, 5:135–217; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 288.

³George Shadford (1739–1816) was converted at a Methodist service in 1762 and commenced preaching in the Epworth circuit shortly after. He entered the itinerancy in 1768. In 1772 Shadford volunteered for service among the Methodists in America, where he served until the War of Independence broke out. Shadford returned to England and continued to itinerate through 1791. See Jackson, *EMP*, 6:137–81; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 313–14.

⁴Rankin and Shadford had volunteered for service in America at the 1772 Conference, but had just now attained sufficient funding to set sail.

⁵Haddon was the licensee of the Christopher Inn, High Street, Bath. He and his wife were leaders of the Methodist Society in Bath. See Bruce Crofts (ed.), *At Satan’s Throne: The Story of Methodism in Bath* (1990), 35–36.

some time since). “Bring it round to him some way or other. Poor man, what will he do when he comes to lie as I do now? O blessed Lord, open his eyes before it be too late, before salvation is gone by.” He then looked upon us, smiling and said, “God bless you all. I wish there were more present. Keep close to the [New] Room.” He then said, “I see Satan there, up against the wall.” One said, “But he has no power over you now.” He replied with an air of triumphant disdain, “Power, no! Fly Satan! Satan, get thee hence! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!” He continued speaking till he fell into a kind of sleep, in which he lay about an hour and a half. And then, clasping his hands together, he looked up and smiled, and in a few minutes fell asleep as in the arms of Jesus.

I have given you the account at large because I thought it would be agreeable to you. All our family are tolerable well, and give their duty to you. Praying that our gracious Lord may be ever present with you, I remain

Your affectionate son in the gospel,

J. Pawson

Address: “Revd. Mr. C. Wesley / at the Foundery / London.”

Postmark: “14/AP” and “Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “April 12 1773 / J. Pawson. Hatton triumph[an]t / in death.”

Source: holograph; Duke has photocopy of original.⁶

⁶Frank Baker saw in Methodist Archives, but current location unknown. A transcription has been published in John C. Bowmer and John A Vickers, *The Letters of John Pawson* (Peterborough: Methodist Publishing House, for WMHS, 1994) 1:17–18.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
April 20, 1773

My Very Dear Brother,

I sent you last week a letter by a young man who went to London. It is for Mr. [Martin] Madan, who civilly charges me in a private letter with disingenuity, unfairness, dishonesty, false quotation, etc. I suppose you have received it by this time. Send me word whether you think it worth sending. I hoped your brother would have corrected it, but I did not see him. I went to meet him at Salop, where I heard he had taken another road. I am still writing my *Double Check* when I can.¹ I hope it will be of a reconciling nature, and a scriptural plan of union upon which the candid on both sides of the question will readily agree. And yet I fear it will gall some touchy Calvinist. But when they try to gall us by false accusations we may be permitted to return true observations.

In your two last you say “you have seen Mr. Toplady’s book and his arguments for reprobation.”² Indeed I have not. I know nothing of what passes or what is published in London or Bristol. I have not yet been able to get so much as one single copy of my *Appeal*, that I suppose has been published in London and Bristol. If you would send me all that is published upon the controversy, together with Dr. Tucker’s piece which you speak of,³ I shall be extremely obliged to you. And add the maps which you spoke of; money to pay them is lodged in Mr. [John] Southcote’s hands, but they have been six months a coming. A parcel may be sent with speed by the Shrewsbury coach, which puts up at Neck and Swan, Ladd Lane, London, directed to me, to be left with Mr. Roberts, carpenter, in Shifnal, Shropshire.⁴ A man from Chester says Mr. [John] Berridge has published a book called *The World Unmasked*,⁵ where we are all represented as foxes, etc.! Send it also. As my hand is in it, I might by a note, etc., save the trouble of a formal answer. I could wish you would propose to the leaders and other members of the society who have clear heads and humble hearts to gather together the most subtle objections for Calvinism which have been suggested to them by the enemy, or by Calvinists, that we might try to trace them to the fountainhead, and detect the fallacies whence they spread.

My *Equal Check* will contain three pieces besides a dedicatory epistle to Mr. Hill. [1.] An historical essay on the harmony of the two gospel precepts “believe and obey,” and on the danger of parting them. [2.] The sermon, guarded with additions and notes, which I preached last Sunday, exactly eleven years after I preached it first, viz. April 18. [3] Then some remarks on Mr. Hill’s *Finishing Stroke*, taking in his shows of argument, and groundless charges of dishonesty, etc.⁶

The sheet you send me is too severe and will do harm, because it quotes as Mr. Hill’s own expressions some words in which I have clothed them—which will give him an opportunity of crying out “forgery,” with more show of truth because I have observed all the expressions were not his, which this

¹I.e., the *Equal Check*.

²Augustus Toplady, *More Work for Mr. John Wesley; or, a Vindication of the Decrees and Providence of God from the Defamations of a late printed paper entitled, “The Consequence Proved”* (London: James Mathews, 1772). Neither of CW’s letters mentioned are known to survive.

³Likely Josiah Tucker, *Letters to the Reverend Dr. Kippis occasioned by his treatise entitled “A Vindication of the Protestant Dissenting Ministers”* (Gloucester: R. Raikes, 1773).

⁴Fletcher gives the first name as “Thomas” in a letter to JW, May 30, 1773.

⁵John Berridge, *The Christian World Unmasked - Pray Come and See* (London: Edward and Charles Dilly, 1773).

⁶Fletcher ended up moving this proposed third part to the opening of *Logica Genevensis Continued* (London: Hawes, 1774), and completing *Equal Check* with two additional items; see Fletcher to CW, Feb. 20, 1774.

quotation does not. I see we must give the Calvinist leave to use a bushel of pepper and soot where we use a handful of salt. And it is very well if, after all, they do not charge us with dealing in nothing but soot.

I am accidentally engaged in an unexpected publication. The title will be something like this: *The Repentance of John Wilks who was executed at Stafford April 3rd, 1773, for housebreaking and robbery*—being chiefly a narrative of two women, fearing God (one of them is my maid, the malefactor's sister) who attended him morning and evening in Stafford jail for some days before his execution. I have a design to add a little penitential office entirely taken from the Scripture and the Common Prayers for the help of malefactors and other penitents.⁷

The young man to whom I gave my letter to Mr. Madan, under cover to you, may bring me any little parcel. His name is Thomas Lees and he lodges at Mrs. Grace Roden, pawn broker, Dock head, London. He will return hither in a week or ten days.

Adieu.

Address: "To / The Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley / at the Foundry / Moorfields / London."⁸

Postmark: "22/AP."

Endorsement: by CW, "Fletcher / April 20. 1773."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/87.⁹

⁷It appeared as: John Fletcher, *The Penitent Thief; or, A narrative of two women, fearing God, who visited in prison a highway-man, executed at Stafford, April 3, 1773; with a letter to a condemned malefactor; and, A penitential office, for either a true Churchman, or a dying criminal* (London: R. Hawes, and sold at the Foundry, 1773).

⁸On the address page CW has written in shorthand a brief list of musical works (likely for his son CW Jr.).

⁹A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 306–08.

Samuel Wesley (son of CW) to Charles Wesley Jr.

Bristol
April 20, 1773

My Dear Charles,

Last Sunday I played a Psalm at St. James's Church.

Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor says she longs to see you and papa at Bristol. I have learnt Handel's "Water Piece" today.¹ I had some of the "Highland Laddie."² I saw Mr. [Edmund] Rooke last Sunday. He looks very bad. Mr. Allen called here yesterday.³ Have you seen Dr. Ford yet?⁴ Perhaps he is sowing poppy seeds at the sign of forgetfulness of his old friends? I have not had a letter from him yet. I hope Mr. [John] Worgan and Mr. [Samuel] Arnold is well.

My sister and I join in duty to papa and love to yourself. I am

Your affectionate brother,

Samuel Wesley

Prudence's duty waits on papa and you.

Address: "Master Wesley / at the Foundery / upper moor Fields / London."

Postmarks: "Bristol" and "22/AP."

Endorsement: by CW, "1773 Apr. 20 / Sam of Ford forgetful."

Source: holograph; London, British Library, Add MS 35012, ff. 115–16.⁵

¹G. F. Handel, *Water Piece for the Harpsichord* (London: Thompson, 1755).

²Michael Arne, *The Highland Laddie* (1755).

³John Allen (1737–1810) was stationed in Bristol at the time (*Works*, 10:407). A native of Chapel-en-le-Frith, Allen's mother was a Presbyterian with Methodist connections. Her death brought on his conversion in 1759 and he became an itinerant in 1766. He served until 1799, when he settled in Liverpool and died Feb. 20, 1810. See Jackson, *EMP*, 6:241–48; and *Minutes* (post-Wesley, 1810), 3:133.

⁴Rev. Dr. Thomas Ford; see his letter to CW, June 6, 1772.

⁵There is also a copy in Add MS 35013, f. 2.

From the Rev. Edward Davies

[Coychurch, Wales]
May 1, 1773

There was one thing which I postponed laying before you, and am very culpable for my neglect—our real situation and circumstances (then follows a long account of them). We find it impracticable to sell our goods. They are become a mere drug¹ and are sold (here) for half value, so that we must take them all to London. And as this will be attended with great expense, should esteem it as a great Christian kindness if the stewards could lend us £40 or £50 to defray the expenses of our journey and to commence housekeeping. ... I must beg, my dear sir, your being so kind as to lay THIS before the stewards immediately, because I can do nothing before I have an answer.

Source: secondary copy; excerpt in CW to JW, January 19, 1774 (MARC, DDCW 1/64).

¹*OED* includes as one meaning of ‘drug’ at this time: ‘A commodity which is no longer in demand, and so has lost its commercial value or has become unsaleable.’

From the Rev. Edward Davies

[Coychurch, Wales]
May 28, 1773

I take it inexpressibly kind your staying for my arrival, for I know the timidity of my spirits.

Source: excerpt in CW to JW, January 19, 1774 (MARC, DDCW 1/64).

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

Londonderry
May 30, 1773

Dear Brother,

I have had no letter from any of our preachers to stop Mr. [Edward] Davies coming to help us. But I easily foresaw there would be objections to the largeness of the salary. If a few of our brethren would assist herein, that matter will be quite easy. I really believe his heart is with us and that God will make him useful to the people. He is *given* to us, and we should take care to be as useful to him as we can.

Nay, but you have *intended* again and again to stand by me at this and that Conference, and then left me to stand by myself. It is certain we two can turn the tide. I alone can only *stem* it.²

I have been in two mobs since I came into Ireland, one in the south and one in the north. The Protestant mob was far the worst. But I am still in a whole skin.³ *Dum vivimus vivamus*.⁴

Peace be with you and yours.

Adieu.

Source: published transcription; John Telford (ed.), *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.*, 8 vols. (London: Epworth, 1931), 6:29.

¹JW is replying to CW's letter of c. May 22, 1773.

²See the earlier emphasis on this point in JW to CW, Dec. 15, 1772.

³For the riot at Waterford on Apr. 25, 1773, and the more serious one at Enniskillen on May 24–25, see JW, *Journal, Works*, 22:364–65, 370–72.

⁴“Whilst we live let us live.”

Rebecca Waller to Samuel Wesley (son of CW)

Islington
June 29, 1773

I hope my dear cousin Sammy will excuse my long silence when [I] assure him I will be better for the future. I have lately received a letter from Miss Heron, and she tells me she has no thoughts of settling in Carolina, so you may live in hopes of seeing her again. I fancy she has not had yours nor your sister's letters, or she would have taken some notice of them.

We were all very sorry to part with my uncle [CW] and cousin Charles [Jr.], but I am sure you all will be glad to see him, for everyone that knows him must love him for his sweet temper. I hope this short letter will not deter my dear Sammy from writing a long letter and soon, as you know the pleasure it gives me to hear from you.

Pray give my duty to my aunt [Sarah] Wesley. I am
Your affectionate cousin,

R. Waller

Address: "Master S Wesley."

Source: holograph; Duke University, Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Frank Baker Collection of Wesleyana, Box WF 4.

From John Horton¹

London
July 30, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

After Mr. [Edward] Davies had received your brother's letter² (of which Mr. Ley has given you an account) he took the first opportunity to see him, and said he thought it strange to converse with him in writing, and desired to have an hour fixed to meet him with some friends. The time being settled, the persons desired to be present were Mr. [Richard] Kemp, Mr. Folgham,³ and myself, Mr. Davies's brother, his wife, your brother, [and] brother Mr. [Alexander] Mather. Mr. (or rather Mrs.) Davies opened the business with a long detail of the many losses and inconveniences they had suffered in coming so precipitately from Wales, in consequence of your very pressing letters. One of which he gave your brother to read, which he began to read aloud. I stopped him and desired he would read to himself. It was that letter which you mentioned the opposition of [Thomas] Olivers and [Alexander] Mather. I thought it not quite so proper to have that read before the latter which you had wrote concerning him, in the confidence of friendship; though I intend to justify to your brother what you there mentioned concerning their opposition to and hatred of the clergy in general. Something has already been said to him on that subject, and he listened to it with attention as a matter of consequence in its aspect to the future.

You will pardon my wandering from my first subject. At our meeting Mr. Davies dropped every claim and appeared as a petitioner. Your brother agreed to let him have some time in every year to go into Wales when himself was in town, with the use of his horse when convenient, and the £80 per annum. He also gave him some hope of expectation that something might be given toward making amends for his losses. After your brother was gone Mr. and Mrs. Davies came to me and introduced the affair about your horse bargain, by which I very plainly saw he intended to recant his former concession with Mr. Ley about returning her. She laid great stress on your not making claim of the mare after your loss of the other, and seemed to think it very unjust you should at all expect her.⁴ Mr. Davies said he would immediately write you on the subject.

I am rather sorry your brother has so concluded this matter, as I fear the disposition of this poor man is such that he can be of little use either to himself or to us. I own I am jealous of the honour of the clergy in our connection, and fear least he should bring a reproach and give occasion for those to triumph who will let no opportunity of that kind pass unnoticed.

I fear by this time you will think me too pro<lix>.⁵ I will therefore only add that I hope soon to <have> the pleasure of [a] line from you with a good ac<count of> your health, and that of Mrs. Wesley and family. I <rejoice?> my wife is somewhat better.⁶ She desires to join me in love to yourself, Mrs. Wesley, etc. My dear sir, pray for us. I am

¹John Horton (1740–1802), a merchant in Islington, a merchant, was active in leadership at the Foundery and later City Road chapel. In 1771 he married Mary Bowtell. After she died in 1779, Horton married Mary Durbin in 1780, and in 1800 retired to Bristol. See *Methodist Magazine* 26 (1803): 211–15; Stevenson, *City Road*, 569; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 164–65.

²JW to Edward Davies, July 19, 1773, *Works*, 28:forthcoming; which laid out JW's expectations and his approval of yearly support of £80.

³John Folgham (1740–1802), a London cabinet maker, was a trustee at the Foundery and City Road chapel; he and his wife Jane (1745–1818) are buried at Wesley's Chapel. See Stevenson, *Chapel Road*, 569

⁴See CW, "The Case of Edward Davies," *Journal Letters*, 422–33.

⁵A small portion is torn away on the right margin; the text is reconstructed as possible.

⁶Mary (Bowtell) Horton (d. 1779).

Your affectionate, humble servant,

Jno. Horton

Endorsement: by CW, “July 30 1773 Horton of / Davis and the Mare.”⁷

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 1/41.

⁷There is also a shorthand copy of CW’s response, c. Aug. 3, 1773.

Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

Islington
August 5 [1773]

We are very uneasy in not hearing from my dearest sister or some one of our friends at Bristol. Hope illness is not the cause of silence. Mr. [James] Waller set out from hence last Saturday for Flanders. I shall expect to hear from him in a few days. I dare say you have been informed of sister [Joan] Price's safe delivery of a boy,¹ and both in a fair way of doing well, but find she had a smart time.

Lady Ann Hamilton is going to Garth on a visit and intends going through Bristol, and purposes calling on you either the latter end of this week or beginning of the next.² Mr. Duke Gwynne and family were at her house while in town,³ but we knew nothing of it till the night before he set out, which was on a Saturday, and Sunday was not a day to transact business. *That* he knew well, which made him send to speak to Mr. Waller. But he was out of town, and had he gone to him *then*, I don't know any good would have been done but promising and deceiving. Indeed, they use him cruelly, for not a shilling can he get out of his hands. I mention this because Lady Ann may endeavour to vindicate her (brothe)r's⁴ conduct in this last affair, which I think has been shameful. Mr. Waller wrote just before he went abroad, and I added a line to beg he would send me the money in his absence. This is only on Duke's *own account*, but [I] greatly fear we shall not have our due till other methods are used, which Mr. Waller was determined to do, had he known of his being in town last.⁵ Poor sister Beck⁶ never hears from brother Duke. The Lord change them, for they are in a sad state at present.

I hear Ned Baldwin came to town last night.⁷ We have not seen Dick or his sister near three weeks.⁸ Sarah called her today in the way to Mr. Shirley's.⁹ She says her master(?) is much the same. I wish he may get the better of his complaint. My sister [Rebecca] and young folks join in duty and love, as due to you, my brother [CW], and dear children. Believe me to be, dearest sister,

Your most affectionately,

E. Waller

P.S. Our respects to Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor and family, and all enquiring friends, not forgetting Prudence [Box]. Betty is four months gone with child.¹⁰

Address: "To Mrs. Wesley / Charles Street / near Stokes Croft / Bristol."

Postmarks: "'5/AV," and "Penny Post Paid."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/93.

¹No baptismal record of this child has been located.

²Apparently Anna Charlotte Maria Powell (1715–91), a native of Wales and widow of Lord Anne Douglas-Hamilton (1709–48) She is referred to as "Lady Ann Hamilton" in newspapers of the time.

³Marmaduke Gwynne Jr., his (second) wife Elizabeth (Price) Gwynne, and some of Marmaduke's children from his first marriage.

⁴A small portion is torn away by the wax seal; this is one possible reconstruction.

⁵Marmaduke Gwynne Sr. died in 1769, and Sarah (Evans) Gwynne early in 1770; there was significant delay in settling the estate—see Marmaduke Gwynne Jr. to CW, Feb. 22, 1772.

⁶Rebecca Gwynne.

⁷Edward Baldwin Jr. (b. 1752), son of Edward and Mary (Gwynne) Baldwin (both deceased).

⁸Richard Baldwin (b. 1748) and Mary Baldwin (b. 1753), siblings of Edward.

⁹Mr. Shirley provided medical care; see Rebecca Gwynne to SGW, Nov. 4–6, 1770.

¹⁰Betty was a servant in the Waller home; see Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller to SGW, Nov. 13, 1781.

From John Horton

London
August 6, 1773

Dear Sir,

Your brother tells me Mr. [Edward] Davies has consented that the mare shall be immediately sent.¹ Mr. Snig will bring her to you. So far is well, but what can be done with the man? This poor man. I fear he is fixed upon us, and I am persuaded he will no means answer. He complains to some of our friends that I have lost my freedom with him, that I am very shy. I cannot be otherwise while I think him guilty of every charge brought against him, notwithstanding your brother's favourable opinion.

Your brother is drawing up a plan for settling all the preaching houses in one general trust. If he can accomplish this, there may be a possibility of keeping preachers in some tolerable order. But if something is not done to the purpose, and if he is unable to govern, what can be expected from those who may succeed him in the management of these headstrong gentleman? When I told him you hoped to see him on the 11th to dinner, he desired I would tell you he expected to be with you on Monday evening by the Fly.

I saw brothers [John] Collinson and [John] Butcher yesterday. They think it would be best to put up a bill to let or sell the house, as you think it a burden. At the same time let me observe that the society will not be pleased with a proposal of saving £60 a year, on condition of losing your labours among them.

My wife [Mary] is still at Islington, and I hope better for the air and water. She purposes removing to a more agreeable lodging in about a week or ten days, and will esteem it a particular kindness in your sisters² if they will sometime give her the pleasure of their company, though it will be a considerable distance from them to visit at No. 16 Wells Row.³ She desires her best thanks for your kind repeated enquiries about her and joins in love to yourself, Mrs. Wesley, and family with

Your affectionate, humble servant,

Jn. Horton

I have just received a letter from Mr. [William] Ley with a good account of himself and Billy, and the very kind reception he has met with from his mother.

I shall hope to have a line from you after you have seen your brother.

Endorsement: by CW, "Horton of Davis and mare / Aug. 6. 1773."⁴

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP 1/42.

¹See Davies's letter to CW that follows.

²I.e., Elizabeth (Gynne) Waller and Rebecca Gwynne, who lived near the Hortons in Islington.

³This was near present-day Highbury Corner.

⁴A shorthand copy of a letter of CW to John Fletcher also appears here.

From The Rev. Edward Davies

London
August 7, 1773

Dear Sir,

The grey horse I have now come up, cost me £15.5s.0[d.], last May 12 month. From the time I had him he has not been well, and is at present not worth £5. Can I go to the seller and complain? No. It is a casualty which he could not foresee. The mare I sent you from Wales (had she been to be sold) 2 or 3 days before she set out I might have had eleven pounds for. Was she sound when I left her at Cowbridge on her way to Bristol? Yes, to the utmost of my knowledge, I can clearly make an affidavit. Was it my agreement to run all hazards to Bristol, or to send her on such conditions, or was I to defray her expenses on the way? No. I defrayed the expenses of that [mare] I had from you. It is true I had the little mare so much sooner than you had the other. According to the time of agreement I sent her. And now I will inform you what I did not intend. It cost me eleven shillings for you to have the use of Mr. Henderson's mare till near the time of your's coming, for I bought a silver spoon and made him a present of it.

In the Conference *Minutes* Mr. Wesley has inserted, "Write him knave that would not do as he would be done by, in buying and selling of horses."¹ Have I in this instance with you? *To the searcher of hearts I appeal*, and to you I testify that I have to the utmost of my power, and all your letters acknowledge the same.

Source: CW manuscript transcription for records; MARC, DDCW 7/111, pp. 7–8.

¹See *Minutes* (1766), JW, *Works*, 10:331.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
August 24 [1773]

My Dear Brother,

You first paragraph was a riddle to me for some time.¹ I have since recollected my last to your brother, whose meaning you have mistaken; or he, mine.² How far I have not showed myself *justum et tenacem propositi virum*,³ you may judge yourself by the original letters I send you with the rough draft of my reply to Mr. Hill's first letter.⁴ You may keep them, and communicate them to your brother.

Mr. Hill is partial; he will have the *Checks* suppressed that vindicate your brother, but not his books against your brother. I doubt whether he means them by "the pamphlets relating to the *Minutes*," and query whether they have not, like a land flood, already done the mischief they can do. I think he will soon return into the field. I must fence myself up against him as if he were already there. If your brother sends him his Christian respects, and leaves me to decide about the suppressing the *Checks* or not, I will reply that as I have fought for what I am persuaded is the truth, I should wrong the truth and myself if I suppressed my honest pleas for it, which can alone vindicate my injured character before impartial readers. And so I shall keep to the words of my last, "I will not leave the subject explained by halves."

My sermon about the earthquake is in the press at Salop;⁵ I have bespoken 2,200 [copies]. I doubt I shall be ruined by this bold venture. I shall want you to read it and say whether it will be worth advertising. It would have sold two months ago—now the season is past. I have revised my *Appeal*, corrected it, and made some additions.⁶ The chief are: a striking quotation out of Voltaire upon man's misery, an attack upon credulous infidels, and some more reflections upon the traduction of the soul. I have also corrected the *Fourth Check*, rectified the inaccuracies of my quotations, etc., as Mr. [Samuel] Franks sent me word another edition might be wanted. Mr. [Martin] Madan has answered me civilly, without disproving one tittle of my reply to his charges. He only says "You shall not make me an Arminian," and gave me his Calvinist creed.⁷ Mr. [Edward] Davies has a failing; he is no economist, he is always in debt. This makes him nearer in his bargains than he should be, etc. I give you this hint rather to excuse than to accuse him. And yet this want of economy is a capital fault before the world, as it seems to

¹Fletcher is replying to a letter which is not known to survive (though the record of his brief note to Fletcher on Aug. 10 may be an excerpt).

²Fletcher is possibly referring to his letter to JW on May 30, 1773; see Forsaith, *Labours*, 308–10.

³Horace, *Odes*, III.iii.1; "a man of integrity who holds fast to his purpose" (Loeb).

⁴The two letters he had received from Hill that Fletcher sent CW survive among CW's papers: The first, dated July 31, 1773 (MARC, DDWes 2/76) was endorsed by CW: "Sq[ui]re Hill ... pacific." The second (MARC, DDPr 1/93) bears CW's endorsement: "Sq[ui]re Hill to Fletcher / Aug. 20. 1773 / Palinodia [i.e., recantation]." Since Fletcher did not withdraw his *Checks*, Hill published these and one further letter in *Three Letters Written by Richard Hill, Esq., to the Rev. J. Fletcher, Vicar of Madeley ... Setting for Mr. Hill's Reasons for declining any further Controversy relative to Mr. Wesley's Principles* (Shrewsbury: Wood, 1773). Unfortunately, Fletcher's draft of his reply to the first of Hill's letters is not known to survive.

⁵John Fletcher, *A Dreadful Phenomenon Described and Improved. Being a particular account of the sudden stoppage of the River Severn, and of the terrible desolation that happened at the Birches ... on Thursday morning May the 27th, 1773. And the substance of a sermon preached the next day on the ruins* (Shrewsbury, J. Eddowes, [1773]).

⁶Fletcher, *Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense*, 2nd edn. (Bristol: Pine, 1773).

⁷Apparently in a private letter.

spring from want of delicacy in principle as well as from thoughtlessness or pride.

The last day you mention I was chiefly taught to admire and press after the abiding temper of the publican, which I think is much wanted by me and many professors. In consequence of it I preached last Sunday upon the epistle; in the evening upon Ezekial 16:63. I saw the truth of that thought of one of your hymns: “Plant humble faith within my breast, / and if thou canst deny the rest.”⁸ If that sense came in answer to your prayer, I am bound to return God thanks by the same channel by which he blessed me. Only pray I may be a doer of the word, and not a hearer, seer, or writer only. I am glad you transcribe your journal. Your brother will outlive us both. I wish you joy about his health, and renewed strength to labour. He amazed us all here.

The only argument of the Calvinists that puzzles me is: “God blesses us more than you. Our congregations are always larger, and more awakened by the preaching of our doctrine than yours.” How far is that true? This argument is the more pinching to me as my preaching seems to be like the tinkling of a cymbal. No sinners seems to me to cry out, “What shall I do to be saved?”⁹ And few professors grow in grace.

My Salop printer is more exact than [William] Pine, but his letter¹⁰ is not so good. I must employ him for the *Equal Check*, though I do not know how I shall pay him without some assistance. I just remember I have some money in a friend’s hands that will do.

You ask what I think of the orphan house.¹¹ My grand thought is that Methodists must have little to do with building houses, and nothing with building grand houses, palaces with collected half-pence. I had written a letter to Lady Huntingdon about it, but have not sent it. The breach between her and me in point of outward connection is irreparable. But I should be glad, as I intimated to your brother, that we might live upon terms of civil friendship with her, and indeed with all. Becoming all things to all men for edification is certainly a better extreme than reserve and bigotry. Nevertheless there is a danger in the former also, because with some people we must be either very near or quite off. I doubt whether this is not a little the case with our great friend. I am glad Howell Harris has ended well.¹² Let us look for his mercy, for our time approaches. My Christian respects to Mrs. Wesley and love to your sons. I write a line to my goddaughter [Sarah Jr.].

Adieu.

Endorsement: by CW, “Fletcher Aug. 24. 1773.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/48.¹³

⁸The second half of this quote is the concluding line of CW’s 26th hymn “For those Desiring to Pray” in *HSP* (1749), 2:37. The first half appears nowhere in CW’s published hymns.

⁹Acts 16:30.

¹⁰I.e., his type font.

¹¹George Whitefield bequeathed to LH the Bethesda orphan house he had established in Georgia. She began pouring funds into the site (which from the beginning she desired become a college rather than remain an orphanage). It burned to the ground on May 29, 1773 and she was debating rebuilding it.

¹²Harris died July 21, 1773.

¹³A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 311–13.

By [John Pawson]¹

[Bristol]
c. October 20, 1773

The first memorandum that I made of the dear departed saint² (which was all so excellent and might as to have deserved the utmost notice) was on the 23rd of September 1773, when she dealt much on the devil's first temptation of Adam in the garden, when he tempted him to disbelieve God's faithfulness to his word by saying, "Thou shall not surely die."³ "This," said she, "was Satan's first device, and it is still his greatest. Perhaps he may be suffered to beset me with it in my last moments; but Jesus has overcome him, and will make me more than conqueror through him!"

At another time she said, "The Lord has given me great patience. I who always had good health, what a mercy that I am enabled to bear my afflictions with patience! Well, I am not to parley with my enemy. No, I have nothing to do but to look to Jesus when assaulted by the enemy."

At another time she said, seeing death before her, "What a mercy, that I have not been once suffered to doubt of my interest in Christ." "Well," said she, "if the Lord heard the prayer of Moses, much more that of Christ as expressed in the 17th [chapter] of St. John."

At another time I asked her how she found herself. "Happy," said she, "waiting for my dismissal. For blessed be the name of the Lord, the sting of death being taken away, I have no fear of death. No, no, I have not followed a cunning devised fable⁴ but a reality. I shall soon sink into the ocean of divine love, and swim therein to all eternity. Its views are now delightful to my soul. O Lord who would not but love and serve thee!"

One said to her, concerning a sermon she had just heard from the words, "You have sown in tears and are going to reap in joy."⁵ "Yes," said she, "I am going in with my last sheave. O precious grace! Grace," said she, "is but glory in the bud!"

On being asked if she had any text of scripture on her mind for the subject of a funeral sermon, she answered, "'Trust in the Lord forever, for with the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength'.⁶ He has," said she, "been a faithful covenant-keeping God to me, and a strong tower of refuge; and will be the same to all believers, and they too will feel his power to save. Oh how good is he to a vile worm! He has brought me from the kingdom of darkness into that of his dear son. And when this tongue ceases to praise him here, I shall do it with a better to all eternity. O Jesus," said she, "my Lord and my God,⁷ how good art thou in preserving me, all my days, even to grey hairs! Thy faithfulness and truth is my shield and buckle. O how shall I praise thee? Enable me Lord."

To one present whom she had been the instrument of awakening, she said, "Come on, there is room; he casteth out none. Fear not, he that has begun the good work will carry it on. O my lovely Jesus,

¹This was not a letter, but a manuscript account of a "good death." While unsigned, the hand resembles John Pawson's letter of April 12, 1773, and Pawson was currently appointed to the Bristol circuit. CW produced a somewhat polished version of this account in shorthand, which follows.

²CW identified the "saint" as Sarah Pearce. She was one of his earliest converts in Bristol (see *MS Journal*, Sept. 26, 1739), and remained active in the society until her death (appearing in a list of bands for the Bristol society in 1770).

³Gen. 3:4.

⁴See 2 Pet. 1:16.

⁵See Ps. 126:5.

⁶Cf. Isa. 26:4.

⁷See John 20:28.

oh my blessed Lord, I want to be gone, to praise thee as I ought.” Returning to the person before mentioned, who was much affected by her conversation, she said, “Oh come, my dear, and I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my soul. I shall praise him to all eternity. He is an unchangeable God. We change, but he changeth not. This has been my support during my pilgrimage.”

At another time she said to her friend, just as she awoke in the morning, “I have been as it were in heaven.” Her friend asked, “Awake or in your sleep?” “In both,” said she, “for I have been in the arms of my Saviour all night, and so filled with the love of God that I cannot express it. And I longed for you to wake that I might tell you of it.” At another time she said, when pitied by her friend to see her in such a deplorable weak state, “Poor,” said she, “I am rich indeed.” Her friend observed to her, “You have been silent a long time; pray, how have you been in your soul?” “Why,” said she, “I have been making melody in my heart to the Lord. I have the full assurance of faith which none can take from me. I cannot talk, I am so weak. But God is the strength of my heart and portion forever,⁸ and I am waiting with longing expectation for my change.”

Her friend returned in the evening, to whom she said, “I did not expect to see you anymore.” On being asked if the enemy was kept from distressing her, she replied, “Yes; my God is my support, and he keeps him off, and fills my soul with his precious presence. O he is a faithful covenant-keeping God, and I shall as surely be with him soon as you are now alive. O how precious he is to my soul! He will save me. He will not leave me now, nor let me go. He is my Saviour, my Lord, and my God. Friends can only look on, but cannot help me now. But my God sticketh closer than a brother. But I, I do not trust so much on my own feelings as on God’s word and promises to me. On these I hang. On these I rely. Blessed be his holy name, he doth favour me in keeping the enemy from me.” Turning to her friends she said, “The Lord will bless you both and give you a double portion of his Spirit, guide you by his counsel and bring you to glory.”

At another time she said, “I am in the valley and shadow of death, but there is light in the valley.” When a funeral sermon was mentioned, she said, “Say nothing of me but that I am a poor sinner saved by rich unmerited grace, an unprofitable servant, saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

The evening before she died she was asked by a friend if she could look back with comfort on her past life?” “No, no,” she said, “I can reflect on nothing with comfort but Jesus, on his glorious righteousness. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word cannot fail me.”

On being asked whether the enemy attempted to make her to doubt of the genuineness of her faith? “No,” said she. “He cannot do that, It has been so long clear to me.” On being asked if she had any fear of the agonies of death, she said, “No, I can trust the Lord with all that.”

Her friend, at leaving her, desired her to remember him. She answered, “Jesus remembers you now. He is in his kingdom.” She slept but little the following night, and was so ill that she said the pains of death were upon her. At 6:00 in the morning the Rev. Mr. Glascott⁹ prayed with her, and at the end of every sentence she joined in the most hearty amen. And on taking leave of us, she prayed for us, still bearing the same blessed testimony of her own happy state. She soon after this grew very bad, The agonies of death seized her. She desired frequently to be moved, asked for drops, air, etc., and in her extremity said many times, “My God, help me out. My Jesus, help me, by thine agony and bloody sweat deliver me!”¹⁰ She once said, “Jesus, where art thou?” Her last words were, “My Christ, pity, pity” And in a few moments more she breathed her last!

⁸See Ps. 73:26.

⁹Cradock Glascott (1742–1839) received his BA at Jesus College, Oxford, in 1766 and was ordained priest on Dec. 21 of that year by John Green, Bishop of Lincoln. Following a year of curacy, he was presently a chaplain of Lady Huntingdon, serving in a variety of settings in her connexion.

¹⁰BCP, Great Litany.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/117.¹¹

[CW's Shorthand Version]

Sarah Pearce: Her Last Sickness and Death

Monday, October 18, 1773¹²

September 23. [[She dealt much on the devil's first temptation of Adam in the garden, when he tempted him to disbelieve God's faithfulness to his word by saying, "Thou shall not surely die." "This," said she, "was Satan's first device, and it is still his greatest. Perhaps he may be suffered to beset me with it in my last moments; but Jesus has overcome him, and will make us more than conquerors. To him I look."

[[At another time she said, "The Lord has given me great patience. I who have always had good health, what a mercy that I am enabled to bear my afflictions daily! I am not to parley with the enemy. When assaulted by him, I have nothing to do but to look unto Jesus."

[[At another time she said, seeing death before her, "What a mercy, that I have not been suffered to doubt of my interest in Christ! Well, if God heard the prayer of Moses, much more that of Christ as expressed [in] John 17." When I asked her how she was, her answer was, "Happy! Happy! What of my dissolution. But blessed be the name of the Lord, the sting of death being taken away, I have no fear of him. I have not believed a cunningly devised fable but a reality. I shall soon sink into the ocean of divine love, and bathe therein to all eternity. Its views are now delightful to my soul. O Lord who [could] not but love and serve thee!"

[[One said to her, alluding to a sermon she had lately heard, "You have sown in tears and are going to reap in joy." "Yes," said she, "I am coming in with my last sheave. O precious cross! Grace is but glory in the bud!"

[[On being asked if she had any text of scripture on her mind for the subject of a funeral sermon, she answered, "Trust in the Lord forever, for with the Lord Jehovah is everlasting [life], etc." "He has been a faithful covenant-keeping God to me, and a strong force of defence; and he will be the same to all believers and they too will feel his power to save. O how good is he to a vile worm! He has brought me from the kingdom of darkness into that of his dear son. And when this tongue shall cease to praise him here, I shall do it with a better to all eternity. O Jesus, my Lord and my God, how good art thou in preserving me, all my days, even to gray hairs! Thy faithfulness and truth is my shield and buckle. Lord enable me to praise thee."

[[To one whom she had been the instrument of awakening, she said, "Come in my dear, come in, there is room for you; he casteth out no one, fear not, he that has begun the good work in you will carry it on. O my lovely Jesus, oh my blessed Lord, I want to be gone that I may praise thee as I ought." Then turning to the person before mentioned, who was much affected by her conversation, she said, "Oh come, my dear, and I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my soul. I shall praise him to all eternity. He is an unchangeable God. This has been my support during my pilgrimage."

[[Waking in the morning she said to a friend, "I have [been] as it were in heaven." Her friend asked, "Awake or in your sleep?" "In both," she answered, "for I have been in the arms of my Saviour all night, and so filled with his love that I cannot express it. And I longed for you to wake that I might tell you of it." At another time when pitied by her friend to see her in so poor weak a state, "Poor," said she, "I am rich indeed." Her friend observed, "You have been silent a long time, how have you been in your

¹¹For a digital copy and "as-is" transcription, see:

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

¹²This is CW's somewhat polished shorthand copy of Pawson's account. Scripture annotations are not included in this setting, as they appear in the original account by Pawson.

soul?” “I have been making melody in my heart to the Lord. I have the full assurance of faith which none can take from me. I cannot talk, I am so weak. But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever, and I may wait with long expectation of my coming.”

[[Being asked if the enemy was kept from distressing her, she replied, “Yes, my God is my support, and he keeps off Satan, and fills my soul with his precious presence. O he is a faithful covenant-keeping God, and I shall as surely be with him soon as you are now alive. O how precious is he to my soul! He will save me. He will not leave me now or let me go. He is my Saviour, my Lord, and my God. Friends can only look on, but cannot help me now. But my God sticketh closer than a brother. But I, I do not trust so much to my feelings as to God’s word and promises. On these I hang and rely. Blessed be his holy name, he doth favour me by keeping the enemy from me.” Turning to her friends she said, “The Lord will bless you both and give you a double portion of his Spirit. He will guide you with his counsel and bring you to glory.”

[[At another time she said, “I am in the valley of the shadow of death, but there is light in the valley.” When her funeral sermon was mentioned, she said, “Say nothing of me but that I am a poor sinner saved by unmerited grace, an unprofitable servant, saved by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

[[The evening before she died, she was asked if she could look back with comfort on her past life?” “Oh no,” she said, “I can reflect with comfort on nothing but Jesus, and on his glorious righteousness. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his word cannot fail me.”

[[Being asked if the enemy attempted to make her doubt of the genuineness of her faith, “No,” she answered. “He cannot do that, it has been so long clear to me.” “Have you no fear of the agonies of death!” “No, I can trust the Lord with all that.”

[[Her friend at leaving her, desired her to remember him. She answered, “Jesus remembers you now, he is in his kingdom.” She slept but little the following night, said the pains of death were upon her. At 6:00 in the morning Mr. [Cradock] Glascott prayed with her and at the end of every sentence she joined in the most hearty amen, and at our taking leave she prayed for us, still bearing the same blessed testimony of her own happy state. Soon after this she grew worse, the agonies of death seized her. She asked frequently to be moved, asked for drops, air, etc., and in her extremity said many times, “My God, help me. My Jesus, help me out, by thine agony and bloody sweat good Lord deliver me!” She once said, “Jesus, where art thou?” Her last words were, “My Christ, O pity, pity ...” And a few moments after breathed her last!]]

Annotation: “Sarah Pearce, transl[atio]n / Oct. 18, 1773.”

Source: CW shorthand account; MARC, DDCW 6/87a/1.

From Ann Chapman

[Bristol]
[c. October 25, 1773]

[[Account, Miss Chapman's]]¹

[[When it pleased the Lord to waken her, she was but young and a servant. The Holy Spirit enlightening and convincing her of sin by d[e]grees, led her to see and feel her utter depravity. In the meantime she searched the Scriptures, and meeting Mr. Burkitt's exposition of the New Testament,² she was partly resolved with it; and spent the morning hours from 4:00 till 6:00 in reading it with a friend who was also seeking the truth. Her distress increasing, she made use of every means that then offered, going from church to church. But not being pointed there to love of God, it only added to her misery. Which at last grew so great that she was almost in the depths of despair.

[[At this time[?]] the Lord was pleased to send Mr. [George] Whitefield and Mr. [John] Wesley to Bristol with the glad tidings of salvation through faith in Jesus. Through their ministry she was convinced of unbelief; and for a while groaned under the ad[ditional] burden of that damning sin. But the all powerful, all g[racious] God (who knew if he delayed to help, the spirit would fail both him and the soul which he had made) did not let her suffer long. For another minister coming to town and being to preach at Weaver's Hall, she attended. His sermon [text] was "He justifieth the ungodly."³ In the progress of this discourse he showed who where the ungodly, and so exactly described her case that she seemed to herself the only person pointed at, and the vilest sinner upon earth. He lastly enlarged on that word "He justifieth," showing the only ground of acceptance with the Father, the sufficiency of the atoning sacrifice and mediating office of Jesus Christ as procuring pardon and peace for the guilty and ungodly.⁴ It was then she was enabled to venture her soul upon him, and then indeed experience that truth "He justifies the ungodly through faith."

[[After this she went on her way rejoicing, being exceedingly zealous of good works, speaking boldly of her Master wherever she was, and often with good successes. Many now living can testify the great help she has been to them in their Christian course.

[[Her tenderness and sympathy for the sick and afflicted was well-known. And as the most deplorable calamity claimed her greatest pity, she paid peculiar attention to the prisoners in Newgate under sentence of death, and was greatly blessed to several of them, an instance of which has been published in the close of the life of Nicholas Mooney.⁵

[[In the last stage of her life her zeal for the glory of God and the good of her fellow creatures was rather increased, although her labours were necessarily more confined by the long sickness of her aged sister (who departed in the Lord last February) the fatigue of which brought on her last sickness.]]

Source: CW shorthand account; MARC, DDCW 6/87a/2.

¹This is appended to CW's shorthand version of Pawson's account of Sarah Pearce's death.

²William Burkitt, *Expository Notes with Practical Observations on the New Testament* (London: Parkhurst, Robinson, & Wyatt, 1700).

³Rom. 4:5.

⁴The preacher was CW, likely on Sept. 12, 1739. See CW's comment about her receiving full assurance in a sermon later that month; *MS Journal*, Sept 26, 1739.

⁵*The Life of Nicholas Mooney* (Dublin, 1752); a highwayman executed in Bristol in 1752.

From John Horton

London
December 4, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

The Lord has been pleased again to exercise us with the loss of our youngest child.¹ You will imagine this trial is not favourable to my wife's health, especially as she is in the way you have heard.

Mr. Kenton has paid me on your account £10.17.3.² The other £15 comes from John Reddall, which he assures me he is unable to pay at present. Let not this concern you, I will manage with him.

I am also in doubt whether Mr. Kenton is equal to the business undertaken.³ But as I know little of him, I will not judge hastily.

Your brother will think Mr. [Edward] Davies may be a useful man to us. His friends cannot concur with him in this opinion.

From the method intended to be adapted I am much in hopes the account of your books will shortly be in a better situation. But should it not operate in time to prevent difficulties to your brother, he must apply to the people. The public debt is now at an end, and he well knows what to say on the subject. This was the resource I meant, of which you enquire.

I should have wrote sooner but could not settle with Mr. Kenton, and I knew you would wish to hear that business was done.

My partner [Mary] joins me in love to yourself, Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, and family. I am, dear sir,
Your affectionate humble servant,

John Horton

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

Postmark: "4/DE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Dec. 4. 1773 / Horton / My Answer."⁴

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP 1/43.

¹This was apparently their second child, recently born and no baptismal record. Their first child, John Jr., was baptized in Dec. 1772.

²James Kenton (1723–1802) became active at the Foundery around 1750. He came from affluent circumstances but ended up in financial need (see JW to unidentified, Apr. 26, 1789). Kenton fancied himself a poet/hymnist. He published *An Essay on Death; a poem, in five books* in 1777, elegies on both Wesley brothers at their death, and *A Familiar Epistle* honouring a benefactor to Charterhouse in 1792. Two manuscript collections of his hymns also survive in MARC (MA 1977/180 and 182). Kenton was particularly close to CW's family, serving as a witness at Samuel Wesley's wedding. He was buried June 2, 1802 in Bunhill fields.

³Kenton had agreed to compile and exact account of CW's books (see Horton to CW, Jan. 11, 1774).

⁴CW's answer appears in shorthand.

From John Horton

London
December 11, 1773

Reverend and Dear Sir,

We are much indebted for your last kind letter.¹ I hope we do bear our loss as becomes us,² not doubting the mercy of God in his dispensations.

Mr. [John] James's draft was paid some time before I last wrote.

When I first called on Mr. [James] Kenton he had not money. I perhaps was the more indifferent about going again too soon, having done as I supposed what was necessary respecting you in the payment of the draft. And considering the business then as my own, a week or two made little difference to me.

The expenses of the Foundery (housekeeping I mean) run the society in debt every year, which generally is felt about this time. The ordinary collections being inadequate, we are obliged to have recourse to an extra collection among the richer members to make up the deficiency. And till that is done, John Reddall, the steward, generally borrows money for present demands. Which not having done this year, occasioned the delay of paying your money; which delay was not long, as I received it on Tuesday evening last.

It certainly is not fit you should lay at the mercy of John Reddall or anyone else for money due from the society, and if I have the management of this affair you never shall be disappointed.

Last night we had a meeting of the committee and among other things came to the following resolution: "That the secretary do write to the Rev. Mr. [Edward] Davies, acquainting him that his assistance does not answer for the additional expense of his salary, and therefore in the name of the committee to give him a quarter's warning to provide for himself."

My dear sir, I congratulate you and our friends on the above resolution, especially as your brother gave his full consent to it. And being done by the committee will prevent the consequence an application to your brother from his smooth tongue might otherwise have. The part I took in this business I expect will ensure me the character of a very bad man.

Another clergyman will now be wanted in London. Cannot you find one that will be helpful to you and profitable to the people instead of Mr. Davies? I hope there would be no danger in finding and I think it will not be so easy again to deceive you.

My wife [Mary] joins me in love to yourself, Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, and family. Mr. [William] Ley has just left me. He desires his best love and says next week shall produce a letter from him. His little folks are down with the measles. In much haste I remain

Your affectionate humble servant,

John Horton

My dear sir pray for us.

Endorsement: by CW, "[[Horton December]] 11. 1773 / [[Davies warned]]"; and "Horton Dec. 11. 1773 / D. warned by Committee."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP: 1/44.

¹Horton is replying to CW's letter of c. Dec. 7, 1773.

²The death of their child; see previous letter.

From John Worgan

Rathbone Place [London]
Monday, December 27, 1773

Dear Sir,

Be assured, not a jot of the esteem I have for you and yours is diminished, though [I] have not wrote in answer to your last.¹ These holidays give me a little respite, which gives an opportunity of taking pen in hand. It greets you and yours in the usual forms of the season, sincerely wishing many happy and prosperous returns of the New Year. We have no news to acquaint you with.

[I] hope Charles [Jr.] increases in knowledge and ability in execution, and likewise that he has begun the violin. I trust my friend Samuel, if he is in health, is as *pomposo*² as ever, more especially in the impulse he receives from great Handel's music. [I] am sorry [I] can't inform Charles of having success in my application for leave to give him *that* lesson of Scarlatti's, but he has others as good.

When you see the gentleman, your friend whom Charles and I went with to Kirkman's,³ give my compliments to him and tell him I hope his harpsichord turns out to his *utmost* wishes, and my *earnest* and *sincere* recommendations.

When do you come to town [London], or do you come at all? [I] hope this will find you and Mrs. [Sarah] Westley in perfect health. Mrs. [Eleanor] Worgan has been ill with her constitutional asthmatical cough, which deprives her of sleep, but at present is somewhat better. She sends her compliments and good wishes to Mrs. Westley and self, to which I unite mine, and am, dear sir,

Your sincere friend,

J. Worgan

Address: "To / The Revrmd. Mr. Charles Westley / at / Bristol."

Postmark: "27/DE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Dec. 27. 1773 / Worgan of Chas. & Sam."⁴

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/118.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²Italian for "pompous," but likely used in sense of exuberant and stately.

³This was likely Thomas Lediard; cf. CW's shorthand note on address page and CW to Mr. Hall, Oct. 21, 1773.

⁴CW added three notes in shorthand on the address page: [[for Lediard]] / [[Charles play]] / and [[African trade]]. It is unclear whether these are brief notes on his reply to Worgan.

1774

From John Horton

London
January 11, 1774

Dear Sir,

Your brother is quite well after the operation.¹ It was attended with very little pain. The next morning he rose at his usual hour, and has abated nothing of his labour since. I am just returned from the Foundery, where he preached and met the leaders afterward.

Mr. [James] Kenton has promised to pay your money on demand. Your servant has received of him £1.16.0, and Mrs. Hall is to call in a few days for £5.15.0.² The balance remaining will be £16.9.0, which I shall receive of him. He tells me it is not yet in his power to give any exact account of your books, but hopes he shall be able to do it soon.

I have no doubt but your stipend from the society will be paid at the proper time, so that you will draw on me for the whole, either in one or two drafts as shall be most convenient.

I hope you will not long defer writing about Mr. [Edward] Davies. I fear lest your brother, by his wiles, should be persuaded to alter his purpose.³

I should have wrote sooner but could not get a determinate answer concerning the money, without which you would not have been quite so satisfied. I desired Mr. [William] Ley to say something for me in his letter.⁴

Mrs. [Mary] Horton joins me in best thanks for your kind wishes and enquiries and in love to yourself, Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, and family.

Your affectionate, humble servant,

John Horton

We were very sorry to hear of your indisposition, but hope you are now perfectly restored.

A recent affair at the Foundery shows the propriety of your intention to desire your letters of Mr. Davies may not remain there.

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

Postmark: "11/IA."

Endorsement: by CW, "Jan. 11. 1774 / Horton."⁵

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP: 1/45.

¹Dr. Samuel Wathen drained JW's hydrocele on Jan. 4, 1774; see *Journal, Works*, 22:395–96.

²CW provided regular support for his sister Martha (Wesley) Hall.

³See CW's detailed letter to JW, Jan. 19, 1774.

⁴William Ley's letter to CW, c. Dec. 20, 1773, is not known to survive.

⁵Under his annotation CW added two financial notes: "Maid 1.16.0 / S[ister] Hall 6.15.0." on the right margin of the address page appear two combinations of funds adding to the same total: "16.9.0 / 15.0.0 / 31.9.0" and "20.0.0 / 10.9.0 / 31.9.0."

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

London
January 13, 1774

Dear Brother,

Probably, if I live another year, I may need Mr. [Samuel] Wathen again; but as yet it is not easy to determine. However, I am at present perfectly well.

Your advice with regard to Mr. [Edward] Davies is good. He is very quiet, but not very useful.

To tell *you* my naked thoughts (which I do not tell to everyone), I have talked with Ralph Mather again and again.² I think verily I never met with such another man. I am much inclined to think (though he is not infallible, neither of an uncommon natural understanding) that he is now as deep in grace as Gregory Lopez was.³

I mean Dr. [William] Boyce. I am glad [[Charles [Jr.] is at home]]. But why [[should you not have him to yourself]]? *Vir es!*⁴

No truth in it at all. A mere Georgian story.⁵

I think God raised up out of the dust Thomas Olivers, in the room of poor decrepit Walter Sellon. The conclusion of his book is noble: true, strong oratory.⁶

Goldsmith's *History* and Hooke's are far the best. I think I shall make them better.⁷ My view in writing history (as in writing philosophy) is to bring God into it.⁸

When I talk with Ralph Mather, I am amazed and almost discouraged. What have I been doing for 70 years?

Peace be with you and yours!

[[Adieu.]]

¹JW wrote CW just before or after Samuel Wathen drained his hydrocele on Jan. 4 (the letter is not known to survive). CW replied c. Jan. 9, apparently including a sense of the longer draft shorthand letter of Jan. 8 that is annotated "never sent." CW's reply is also not known to survive, but JW responds to some questions in it here.

²JW first mentioned Ralph Mather (c. 1750–1803) in his *Journal* on Aug. 12, 1773, calling him 'an humble, scriptural Christian' (*Works*, 22:385–86). Over the month of January JW came to worry that Mather was 'almost driven out of his senses by mystic divinity' (see *Journal*, Jan. 29, 1774, 22:397).

³Gregory Lopez (1542–96), a Spanish hermit, whom JW considered a model of the holy life.

⁴"You are a man" or "Be a man."

⁵Likely referring to the false tales told about both brothers during their time in Georgia.

⁶Walter Sellon published four books between 1767 and 1770 defending the 'Arminian' stance of the Church of England and the Wesleyan revival against Calvinist critics. Thomas Olivers had stepped into this role and just released: *A Scourge to Calumny: in two parts, Inscribed to Richard Hill* (London: Hawes, 1774), the conclusion appears on pp. 165–68.

⁷JW had just published *A Short Roman History* (*Bibliography*, No. 347), an abridged version of Nathaniel Hooke, *The Roman History*, 11 vols. (London: Hawkins, 1766–71). He was starting on *A Concise History of England* (*Bibliography*, No. 357), which would run 4 vols. and be completed in 1776; The bulk of this work was drawn from Oliver Goldsmith, *The History of England, from the Earliest Times to the Death of George II*, 4 vols. (London: T. Davies, Becket, et al., 1771).

⁸JW is alluding to *A Survey of the Wisdom of God in Creation; or, A Compendium of Natural Philosophy* (Bristol: Pine, 1763), where he comments in the preface (1:iii) that his goal was to direct a treatise on natural philosophy to its right end: "not barely to entertain an idle barren curiosity, but to display the invisible things of God, his power, wisdom, and goodness."

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

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother]. Jan 13 / 1774 / R. Mather, Gregory Lopez!”

Source: holograph; MARC, MAM JW 5/51.

From John Horton

London
January 24, 1774

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am indeed much in your debt for the favour of your three last letters,¹ and should have returned an answer sooner. But [I] waited till I could have a proper opportunity of seeing your brother with two or three of our friends, that I might be able to say something about that poor man of whom you have been obliged to make such frequent mention.

This morning your brother, Mr. [William] Ley, Mr. [Richard] Kemp, and myself breakfasted together. Our meeting was to consult what would be the most proper way of finally settling with Mr. [Edward] Davies—as he expects a compensation for his heavy losses and wants to have a meeting with your brother to make good his claim, and prove how greatly he has been injured.

Our dear friend [JW] seems conscious how unable he is to deal properly with this subtle man, and has therefore carefully avoided meeting him alone. But as he thinks himself injured, it was agreed to gratify him in this matter. Your brother will therefore desire him to bring a friend with him (if he thinks proper), and in company with us will have an interview with him, to attend to his complaints; and if any thing moderate will satisfy his cravings, we shall be glad to get rid of him on such terms. When we have had this meeting I will let you know the result of it.

I am for paying him his quarter's money directly, and giving him the time. And in this I hope to prevail. We shall then wish to see you here, if your health permits.

Since I mentioned to your brother a codicil of his papers, he has returned me his will unopened (as I delivered it) and on the outside has wrote, "I bequeath all my manuscript papers to the Rev. Mr. Fletcher, October 16, 1773. John Wesley."²

I knew not how to get satisfied of the other particular, tell me how I shall act in this delicate matter?

Your draft to Mr. Moore came. Agreeable to your advice, the same day I received the money of Mr. [James] Kenton, amounting to £16.9.0; which with £6.15.0 he had paid Mrs. [Martha] Hall, [and] £1.16.0 paid to Nanny,³ made up the sum due—viz. £25. The £15 from the society will be punctually paid at the usual time. You will suit your own convenience in drawing for it, the draft shall be duly honoured.

I was quite astonished at the account you gave Mr. Ley of Mr. Hill's letter to Mr. Fletcher.⁴ The original had been sent to your brother. Is he really ashamed of his past conduct, or afraid of Mr. Fletcher, or both? I fear only the latter.

My poor wife [Mary] has been very ill and has at length miscarried; but through mercy is now much better. She desires her love to yourself, Mrs. Wesley and family with,

Your affectionate humble servant,

Jno. Horton

I am sorry by delaying so long to write I have given you occasion to speak of your frequent letters. I shall not however despair of hearing from you at every favourable opportunity.

¹None of these letters are known to survive.

²If this was a revision of JW's will between that of March 16, 1770 (now in the Bridwell Library, SMU) and his final will of Feb. 20–25, 1789 (British National Archives, PROB 1/71), it is not known to survive.

³The maid caring for CW's house on Chesterfield Street.

⁴Richard Hill's conciliatory letter to Fletcher of Dec. 23, 1773; cf. John Tyerman, *Wesley's Designated Successor* (London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1882), 287–88.

Address: “To / the Revd. Mr. Wesley / Bristol.”

Postmark: “25/IA.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Horton Jan 24. 1774 / [[with my answer⁵]] D[avies]’s modest demand / my advice to give £20 or £40.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 1/46.

⁵CW records his response to Horton in shorthand.

Thomas Waller to Rebecca Waller¹

February 17, 1774

I never want a spur to anything that may in the least contribute to give my dearest Becky pleasure, so [I] write directly, which I certainly should have done soon. But oh how can I express the feelings at my heart when I find my sweetest sister is so well recovered! Indeed, my dear God has been very good to us (which I don't doubt but you are sensible of) and am persuaded we shall still live many happy years together. I own I am greatly pleased to find you will not be much marked [by small pox]; yet had that been the case, *I* should have been the *same brother* still. Yes, my Becky, it is not the case only I prize; no, there is a jewel fare above it, the *mind*. And I am quite sure that whatever trifle at beauty you might have lost in your outward *form* would be doubly made up in the inner.

I hope my dear girl will not be displeased with any of the above, as I would not do anything to offend her, but beg she may always impute it to the fondness of a brother who wishes to see his sister everything that can be called *truly amiable*—which he makes not the least doubt of in one of her good sense.

My mother is calling and says I shall not be ready for dinner. But how can I leave off when writing to my dear sister? Besides, I want to acknowledge the many obligations I am under to my father [James Waller], Mr. Shirley,² Mrs. Harris,³ and Martha. And as to my dear aunt,⁴ I can never say sufficient of her goodness, but will attempt to say something to her on that subject in a day or two. My mother calls, so find myself under a necessity to conclude with assuring my dearest sister that I am at all times, and in all places,

Her truly affectionate brother,

Thos. Waller

Address: "Miss Waller."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 22/50

¹Thomas and his mother Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller were on a trip that included staying for a while with CW and family; see Elizabeth(Gwynne) Waller to SGW, Mar. 28, 1774.

²Mr. Shirley provided medical care; see Rebecca Gwynne to SGW, Nov. 4–6, 1770.

³This may be Elizabeth (Peavey) Harris, the wife of Baker Harris; cf. CW to SGW, Feb. 25, 1771.

⁴Rebecca Gwynne.

From Little Ephraim Robin John and Ancona Robin Robin John¹

King Road²
February 18, 1774

Mr. Charles Wesley,

This comes with my kind love to you, hoping that you are well and Mrs. Wesley and all your family is well, as we are at present. And as we are forced to come back again, the wind being contrary for us³ to go home to old Calabar, and so I send a letter to know how you and all your family are. And if we have got time to come to shore, we will come and see you. If not, I should be glad to hear from you. and if you have an opportunity of writing to us, I should be glad please to enquire how Mrs. [Elizabeth] Johnson and Mrs. [Mary] Purnell and all the family, how they are.

I am

Your humble servant,

Little Ephraim Robin John
and Ancona Robin Robin John

Address: “Mr / Charles Wesley in / Charles Street St James’s / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Febr 18. 1774 / Ephraim & Ancona.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/6.

¹Little Ephraim Robin John, and his brother Ancona Robin Robin John, of the Efik clan, were members of the ruling family of Old Town, Calabar, Nigeria, headed by their older brother (Ephraim Robin John, who took the name Grandy King George). This family captured other Africans and sold them to British slave traders. In 1767 the two men were themselves captured, during a raid by a rival African slave-trading family and British traders. They were enslaved on the island of Dominica for a while, then in Virginia. When their owner died in 1772, the two were able to get passage on the slave-trading ship bound for Bristol, England—where the captain promised to transfer them to one headed to Africa. Instead, on arrival in Bristol, the Robin John brothers were put on a ship due to depart soon back to Virginia. At this point the prominent Bristol slave trader Thomas Jones (d. 1794), who had formed a close relationship with the ruling family of Old Town intervened and in late 1773 won recognition of the brothers under British law as freemen. They spent several weeks in Bristol preparing for their return to Calabar, during which time they became friends with CW and other Bristol Methodists. Indeed, CW had baptized them in Jan. 1774 (see CW to William Perronet, Jan. 23, 1774). For more details, see Randy Sparks, *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

²The harbor in the Bristol Channel, at the mouth of the River Avon.

³Orig., “we.”

From the Rev. John Fletcher

February 20, 1774

My Dear Friend,

I thank you for your kind intention of seeing Madeley once in your life.¹ I welcome you beforehand to my home and pulpit, and want to know when I must get you a bed well aired. Next month your brother leaves London, and our roads will be tolerable. Nay they begin to be so now. So come round this way, correct my *Scales*,² strengthen my soul, and rouse my stupid flock.

My *Equal Check* is in great forwardness. The printer treads upon my heels, which I find exceeding disagreeable, as the more I want to dispatch business the less I do. To the two parts of it that you saw last year, I have added two more. The one a Scriptural Essay on the astonishing rewardableness of the works of faith, i.e. good works—which is a scripture comment on the proposition of the *Minutes*: “Salvation by works as a condition.”³ I trust I have treated the subject in such a manner as to give a push to Calvin’s ark without touching that of our Lord. However, for fear this piece should make the scale of works preponderate, should break the balance, and should render my *Check* unequal, I have added (or rather I am now adding) a rational essay upon the doctrine of salvation by faith, showing that in the nature of things faith alters a man’s principle—and consequently that true faith must be the root of every good; and unbelief, or faith in some lie, the root of every bad work.⁴ This seems to me the only way of maintaining the fundamental doctrine of salvation by faith without countenancing solidifidianism and Calvinism. This piece obliges me to lay by my *Scales*.

I get a 1,000 copies printed and desire your brother to take the whole impression, except 12 copies which I design to give to a few friends. Lady Huntingdon (*entre nous*⁵) gave me leave to see her privately. I declined, as not conscious to have done anything to make her ashamed of giving me leave to wait upon her openly. She then consented I should see her before all the world, but I have declined in doing it till she has seen my Scriptural Essay (which the Calvinist will call “popery unmasked”) and my *Scales*. This favourable turn is, under God, owing to a few arguments by which I have tried to convince her that derived worthiness in believers perfectly agrees with Christ’s original merit. The Calvinists fight now openly with lies. They take their advantage of the liberty of the press. Let us take advantage of the liberty of access to a throne of grace, and while they pour floods of calumnies upon us, let us pour ardent prayers for them, and floods of arguments and scriptures upon their mistakes. I thank you for answering so fully my *argument ad hominum*.⁶ Pray for me and come full of the blessing of the gospel of peace. My Christian love to all in your house.

Adieu.

Address: “To / the Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley / at the Room / in the Horsefair / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Fletcher / Feb. 20. 1774.”

¹CW’s shorthand summary of his letter of Jan. 16, 1774 to Fletcher contains no mention of a possible visit to Madeley (or response to an *argument ad hominum*). This suggests a reply by Fletcher in late Jan. (his *argument ad hominum*), and response by CW in early Feb., neither known to survive.

²This became two volumes: *Zelotes and Honestus Reconciled, or Equal Check, Part I of Scripture Scales* (London: R. Hawes, 1774); and *Zelotes and Honestus Reconciled, or Equal Check, Second Part of Scripture Scales* (London: R. Hawes, 1775).

³See Fletcher, *Equal Check*, 92–136.

⁴*Ibid.*, 137–264.

⁵“between us.”

⁶“argument against the person.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MAW Fl., 36.1.⁷

⁷A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 315–16.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Deptford
February 22, 1774

[[Dear Brother,]]

I have seen Mr. Lediard.¹ Speak a few words in the congregation, and the remaining tracts will be sold in a quarter of an hour.²

Surely you should reprint the depositions; only leaving out the names both of captains and ships.³

Read on. The farther you read in Thomas's tract the better you will like it.⁴ I never saw it till it was printed.⁵

Miss [Jane Catherine] March is likely to recover; she rides out every day. Mrs. [Lucia] Gallatin is not joined with the Germans. I believe Miss [Mary] Bradshaw is.⁶ Miss F__ is in town.

Today, Henry Hammond and John Bates pleading on the one side,⁷ Mr. [John] Horton and [William] Ley on the other, Mr. [Edward] Davies had a full hearing. In the end he desired (not demanded) that some compensation might be made him for his losses. This is to be referred to the committee which meets tomorrow night. I shall not be there, but at Lewisham.

We join in love to you and yours.

[[Farewell.]]

Postmark: "23/FE."

Endorsement: by CW, "B[rother] Feb. 22. 1774 / D[avies]'s hearing."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/69.

¹Thomas Lediard (1732–c. 1794) was a "drysalter" in Bristol, who married Ann Fagg (1731–62) in 1758. He was a friend and supporter of CW and his family.

²JW was likely referring to *Thoughts upon Slavery*, which had just been published. Alternatively, Lediard may have raised concern about *Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions* (issued as a tract in 1773) which JW had satisfied.

³JW is referring to depositions given by Little Ephraim Robin John and Ancona Robin Robin John, about how they were treated on ship after being taken captive in Africa, and were twice tricked by captains who promised to return them to Africa but instead sought to enslave them again. See Sparks, *Princes of Calabar*. Cf. their letters to CW, Aug. 17, 1774.

⁴Thomas Oliver's *A Scourge to Calumny*; cf. JW to CW, Jan 13, 1774.

⁵The opening of the previous paragraph, and this sentence in the present paragraph are underlined—almost certainly by CW, as he typically did in letters he received for points of particular interest or to which he intended to respond.

⁶Mary Bradshaw was a younger relative of or aid to the Gallatin family, living at their home. She and Mrs. Gallatin were both in close contact with James Hutton; cf. CW to Hutton, Dec. 25, 1773.

⁷Henry Hammond appears on the Foundery Band Lists (1742–46) up through Jan. 1744, as a single man. In late 1757 Charles Wesley persuaded Hammond, "a poor wandering sheep that did run well for years, but left *us* upon his marriage, and Christ too," to go to Spitalfields Chapel after twelve years' interruption. He returned to the fold, and was a regular attendant. See CW to SGW, May 10, 1758.

From Little Ephraim and Ancona Robin Robin John

Portishead Point,¹ on board the *Maria*
February 24, 1774

Reverend Father in God,

Yours I received with several good books of Christ,² which [we] peruse as much as our weak abilities will admit. Our love to all our brethren and trust in God their prayer will not be wanting for our souls and save arrival in our desired country. Our kind love to your wife and two sons and daughter, and [we] hope God will bless them with health. Likewise [with] the knowledge of God equal to yourself, which shall always be the prayer of

Your poor and loving brethren till death,

Ephraim Robin John
and Ancona Robin Robin John

N.B. Our captain³ and doctor desire their loves to you all, and they are great friend[s] to us, assisting us in everything that is good, which we hope will lay in our powers to reward.

Address: “To / Reverand / Charles Westley / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Feb. 24. 1774 / Ephraim & Ancona.”⁴

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/7.

¹Orig., “Porsett pount.” S docking site just south of the mouth of the River Avon, in the Bristol Channel.

²CW’s letter is not known to survive.

³William Floyd was captain of *Maria*.

⁴Also a later note: “Looked on and to be preserved.”

From John Horton

London
February 28, 1774

Reverend and Dear Sir,

With pleasure I can now inform you the interview with Mr. [Edward] Davies is over and our mournful separation draws near.

Your brother [JW], Mr. [William] Ley, Mr. [Richard] Kemp, and myself gave him (with a couple of his friends¹) the meeting a few days ago. His complaint turned chiefly upon his great losses in being urged to leave Wales so precipitately, to which we made answer the engagement he was under as his large salary was going on, together with the inconvenience you was under in being obliged to stay in town till he came, etc., etc. I told him the agreement had been strictly kept in our part and I thought he could make no claim. If anything was given, it was matter of courtesy. I was glad he acknowledged this himself. (What should be given was agreed to be left to the committee, who met the next evening) and we parted in seeming friendship. You will perhaps wonder when I tell you I was almost the only advocate for him among the committee, as they were for making him no allowance whatever. It was however at length agreed to give him ten guineas at the time of paying his quarter's salary, which will be on or before the 13th of March, the day his labours cease among us. I think it is on that day your brother intends to leave Bristol, so I hope we may expect to see you soon after.

Your brother told me this morning (on my desiring to see that part of his will respecting his covenant to you and Mrs. Wesley for £100 per annum from the books) that he was firmly bound to that agreement by your marriage settlement which nothing could disannul. If so, it is not of consequence whether he has been express in that particular or not. If you wish me to press this matter farther, or anything else relating thereto, there will be time to give me a line, which I shall particularly attend to.

The tract on slavery I saw as soon as published, and expected to have seen your supplement to it.² About 300 were given away at your brother's expense.

My wife [Mary] remains in the same languid state. She desires her love to yourself, Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, and family, with

Your affectionate humble servant,

Jno. Horton

P.S. If you are not satisfied your brother's engagement is sufficiently binding, will it not be best to desire him (immediately by letter) to satisfy you in this particular by making express mention of it in his will, as I am in doubt whether he has said anything about it.³ I told him I should write you this evening.

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

Postmark: "28/FE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Horton Feb. 28. 1774. / D[avies] dismissed."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 1/47.

¹The friends were Henry Hammond and John Bates; see JW to CW, Feb. 22, 1774.

²The anticipated supplement to JW's *Thoughts upon Slavery*, which had just been published, may have been the depositions of the Robin John; see JW to CW, Feb. 22, 1774.

³JW's will of 1770 did specify payment of £100 a year to CW and his immediate heirs.

From the Rev. Edward Davies

No. 7 Winkworth Buildings
March 13, 1774¹

Reverend Sir,

As I shall now want my mare, you will please to send her by James's first wagon,² a particular charge to take care of her. And in advising me of the day she is to be in London, you will oblige,

Your humble servant,

E. D.

[c. March 20, 1774]

"I was less surprised than might be expected by this demand, which was soon followed by a second, more pressing."

Source: CW manuscript transcription for records; MARC, DDCW 7/111, pp. 9–10

¹This was the last day of Davies's employment by the London Methodists.

²William James (c. 1712–1787) operated a wagon and carrying service from Bristol to London.

From John Horton

London
March 22, 1774

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I am again surrounded with bricklayers, carpenters, painters etc. That I have not sooner answered your two last letters is chargeable to their account.¹ Therefore admit my excuse.

I am indeed truly glad to hear your brother is so well after the operation, I hope this disorder will be attended with no other inconvenience, though [I] am sorry there should be occasion so soon to repeat that disagreeable business.

I believe the fidelity of Betty may be depended upon.² I shall however take an opportunity to mention that matter as from your brother.

It is well your brother is not in town. He would be encompassed with humble petitioners from morning till night, in consequence of Henry Tucker's bequest.³

[James] Kenton is determined to go, and I am informed Samuel Tooth is appointed by your brother to succeed him.⁴ I fear our friend is strangely mistaken in his choice.

Mr. [Edward] Davies desired he might be permitted to stay till Lady-day [March 25], and pleaded your brother's letter of warning for that time. He has accordingly *earned* another fortnight's wages and intends setting out for Wales very soon. What he is purposed to do in [the] future I know not, but I am persuaded he will not easily find another curacy of £80 per annum for preaching once a week. I have not seen him since our meeting with your brother.

I hope we shall soon have such weather that you may venture to town. The people are every day enquiring about you, and very many are in expectation of seeing you on Easter Sunday. I cannot yet hear of any proper place for you after the Foundery preaching, but hope you would soon find an agreeable lodging after your arrival here.

What indeed will become of the preachers and the people? I fear some of the former have not a single eye. Such will make a prey of many of the latter unless our Lord interpose; which I trust he will, and keep the people in his fold.

When will Mr. [John] Fletcher come among us? Cannot you settle it so as to come together? Your brother gave us some hope we might expect him soon. I suppose he has nearly finished his polemic writings, as some of his opponents begin to cry for quarter.

I wish it was convenient for your whole family to accompany you here. We cannot expect your stay will be so long without them.

My wife [Mary] joins in love to yourself, Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, and family. She still continues in a very feeble languid state. We intend to get out of town in a very short time. My dear sir, remember us at the throne of mercy.

¹These letters are not known to survive.

²Betty was a housekeeper at the Foundery.

³Henry Tucker, a man of some wealth, was buried on Mar. 10, 1774 in Bristol. While it would not be proved until Aug. 16, it had apparently become known that Tucker's will named JW his executor, and bequeathed to JW nearly all of his estate.

⁴Samuel Tooth (c. 1743–1809) was admitted as a travelling preacher in 1771, but served only one year (see JW, *Works*, 10:395). Turning to a career in business, he became a prosperous timber merchant and builder. Tooth worshipped for a while at the Foundery, and was apparently stepping in to handle financial matters at JW's request. Tooth later became a leader in the society at West Street. He was one of the contractors who built the new chapel on City Road and was named one of its stewards. His family remained prominent in London Methodism for many decades.

Your affectionate humble servant,

Jno. Horton

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

Postmark: "25/MR."

Endorsement: by CW, "March 22. 1774 / Horton / D[avies] going. Call for me/ my Answer.⁵"

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP_r 1/48.

⁵CW's reply to Horton is copied in shorthand.

Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

Marylebone [CW home on Chesterfield Street]
March 28 [1774]

As soon as I got to this place, which was on Saturday afternoon, I fully intended to write to my dearest sister to thank her and my dear brother [CW] for giving poor Tom and me house room. But I was unable to hold a pen, owing to a violent headache, which did not leave me till yesterday morning. I found your house in good order, and the beds were well aired.¹ I never saw your furniture look so clean. Your maid [Nanny] said they were left in a dirty condition by the family that were here. Betty (of the Foundry) told my sister [Rebecca] the same. This woman, so far as I can judge from the little I have seen, seems careful of the things. She has brought me some of your table linen, etc., that is gone yellow by lying by, so that I shall use them once, which will bring them to a good colour before they are locked up. On Thursday sister Beck I believe will be here.

Mr. [James] Waller came last night. He left dear Becky in good spirits at the Hardwicks.² I saw her in a coach a few days before she went. She has had it very thick indeed, and yet will not be much altered. Her nose is [?], but when her eyebrows and lashes are grown it will make a material difference in her looks.³ We have great reason to be thankful that her life was spared and has no weakness in her eyes. The boils she had were of infinite use I believe. She never made use of a mask, which she was wrong in not complying with, as her friends requested she would. Some say the redness in her face will go off the sooner, but I am really no judge, as no pains was taken with my face. Many think Becky is now something like me. But Mr. Waller, who saw us both in the disorder, says I had it ten times worse than she had.

Mrs. [Millbery] Foottit has just been here and desired to be remembered to you. And my B^{r4} Tom begs his duty, and says he shall be glad when the harpsichord comes, and is ashamed of not answering his cousin [Sarah Jr.]'s letter. He is at present much taken up in writing to his sister, but promises to write to her soon. In the meantime he joins in love to each. Believe me to be, my dearest sister,

Yours most affectionately,

E. W.

Nanny desires her love to Charles, she does not know the rest. She talks a deep Yorkshire [accent].

Address: "To / Mrs Wesley / Charles Street / near Stokes Croft / Bristol."

Postmark: "28/MR."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/89.

¹The house on Chesterfield Street in London.

²Thomas and Sarah (Witham) Hardwick, of Brentford.

³Elizabeth Waller Jr. was recovering from smallpox.

⁴The letters are clear, but their meaning is not, as Elizabeth is clearly referring to her son Tom.

From Elizabeth Marriott¹

[London]
April 1774

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Agreeable to your desire, I will attempt to give you a short account of the dealings of God with my dear mother [Webster]. But as the family took up much of my time during her sickness, I had not the opportunity of seeing or hearing near so much as those that constantly waited on her.

When first her bodily strength decayed, she appeared to be in great darkness of soul and would often retire to weep. The enemy thrust sore at her and strove much to overcome her by impatience. All this time I could do nothing but pray for her. Considering it was my parent, I could not find freedom to speak. Till one Saturday I broke through and asked her how she felt her mind.

She said, "I have thought much since I have been confined, and had many views of eternity. I see much cause to be thankful. Everybody is very kind and I don't find my family miss me. I used to think nothing would be done as it ought if I did not see to it. But I fear you will be overdone, and then I don't know what we shall do. I am sorry to see you so exercised in body and mind. I know you feel for me."

I said, "Do not give yourself one moment's uneasiness about me. The Lord doth support me. I fell a little what it meaneth to walk unconcerned in care."

She said, "I bless God for it, but still I often think wherefore my body is so afflicted. Sometimes I think it is a token for good, that the Lord will save me, and therefore my sin has it punishment here. At other times I fear it is only an earnest of eternal misery. I know the Lord might justly banish me from his presence forever, for my unfaithfulness to his grace."

I encouraged her to believe it was a token of his willingness to receive her after all that she had done, and to heal her backslidings and love her freely.

And so it proved, for not many days after, while the nurse was praying with her, she broke out "The light is come! I feel peace, and pardon, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

And I believe [she] never lost it more, though tried as by fire, both with severe pain and strong temptations, Especially this, that the last agonies of death would be such as to make her quit her hold on Jesus. Another was an unwillingness to tell what God had done for her soul. She said none would believe her, because her conversation had not adorned the gospel in times past. But after she was prevailed on to break through, leaving that to the Lord what any might say or think, she was continually telling of his goodness.

She often said, "O what do I see now!" (seeming to refer to the Lord's past dealings with her). "All is mercy. All I see is God. I see God in all." Sometimes when she thought of getting over the disorder she would say, "Be my days many or few, they all are his due, and shall all be devoted to him." I asked if she chose life. She said, "No, only by life or death to glorify God; for I fear lest if I live I should not live wholly to him. But I know he will do that which is best for me and all of you."

She often saw invisible things. One day as she sat in her bed she nodded her head and said, "Aye, I am coming." I asked her what she meant. She said, "Nancy peeped at her and beckoned her."² Another time she asked me who that man was that came into the room. I said, "There was none." She said, "Yes there was, and he says *you* won't let me go to heaven." On my making no answer, she overed with it again, till I said, "Yes, I will let you go."

She would not suffer any of us to hold her back, nor allow us to shed a tear in her presence. She said we ought to rejoice; she did, and felt no reluctance to part with any of us. And indeed it appeared so. I saw her take her leave of her children without the least emotion. I asked the reason. She said she left

¹Elizabeth (b.c. 1750) was the daughter of Thomas Marriott (1725–75) and Webster (Langdon) Marriott (1722–72), who married in 1747.

²Referring to her deceased daughter Anne (b. 1748).

them in the hands of God, he would take care of them; and felt not anxiety, he had been so gracious to her in them already.

Perceiving her soul calm and serene one night, I said “Are you seeking all the Lord has purchased? Do you feel the want of a full renewal in righteousness? She said, “I am waiting for it. I know I shall love him with all my heart.” She then expressed much happiness in God. I said, “Give him all the glory.” She said, “Aye, give him all the glory indeed! It is all of grace. I expect to be saved only for what he hath done and suffered.

At another time she cried out, “Oh wondrous grace!” Frequently when she appeared to have neither strength nor voice she began, to our astonishment, singing, “Now, O my Joshua bring me in.”³

Towards the close of her illness, finding herself very heavy to sleep, she supposed the apothecary had put something of a sleepy nature into her medicines, which she desired him not to do, telling him she was not afraid to die. A few days before she died she said to me, “I am going to God, and you shall go too.” On Tuesday she said, “Open the door and let all them sister come in and we will all go to church together.” I said, “You are going to the church triumphant, where they sing ‘Hallelujah’...”; and was going on when she caught the rest from me and said, “Yes, where they sing ‘Hallelujah to God and the Lamb’.” She continued speaking of him and longing for him till (contrary to her expectation) she sweetly slept in Jesus without struggle, sigh, or groan. She went off so easy that both the persons with her thought her only asleep.

I might say much more, if time would permit, of the goodness of God to her, but must conclude abruptly. I am, sir,

Your affectionate daughter,

Eliz. Marriott

Endorsement: by CW, “[S]ister] Marriot’s happy / Death April 1772.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/108.⁴

³CW, “Desiring to Love,” Pt. II, st. 8, *HSP* (1742), 245. It continues, “Cast out my foes, the inbred sin.”

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

From William Ley¹

April 5, 1774

Your answer to Mr. Davies's letter came too late. He set out for Wales last Friday. I fear you will find him a k[nave] in grain.² He says he only lent you *his* mare, and if you do not deliver it up to him he will bring an action against you.

Source: CW manuscript transcription for records; MARC, DDCW 7/111, p. 10

¹Ley is replying to CW's letter of c. Mar. 28, concerning the ongoing dispute with Edward Davies over a mare.

²I.e., "a knave of the first rate."

From the Rev. Edward Davies¹

Bristol
Thursday Evening [April 7, 1774]

Reverend Sir,

Your not answering my letters has caused me to disappoint a church 90 miles from town, and near as remote from Bristol, where I am come on purpose to demand my mare.

Which demand and right I draw from my purchasing of her, and the following consequences. In my agreement with you, you was to have my mare as soon as a person could be met with to take her after the 26th of August, and *you was to be* at the expense of the journey to Bristol. That very day I had the opportunity of delivering her into the care of your brother. And I, my servant, and several neighbours (if required) will make affidavit that she went sound from me, to the utmost of my knowledge. I also believe that she would not have been ill, or died, if proper care had been taken to have had her milked on the road and in Bristol.

Such casualties I could not engage for, neither by law or equity. Now *what does Mr. Charles Wesley* think of the affair? Let us refer to his own letters for his sentiments:

First letter: "It must be near three weeks longer if you wait to send the mare by a preacher. A post-boy or a sailor you may as safely trust her to. I need not say I should be glad if you could sooner find a safe rider for her."²

Second letter: "I am sorry you heard of the mare's sickness. I never intended you should know it till it was past. For believe me, my good friend, I am more troubled for you than for myself. Don't think me capable of an hard or unkind thought concerning *you*. You could not answer for events."³

Third letter: "Neither you nor I could help the inconveniences arising from that unfortunate beast. Our farrier thinks the mare's milk killed her. What shall we say to these things? *Careat successibus, opto quisquis ab eventu facta notanda putat.*⁴ I blame not you, nor myself, nor anyone. All that happens is providence to me."⁵

From these letters I concluded you wrote in sincerity, and that you was fully satisfied. Therefore it was to my utmost astonishment that you eight months after ordered my mare to be kept idle for days, because you intended taking her to Bristol, and this without consulting me. Did you imagine because I was in connection with you and [your] brother that you should use my property without my consent? I then let you know to the contrary.⁶

I expostulated with you, and your answer was, on the road to Islington, "We will not fall out about *meum* and *tuam*."⁷ I informed you that I was willing to refer the matter to judges. You *declined it*, adding you should *mention her no more*.

¹CW had replied to Davies's letters of Mar. 13 and c. Mar. 20, 1774 in a letter c. Mar. 28 sent to William Ley. But this arrived in London after Davies had already left for Wales.

²See CW to Davies, c. Aug. 10, 1772.

³See CW to Davies, Dec. 10, 1772.

⁴Ovid, *Heroides*, ii.85–86; "Let him come to naught, I pray, who thinks the deed should be condemned from its result" (Loeb).

⁵See CW to Davies, Jan. 1, 1773.

⁶See CW to Davies, June 28, 1773.

⁷What belongs to me and what belongs to you.

Again at the Conference I was surprised that you should attempt to have the use of her, after treating me in the manner you did; but your brother, *begging her* as a favour, because he said his mare went another way. Yet, lest you should imagine you might expect her as yours, I wrote a letter to assure you of the contrary.

No answer came. Had you a shadow of claim remaining, why did not you *maintain it even then?* You have attempted effectually to bring the committee to recant their promise of allowing the trifle of 10 guineas, by your letters to them lately. But this I am well pleased with, as occurrences fall out.

Now, sir, without any farther altercations from me, I have only this to desire, an answer, as short as you please, whether you will or not deliver up my mare to me this night or morning early. I am to set off near 80 miles by Sunday, if I have my mare; if not, I shall take two witnesses in the morning to demand her.

I am your humble servant,

E[dward] D[avies]

P.S. I have kept a copy of this.

Source: CW manuscript transcription for records; MARC, DDCW 7/111, pp. 10–13.

From the Rev. Edward Davies

Monday Night [April 11, 1774]

Reverend Sir,

Had your treatment been in any measure Christian, or consistent, I should have had a real pleasure in compromising any affair, even to the injury of myself. But as you have shown no symptoms of sympathy for me in all my disappointments (though you was the great author of them) and have for want of common civility disappointed the church I was to officiate in for two Sundays past and brought me down to Bristol, I ought to expect a disbursement of all these consequences. Yet, sir, as I desire to be under the influence of that grace that will not permit me to return *par pari refert*,¹ if you choose to keep the mare, *it shall be* under one of these conditions: of your giving me 7 pounds now, and I shall have her to ride to Studley and Wales, and return her to you in six weeks, as well as I have her in going out, or return you the money on consequence of accidents; or, to deliver me the mare tomorrow morning by 8:00.

Being but just come to the inn, I could not wait upon Mr. [Joseph] Stokes, neither will time admit it in the morning.

These are my ultimate proposals, therefore I expect the common civility of an answer.

Yours,

E. Davies

Source: CW manuscript transcription for records; MARC, DDCW 7/111, p. 19.

¹“Like for like.”

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

Whitehaven
May 6, 1774

[[Dear Brother,]]

With or without Mr. [John] Southcote, he need not print nonsense, which he has done in an hundred places.

I will *give* nothing and *spend* nothing out of it—not a shilling; and what is *paid* can but be *repaid*. Nothing is hereby *embezzled*. *Duty* is all I consider. *Trouble* and *reproach* I value not. And I am by no means clear that I can with a good conscience throw away what I think the providence of God has put into my hands. Were it not for the Chancery suit, I should not hesitate a moment.²

My complaint increases by slow degrees, much the same as before.³ It seems I am likely to need a surgeon every nine or ten weeks. Mr. Hey, of Leeds, vehemently advises me never to attempt what they call a radical cure.⁴

You did tell me Mr. [Edward] Davies had accepted of your mare. But surely there are more mares in the kingdom!

I never said a word of “publishing it after my death.”⁵ I judged it my duty to publish it now; and I have as good a right to believe one way as any man has to believe another. I was glad of an opportunity of declaring myself on the head. I beg Hugh Bold to let *me* think as well as himself, and to believe *my* judgement will go as far as his. I have no doubt of the substance both of Glanvill’s and Cotton Mather’s narratives.⁶ Therefore in this point you that are otherwise-minded bear with me.

*Veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.*⁷ Remember, I am, upon full consideration and seventy years’ experience, just as obstinate in my opinion as you in yours. Don’t you think the disturbances in my father’s house were a Cock Lane story?⁸ Peace be with you and yours!

[[Adieu.]]

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

Postmarks: “10/MA” and “Whitehaven.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother]. May 6. 1774 / Ghosts & Witches!”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/42.

¹The letter to which JW is obviously replying is not known to survive.

²This paragraph concerns Henry Tucker’s bequest; see John Horton to CW, Mar. 22, 1774.

³JW’s hydrocele continued to bother him.

⁴William Hey (1736–1819) was a surgeon at Leeds General Infirmary and an active Methodist. See John Pearson, *Life of William Hey, Esq., F.R.S.*, 2 vols. (London, 1782).

⁵JW had just published Extract 15 of his *Journal*, which included a defensive account of a woman who experienced ghostly apparitions; see *Journal*, May 27, 1768, *Works*, 22:135–46.

⁶Joseph Glanvill, *Saducismus Triumphatus; or, Full and Plain Evidence concerning Witches and Apparitions* (London: S. Lownds, 1681); and Cotton Mather, *Memorable Providences relating to Witchcraft and Possessions* (London: Parkhurst, 1691). See JW’s comments on Glanvill in his *Journal*, Sept. 2, 1751 (*Works*, 20:401), and Apr. 9–10, 1769 (22:178).

⁷Horace, *Ars Poetica*, l. 11: “this licence we poets claim and in our tum we grant the like” (Loeb).

⁸JW is contending that CW equated the accounts of “old Jeffrey” at the parsonage in Epworth with an infamous 1762 account of a ghost knocking on surfaces in a house on Cock’s Lane in London, which was publicly debunked. See See Clarke, *Memoirs*, 1:247–85; and Paul Chambers, *The Cock Lane Ghost: Murder, Sex and Haunting in Dr Johnson’s London* (Stroud: Sutton, 2006).

From Joseph Cownley

Newcastle upon Tyne
May 9, 1774

Very Dear and Honoured Sir,

It has been our heavenly Father's will to require me lately to drink the most bitter cup I ever drank of, next to feeling his wrath abiding on me. My poor dear wife was snatched away from me without my being so much as permitted to bid her farewell.¹

I left her on the 18th of March, with her own consent, to visit the society at Alnwick, where I was to spend a week. And she was then as well as most women in her condition, for she expected to lie-in about the beginning of April.² Yet it seems she was taken ill the day after I left her, which was Saturday, with a disorder incident to the sex. And on the Wednesday evening following, just after bearing the child, perfectly sensible and in great peace, she was called away to that rest that remaineth for the people of God, where her heart and affections had been a long time.

You will scarcely believe I had not a friend here that thought it worthwhile, though the post goes from hence to Alnwick almost every day in the week, to let me know how ill she was. Indeed, the day before she died she sent me a line herself informing me that she was confined to her bed and did not know but her labour might come on. This determined me to set out for home the next morning. But alas, she (died a³) few hours after I received her letter. When she was gone my friends thought proper to send an express for me, with met me on the road with the doleful tidings. And none that have not my feelings can judge what spears and daggers went through my heart when I saw and kissed her in her shroud.

She has left eight children out of fourteen; five of which are little and helpless. Oh my dear sir, you can pity and pray for me, and I earnestly beg you to do the latter.

I can say, through grace, I have not yet felt any rising in my heart against the Great Disposer of all events, as though he had dealt hardly by me. On the contrary, I can kiss the rod and bless the hand that laid it on. I know he does all things well, and that it is right he should do what he will with his own.

With my best respects to Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, I am, very dear sir,

Your ever affectionate son and servant,

Jos. Cownley

Should this find you at Bristol, I should esteem it a favour to [be] remembered to my old friends, Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor, her sisters,⁴ and to Mr. [William] and Mrs. [Rebecca] Lunell.

The bearer, though unknown to you, has been a faithful labourer many years, and is worthy of esteem for his uprightness and integrity.

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

Endorsement: by CW, "Cownley May 9 / 1774 / Wife dead."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 1/104.

¹Cownley married Martha Susannah ("Suky") Massiot (1734–74) in 1755.

²I.e., she was pregnant, and nearing delivery.

³A small portion is torn away by the wax seal; but the missing words are clear from context.

⁴The Stafford sisters.

From Martha (Meighen / Colvill) Gumley

c. June 1, 1774¹

“She presented her godson [CW Jr.] with his first organ, and her letter to Charles [Sr.] enclosing the money for its payment is now before the writer, with the endorsement at the back in the handwriting of the Rev. Charles Wesley, ‘Mrs. Gumley, a mother to Charles.’ In that letter she begs Charles, if he has any other wants unsatisfied, that he will not trouble any other person, but at once let her know what they are, that she may have the pleasure of satisfying them.”

Source: published description; Stevenson, *Memorials*, 404.

¹For the date see CW, *Journal Letters*, 455: “[May 19, 1774 we returned to London. Two things Charles wanted to make him a musician, an organ and Dr. Boyce’s instruction in composition. How to procure either I knew not, when by an unexpected providence a lady made him a p[resent] of both.”

From William Boyce¹

[London]
June 13, 1774

Received then of the Reverend Mr. Charles Westley the sum of fifty pounds, in consideration of my instructing his son Charles in musical composition, and which I here promise to do so long as his said son shall find my instruction of assistance in that particular branch of musical knowledge necessary to him.

Received by me,

Wm. Boyce

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/108.

¹While this is a receipt, not a letter, it marks the presence of CW back in London.

From Elizabeth Johnson

[Trowbridge]
June 16 [1774]

Dear and Reverend Sir,

An awful providence constrains me to write. Poor Ephraim and Ancona is again returned.¹ Last Monday, late at night, they came in dressed in borrowed rags. On the 9th(?) of May the vessel was dashed to pieces against the rocks and sunk,² and all the crew escaped only with their lives in a small boat. After which they were near starved. Our pain for them is not to be described. They appear greatly distressed, but yet confident. We have our fears that Captain Jones will not any more attend to them.³ But above all are at a loss to know the voice of God. We was engaged to leave Bristol on the Tuesday morning, but recommended them to the care of Mrs. Purnell for the time of our absence.⁴ When we return [we] shall be ready to give our poor assistance. But what shall we do if the Lord doth not help us? I dare not give place to thought at present, but bow my soul and say “Good is his will.” I expect a letter from Bristol with some account of what befalls. The poor souls ran to your house, and from thence to ours, soon as they came, and all was disappointment. But I have brought them with me on my heart.

I shall be thankful with a line from you. I hope your family is well. I have had some good account of the church in London. May the Lord go on to bless. Adored be his name for all the good that is done to the children of men. I think he is doing and has done all that can be done for Bristol. But [w]o[e] be to us, we are ungrateful. I am ashamed for myself and others, but am with my sisters⁵ united [in] respects and love to yourself and Mrs. Wesley.

Your unworthy servant,

E. Johnson

Be pleased to direct to me at Mr. Turner’s, in Trowbridge, Wilts[hire],⁶ where we expect to be about ten days longer.

Address: “The Revd Mr Chas. Wesley / at the Foundery / Moorefields / London.”

Postmark: “18/IV.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[etsy] Johnson / June 16. 1774 / Africans shipwr[eake]d returned!”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/8.

¹They had sailed from Bristol on the *Maria*, captained by William Floyd and bound for Old Calabar, in mid-March 1774; Cf. Robin Johns to CW, Feb. 24, 1774.

²The sinking of *Maria* off the shore of the Cape Verde island of Boa Vista, was reported in London magazines in mid-June 1774. See the comment of the brothers in their letter to CW, c. July 1774.

³Thomas Jones (d. 1794), listed as an African merchant in the *Bristol Directory* (1775), who had close ties to the Robin John family in Old Calabar, had helped gain the freedom of Little Ephraim and Ancona Robin, and arranged for their transport on the *Maria*.

⁴In Oct. 1763, after the death of his first wife Mary, James Purnell Esq. (1711–72) married Judith Davis (1731–93). Judith was a friend of Elizabeth Johnson and, like Johnson, a strong supporter of the Methodist cause in Bristol.

⁵Elizabeth had two sisters: Mary (1717–83) and Ann (b. 1725).

⁶Johnson’s cousin, Joanna Cook (1732–84), had married Thomas Turner of Towbridge in 1766.

From Ann Chapman

Bristol
Thursday night [June 23, 1774]

Honoured and Dear Sir,

Please to accept of the thanks of dear Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor and her sisters,¹ and [my]self for the repeated tokens of your kind remembrance and regard of us, a sense of which we are at a loss to express.² Mrs. Vigor was rejoiced to hear that Master Charles was so prudent as not to choose to venture himself into the world, and thinks there are good things in store for him.³ She is also glad to hear you have hope of getting rid of your disagreeable neighbour,⁴ as we cannot suppose your London friends would part with you so soon upon any consideration. Praised be the Lord that he is with you. We have heard from others beside Mr. [John] Wesley, and we humbly believe he hath not forsaken us. Mr. [John] Helton is with us. His health will not permit him to preach often, but when he does it is weighty and powerful, calculated to produce both love and obedience. The solemn attention and general approbation promises fair. I have not heard of anything very remarkable lately. I believe we are not much in danger of enthusiasm. We rather lean to the other side.

One piece of news I must tell you: our brother Cook is gone home this morning. About a month ago he set out on horseback (by his own desire, alone) to go to Pill. Just as he got on the Down he was taken so ill that he despaired of life. When in the utmost distress of body and soul he cried unto the Lord, "O Jesus, if thou send me to hell, I will trust in thee." Immediately his soul was filled with a sense of divine love, his body revived, and he went on rejoicing. When he came to Pill his wife, who went by water, was astonished at the change of his countenance, thought the ride had done wonders for him. But he soon acquainted her it was the Lord, how he had met him by the way. And [he] told a friend of his that he had often tasted the love of God, but none could persuade him that his sins were forgiven him till then. He now saw the merits of his Redeemer as fully satisfying for his salvation. He held his confidence to the last. He had many conflicts with the enemy, but said, "I know it is he, for the Lord hath drawn the string of death. I am not afraid to die." He suffered violent pain of body with remarkable patience. He gave up his wife and family with great readiness of mind, waiting the good pleasure of his Lord to take him. He was very much concerned for a aged woman at Pill, and the alarming warnings he gave her seem at present to have a good effect.

This intelligence I had from sister Norman,⁵ who sends her duty and longs for your return, if she might ask it. Mrs. Edwards is near the same. Miss [Jane Catherine] March also desires to be remembered. Mr. [John] Southcote is better. Mrs. Willis is poorly, has an inflammation in her leg. She and all our friends are thankful for your kind remembrance. I have not seen Mr. [James] Ireland a good while. He is so much out of town. Mrs. Ireland is greatly recovered.⁶ She is in the country. Mrs. [Elizabeth] Cart is gone to London. Mrs. Vigor says Mrs. [Mary] Reeve is worse, and almost blind, afflicted above measure. Mrs.

¹Three of Elizabeth Vigor's sisters were still alive at this point: Ann, Mary, and Susanna Stafford.

²These letters are not known to survive.

³CW Jr. had been offered a position as an organist, which required also taking on students; see CW, *Journal Letters*, 455.

⁴A house next to CW's had been rented to a soap-maker, whose trade produced very distasteful odours. See CW to W. H. C. Cavendish-Bentinck, July 7, 1775.

⁵Probably Mary (Oxford) Norman (1695–1779), wife of John Norman (d. 1744), who owned the brickyard where JW preached his first sermon in the open air in Bristol; or Miss Mary Norman, who appears in the Bristol Society Register in 1770 as a member of a band for single women.

⁶James Ireland's first wife, Constant (Norman) Ireland, died in 1769; in Jan. 1771 he remarried, to Frances Godde.

Ann Stafford is often with her.

I should have mentioned that dear Mrs. Vigor and sisters send their duty, respects, and love to you, Mrs. Wesley, Masters and Miss.

Our African brethren came in dismal plight to Bristol,⁷ but were kindly received by Mr. [Thomas] Jones and tenderly treated and respect by our friends, who I doubt not will do the utmost in their power to make up their loss. They seem a little comforted, and I hope will prove that it was God's hand for good.

Forgive, dear sir, this incoherent jumble. I am generally in haste and now more so than common. [I] can only add I am, with kindest respects to Mrs. Wesley, dearest sir,

Your affectionate, though unworthy, child,

Ann Chapman

Address: "To / The Revnd Mr Cs Wesley / at ye Foundery / near upper Moorfields / London."

Postmarks: "25/IV" and "Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "Ms Chapman, Cook Blessed / June 24. 1774."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/502/2/7.

⁷The Robin John brothers; see E. Johnson to CW, June 16, 1774.

From Little Ephraim and Ancona Robin Robin John

[c. July 1774]

Dear Sir,

The following being our opinion of Capt. Floyd's conduct,¹ [we] must beg you will let nobody be acquainted with.

We had fair wind from the time we left Bristol, and were in hopes of soon being at home, when through the wickedness and drunkenness of the captain the ship was lost at the island Boa Vista.² We made the land about 4:00 in the afternoon, and had time enough to avoid it. But the captain, who was very drunk, would not take the advice of his officers to alter his course. But still kept on the same, running on shore as if on purpose. He behave[d] very bad to his officers and people all the time after leaving Bristol. He beat his chief mate when we was out no more than one week, for nothing at all. He was always drunk and never in his senses. We again desire you to let nobody know it, as it may hurt the interest of our friend Thomas Jones.

[Little] Ephraim Robin John
and
Ancona Robin Robin John

Address: "To Revd. Mr Chas. Westley / London / for himself / particularly."

Endorsement: by CW, "Ephraim & Ancona / [[of wicked captain]]"; added later "wicked Captn / 1774."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/12.

¹William Floyd was captain of the *Maria*, which sank.

²Orig., "Bonavista."

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
July 4, 1774

My Dear Brother,

I have these two months to hear whether you were in Bristol or London. I wrote, I think, to Mr. Oliver to know it¹; but he forgot to give me an answer. My printer has also been treading upon my heels and calling for copy, which has made me drop all correspondence but with him. I have not yet got clear of him. He has entered upon my *Scales*, which I hope will puzzle the antinomians, benefit many pharisees, and confirm some of our friends in the good old Scripture-way. The first volumes of the *Equal Check* is printed. I suppose you will soon have it in London. I do not expect to please. I am afraid this new step will rob me of some of our own friends. I believe it will not be of you. The essay on truth will offend some Arminians, as the essay on the rewardableness of works will offend some Calvinists.² I could wish to be zealously moderate. I shall expect your friendly and yet severe criticisms. This, in the meantime, I assure you of, I shall recall all that I shall discover to be false.

With respect to my own soul, I wait for deep humiliation. Some of your deep mourning hymns suit me exactly.³ I am not in the Christian dispensation of the Holy Ghost and of power. I wait for it, but not earnestly enough. I am not sufficiently straitened till my fiery baptism is accomplished. I fear that dispensation is upon the decline among us. I see few people mourning for the kingdom in the Holy Ghost. Foretastes of it and enlargements of soul are taken for it. These pass away, and from thence we slide back into the world, singing to ourselves a pharisaic, a Laodicean, or an antinomian requiem. What are your thoughts on this subject? Do you see many that live in the kingdom come with power? Many do not seem to me even to understand what I mean. When I speak my thoughts, I am an alien unto some of my mother's children. If you stand to what you once wrote to me, we shall be sure to agree, whoever disagrees. Christian perfection in nothing but the full kingdom in the Holy Ghost. Upon this rock and upon no other would I defend the doctrine.

I have not heard from my Lady [Huntingdon] since I last wrote her. I have dedicated to her my essay on truth.⁴ Mr. [John] Helton tells me the dedication will not please. I cannot help that. I took that step not to flatter, or ingratiate myself, but to do justice to her private sentiments concerning faith working, or a working faith. Before any of the *Equal Check* are sold, read the two last tracts. Send me word what you object to [in] them and I shall either recant—or explain myself, as I have done twice. I may add a third appendix upon your criticisms or objections. Lady Huntingdon's preachers beset us round. They come to the next parish and to three places where I preach, being called in by the Baptists, whose hand they strengthen. But no matter, if they strengthen people's hearts in the Lord. Be that as it will, I am glad Christ is preached, though it should be out of contention. The opposition of my parish is stunned by the death of two of the greatest enemies I had. One, our great Nabal,⁵ who was killed as he came home for a midnight revel by a fall from his horse. The other, who was shot with a mortification through his bowels by drinking a cup of perry⁶—the very man who pushed his bottle to the others at the birches.

¹Fletcher likely meant Thomas Olivers, who was stationed in London; John Oliver was on the Chester circuit.

²See respectively, Fletcher, *Equal Check*, 137–264, 92–136.

³Likely referring in particular to [CW,] *Preparation for Death, in Several Hymns* (London, 1772); the focus of hymns in this collection was a plea for purity of heart, to prepare oneself for death.

⁴See Fletcher, *Equal Check*, 138–41.

⁵See 1 Sam., chap. 25.

⁶Pear cider.

Aideu. My love and blessing to all you dear friends and family, and Sally.⁷ Pray for
Your unworthy brother,

J. F.

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

Endorsement: by CW, “Fletcher / July 4. 1774.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/49.⁸

⁷Sarah Wesley Jr., Fletcher’s goddaughter.

⁸A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 317–18.

From Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor

[Bristol]
July 16, 1774

It is with the greatest sense of love and gratitude I always receive both my dear friends' affectionate though unmerited favours, which would fain make some return if it was in my power. But you well knowing my incapacity of writing often, that you so kind and obligingly excuse my silence.

I am happy in having such good and kind friends as Miss [Ann] Chapman and Hetty Farley,¹ who so willingly write for me and supply my defects. We rejoice to hear you enjoy better health than sometime past. Ours is as well as we can expect to be. Only I grow so stiff in my limbs that I can hardly get to the [New] Room. Oh my dear friend, pray for me that as my outward strength decays I may be inwardly renewed in the spirit of my mind.² For the daily cry of my soul is, "Forsake me not, oh my God. Now my strength faileth, but in hoary age be thou my God."³ And I trust he never will take me hence before I experience his utmost salvation. And this I pray for poor cousin R[eeves],⁴ who was never worse, nor likely to be better while she have such a wretched companion; she desires her best respects and your continual prayers.

I was much grieved when our poor African brethren returned, having lost their all.⁵ But it was a mercy they escaped with their lives. They much lament your absence, their dear friend and spiritual father, with all your family, who they mention with the greatest gratitude and respect. I believe a blessing will attend Captain [Thomas] Jones for his uncommon generosity and compassion to those poor afflicted creatures. Mrs. [Judith] Purnell was like a mother to them while under her wise instruction.

Mrs. [Margaret] James desires the favour of a letter from you, directed to herself. They are in Wales at Esqr. Jenkins, near Neath.

My love and thanks to the dear children for their acceptable letters, which I take as a mark of their affection. I greatly commend Charles's wisdom (and yours for him) in not accepting of an offer that might seem advantageous, [but] which [I] fear would have been too fatiguing to anyone of his tender age, and doubtless subjected him to many snares, though he is one of a thousand.⁶ I trust there is a blessing in store for him and dear Sally and Sammy, who daily live on my heart. With longing desires to see you and [your] dear family, whom we greatly miss. Our kindest love to dear Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, Miss [Rebecca] Gwynne, Mrs. [Elizabeth] Waller, etc. Please to accept a larger share than I can express from

Your weak but faithful friend,

E. Vigor

I am thankful for Mr. Wesley's wonderful deliverance.

Endorsement: by CW, "July 16. 1774 Vigor last."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/502/2/33.

¹Hester Farley (1750–1806), the youngest daughter of Felix and Elizabeth (Grace) Farley.

²See 2 Cor. 4:16.

³Cf. Ps. 71:9, 18.

⁴William Reeve (1713–88), the husband of Mary (Andrews) Reeve, would go bankrupt and be disowned by his local Quaker community in 1775; he died three years later.

⁵See Elizabeth Johnson to CW, June 16, 1774.

⁶CW Jr. had been offered a position as an organist, which required also taking on students; see CW, *Journal Letters*, 455.

James Hutton to Benjamin LaTrobe (on CW)¹

[Chelsea]
Saturday night, July 30, 1774

Dear Brother LaTrobe,

Here is the letter I got this evening from Charles Wesley.² Pray read it with Petrey and let me know tomorrow evening whether it be good for me to write at all to John [Wesley], or whether it be better to write to Charles to speak with his brother about it, as he knows my mind as well as if I wrote another letter to John. I know not if it will not be wrong to say anything at all to John anymore about it, as perhaps we shall be obliged to say something disagreeable about John if ever Crantz's History be published in English.³ In which case it is better to take now no notice any more, in a friendly way, of anything that he does or does not do. I am hoarse, and am with love to you and Petrey, and all,

Your H[utton].

Source: Hutton's manuscript copy; London, Moravian Church Archive and Library.

¹Benjamin La Trobe (1727–86) was born in Dublin of Huguenot ancestry, and raised a Baptist. He studied briefly at Glasgow University, but returned to Dublin to lead a Baptist congregation. He was converted to the evangelical revival by John Cennick (now a Moravian) in 1746. La Trobe became a leading figure in the Moravian community in Great Britain, but one who continued to seek a union of Methodists and Moravians. See *DEB*, 663–64.

²CW to Hutton, July 29, 1774.

³David Crantz, *Alte und neue Brüder-Historie; oder, kurz gefasste Geschichte der Evangelischen Brüder-Unität in den ältern Zeiten und insonderheit in dem gegenwärtigen Jahrhundert* (Barby: H.D. Ebers, 1771).

From Ancona Robin John

Bristol
August 8, 1774

Reverend Sir,

Yours of the 31st July we have received, and return you our most sincere thanks.¹ [We] hope you be better. We have been informed by Mr. [Thomas] Jones that you was ill when he left London, for which we are extremely sorry and shall always offer up twenty prayers for your health. Yesterday we had the pleasure of seeing your brother [JW]. He preached at the [New] Room both morning and evening, and drank tea at Mrs. [Elizabeth] Johnson[’s] with us. But so many people followed him he had not time to talk with us then. But [he] says he will take some opportunity of doing it before he leaves Bristol and we will be glad to inform him as far as we can remember [of the wreck].² We have just received a letter from a captain of a ship in London who informed us that our brother³ and friends at Calabar are well, and they have not the knowledge of our being aliv, but thought we was dead. And the captain thought so too, and he [is] very glad that we are at Bristol at our best friend Mr. Jones.

We are, reverend sir, with all respect,

Your most obliged and faithful servants,

Ancona Robin John

P.S. Yesterday we were at the Lord’s table and are sin[ce] very comfortable in our mind. Give my⁴ kind love to Miss [Sarah] Wesley and the two young gentlemen.

Ephraim gives his love to all.

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

Endorsement: by CW, “Ancona July 31 1774.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/3.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²See the letter of the Robin John brothers to CW, c. July 1774.

³Ephraim Robin John; aka Grandy King George.

⁴Orig., “me.”

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
August 14, 1774

My Dear Brother,

I hope you have by this time perused the first part of the *Equal Check*, and will soon give me your friendly severe remarks upon it. To this day I do not wish it recalled, because I think still it is scriptural. I am sure I had as clear a conviction of light from heaven when I wrote as ever I had. The only doubt I have about the contents of that piece is about my making the dispensation of the Holy Ghost (contradistinguished from the dispensation of the Father and the Son) to be the grand characteristic of Christian perfection. I think by maintaining the doctrine of Christian perfection, and connected with the perfection of the Christian dispensation in its fullness, or with the accomplishment of the promise of the Father, we can make the doctrine more intelligible to and defensible against all opposing friends. My views of the subject can never be wrong, if what you wrote to me once is right, “Christian perfection is nothing but the full kingdom in the Holy Ghost.”¹ You and I will not disagree. This is but a circumstantial after all. I go on with the second part of the *Equal Check*, which will be printed before winter I hope. Nothing will clash there. I trust God will always keep me from positiveness or obstinacy in things doubtful. I should be unworthy of the name of enquirer after truth if I were not open to argument and representation.

Your brother is better and better, and gave us four excellent sermons in a day and a quarter.² He will probably outlive me, ten to one. When he was here Mr. Collins,³ a preacher from Glo[uce]ster came to expostulate with me before him (Mr. Wesley) for having advance[ed] in the essay on truth things subversive of the old Methodist doctrine. Mr. Helton⁴ had laid the thing to me, and Mr. Collins (who had not seen the books) wanted to know the truth. I explained myself, and both Mr. Wesley and Collins seemed satisfied. The difference consists (if there is any in my thinking) that those who were justified as Christians, and baptized and sealed with the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, and were made of one heart and mind, or were perfected in one, etc., were in the state of Christian perfection, or under the dispensation of the Holy Ghost—at least in the infancy of it. And that (genuine Christian faith of assurance, as contradistinguished from the faith of babes or carnal believers, a faith this which the apostles had before the day of Pentecost) introduces us into perfect Christianity or the full kingdom of God, which we must learn to stand and to be established on. Your light reproofs, etc., will greatly oblige your affectionate, obliged brother.

Oh my friend, I want to live more in the truth, to walk more in the truth, and to see all that is visible passing, and what is invisible alone to be eternal. I want in all things [Thomas à] Kempis’[s] purity of intention (the single eye that fills the body with light) and fervency of affection (the want of power that fills it with love). Let us live in hope to see the kingdom come to us and all with power.

Adieu.

My best wishes attend you and your spouse, family, and Sally.⁵

¹The letter in which CW wrote this is not known to survive.

²JW was in Madeley July 30–32, 1774.

³Fletcher may mean William Collins (d. 1797), who was admitted on trial as a travelling preacher in 1767 and full membership the following year (see *Works*, 10:343, 352); but he was currently stationed in Chester. Otherwise the reference is to a local preacher.

⁴Orig., here and later in the letter, “Hilton”; by most likely means John Helton.

⁵Sarah Wesley Jr., his goddaughter.

Mr. Decourcy tells me my *Equal Check* has done for me.⁶ Lady Huntingdon, to whom I have written upon the dedication (he thinks) will be greatly offended. She has not seen it. She has answered me in a very civil and sisterly, motherly manner. I hope it will last. Several of our friends (Mr. Helton, etc.) think I am wrong for allowing a faith short of assurance. What do you think of it?

Address: To / The Revd. Mr. Charles Wesley / Foundery / Moorfields / London.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Aug. 14. 1774 / Fletcher.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/50.⁷

⁶Richard De Courcy (c. 1743–1803) was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and ordained deacon as curate to Rev. Walter Shirley in 1767. Being denied ordination in Ireland, his case was appealed to Lady Huntingdon, who secured ordination for him by the bishop of Lichfield and employed him among her preachers.

⁷A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 319–20.

From Ancona Robin Robin John

Bristol
August 17, 1774

Reverend Sir,

At your request I have endeavoured to recollect those particulars you meant.¹ And after the cruel deceit of the English captain, my brother Ambo, upon the first appearance of the fraud, which was discovered by the captain and mate coming into the cabin with pistols; which my brother saw and felt, for the captain struck him on the head. Then my brother seized the captain and mate and threw them on the floor. But behind him were those that were cutting him on the head and neck, till he were spent and almost² killed; at which time he cried out “O Captain Bivans,³ what fashion is this for white men to kill⁴ black men?” So he then cried for mercy, but obtained none. But was thrown up to the hand of his enemies, who cut off his head and [threw it?] on the side of the ship. This being done, they sunk the canoes and drowned more than we can tell.

After this you have heard of our being sold to a French doctor in Dominica, where we was treated according to what they could make of us—upon the whole not badly. But we were determined to get home.

The account of our going to Virginia you have in the affidavit.⁵ I Ancona was sold to Captain Thomson in Virginia, who I⁶ went to sea with. He would tie me up and whip me, many times for nothing at all; then some times because I could not dress his dinner for him, not understanding how to [do] it. And he was [one of the] exceeding badly men ever I saw. He did tie me on Sunday also. And when to his home, make me work Sunday as every day in the week. And I hope almighty great God, he observe me from all great danger. So [God] did, and gave me knowledge to remember what I have suffered. He did tie me one Sunday when we were on the sea, and there was [a] gentleman [taking] passage with him in the ship. His name was William Leler, and [he] begs for me and desires him not to whip me. But he would not regard [the] gentleman but [was] still licking me. Then [the] good man, knowing very well he could not make him leave off to licking me, but only seek off Sunday. I seen the good man was very sorry about it; seemed to be good Christian. He not love to hear anybody swear or curse. But when he found our captain behaving so bad, always curse and swear in the sea. Done mind what we being in great danger in water, then Mr. William [Leler] not want to keep the captain company. But when he were upon deck, then ask me what make my master always swear. So I tell him he [was] always so; since I belong to him, says I. So next day he was walk[ing] upon deck and say his belly ached and fall down. There he died upon deck. Then we all were so afraid, every one of us. And was [a] great wind [off the] prow when he was alive and walked upon his feet. And after he was dead, then come camp⁷ and we may [have] been home in one day if we had any wind. Therefore we could not get wind. There we stand three days before we

¹Both Ancona Robin and his brother Little Ephraim (in the next letter) are recounting their initial capture, how they were treated on ship in route to North America, and were twice tricked by captains who promised to return them to Africa but instead sought to enslave them again. See Sparks, *Princes of Calabar*.

²Orig. “all must.”

³I.e., John Bivins, Capt of *The Duke of York*.

⁴Orig., “killed.”

⁵An affidavit was taken from both brothers at the time Thomas Jones won their initial recognition as free men under British law.

⁶Orig., “he.”

⁷Thus the spelling, likely referring to a doldrums.

came home. And he was so bad nobody [was] going near to him. And after we came home then everybody in that case all thinking he has been so bad man and wicked and great God above saw him, how he deserve. And after he was dead about three week, then we sw Captain O'Neil had arrived in Virginia.⁸ You know that already, therefore the account of we run away with him.

Dear sir, this is all what I can remember to you, and my brother gave his account about we being [on a] transport vessel or we being in prison. [I] hope that will please you what little far as I can remember.

Now we shall sail in three weeks Mr. [Thomas] Jones he mentions to us. I respect to see you, hope before the times. I have received your pleasing letter,⁹ that gives me great pleasure that you have been little better. Am so fear[ful] before about it, now given me great pleasure. Sir, if you please, give my duty for Mrs. Wesley and the two young gentlemen and Miss [Sarah]. Believe me to be, with gratitude and esteem, reverend sir,

Your much obliged, humble servant,

Ancona Robin Robin John

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

Endorsement: by CW, "Aug. 17. 1774 / Ancona's Acct."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/4.

⁸Terence O'Neil, Captain of the *Greyhound*,

⁹This letter is not known to survive.

From Little Ephraim Robin John

Bristol
August 17, 1774

Dear Sir,

I fear you will think we have forgot you, which we have not. But Mrs. [Elizabeth] Johnson made us wait till we could give you some satisfaction. Blessed be the Lord, he gives us to reading his word all the day long, and it is very sweet to us. Your brother [JW] has been so kind as to talk to us and has given us the sacrament thrice. I find him so good as to show me when I do wrong. I feel in my heart great trouble, and see [a] great deal of my own faults and the faults of my countrymen, which I hope the Lord will permit me to tell them when I come home. Which I hope will be soon, as our good friend Mr. [Thomas] Jones is fitting a ship out for us. We suppose she will be ready in about five weeks. I hope we shall make good use [of] that time.

Ancona is writing the account you desire. [I] in put what happened in King Road when we were there.¹ Captain [Terence] O'Neil left us aboard ship and promised us when [the] ship came up in Bristol we should be put in another vessel that [would] take us home. But he altered his mind and never return[ed] to us, but order[ed] the pilot to put us aboard [a] transport vessel; which [he] did, to our great surprise and horror. When they came to put on the irons, we then with tears and trembling began to pray to God to help us. In this deplorable condition we lay for 13 days, among the wretched transport. But here the Lord help us, he putting to our heart to writing to Mr. [Thomas] Jones. Who then providence of the Lord we enquire in some the people who could tell us way Mr. Jones live; to whom we wrote but had no answer. This make Ancona's heart fall, but I saying "I will yet go write once more." To this had no answer. But the Lord was good, stayed the wind, which prevented our sailing.² Then I write again to Mr. Jones, which moved him to pity. He then assured to inquire after us the persons knew us well. Then came dearest Mr. Jones and when it was [I] see him I was [filled with] great joy [and] thankfulness. [I] told him our pity[ful] case. Mr. Jones then ask the captain to let us go ashore; which he refusing, Mr. Jones then got a warrant [to] fetch us up. Then we was [ar]rested us. Put us into prison. From thence I wrote to Lord Mansfield,³ who sent out to fetch us to London, where we was examined then discharged.

After this Mr. Jones brought us in his own house and then treated us well and sent us to school to learn to reading. And from there we desire Mr. Jones we were wanting to read his Lord's word. From thence them people knoweth you and mention your name to Mr. Jones if him had, and enquire for you be better minister to teach us, that we may soon come to have some knowledge of God. Then we was brought to you by Mrs. Forrest. After which you read to us that which we were so new [to] and good to us that we were glad to hear it every day. And we still we find better and better.

And to my comfort, I dreamed of reading two nights. The last night I dreamed I much read the 107th Psalm and make uses of it. Which I did when I came down to Mrs. Johnson, and found good for my heart. I hope I shall be able to give you some farther account before we leave Bristol, and am, with duty to yourself and Mrs. Wesley, and love to Master [Charles] Wesley, and Miss [Sarah], and Samuel, dear sir,

Your loving friend and humble servant

[Little] Ephraim Robin John

P.S. I hope this letter with please you. I heard from my brother [Grandy] King George, by [a] captain come from there. My brother Ancona told me he was mention[ed] his name to you already.

¹The harbor in the Bristol Channel, at the mouth of the River Avon.

²Orig., "sailed."

³William Murray (1705–93), 1st Earl of Mansfield.

Address: “to / the Revd. Mr Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Aug. 17. 1774 / Ephraim’s Acct.”⁴

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/5.

⁴There is also a list of names or items on the address page, all but one ([[Charles]]) crossed out. There is neither legibility nor context sufficient to expand with any confidence.

From Elizabeth Johnson

[Bristol]
[August 18, 1774⁵]

Dear Sir,

As you know our engagements, I need not apologize for silence. I bless the Lord it has been a refreshing time in his presence. Much of it we have had amongst us, and I believe great love amongst the preachers. I believe Mr. [John] Wesley never was more venerated and loved by people and preachers than now. He saw Ephraim and Ancona several times, and read their affidavit; but had not time to take any further account from them.

That painful task we have been engaged in. Much has been concealed, we find, to save the necks of those horrid traitors. It is a most awful affair, which leads my mind into deeps. Much blood I suppose has been spilled by this family, and will be continued to be if some knowledge does not reach them. Poor Ephraim seems to awake and is at times greatly pained. He sees the impossibility of putting an end to the slave trade. He says he cannot pay Mr. [Thomas] Jones any other way. They say if some of them was not brought out of the country they would murder one another. They are so ignorant of any kind of way of getting anything to live on. These things silence me, only [I] am much engaged for these [men] and have an humble trust that the Lord will show them mercy.

They read better and understand it. They have both wrote to you, which will give you some trouble to understand. I have endeavoured to help them, but they will write when they understand themselves. It must therefore be broken.

We had yesterday a good time. Ephraim had dreamt a few nights ago of something in the Scriptures, but could not recollect what it was; though he said he jumped up in the bed as soon as he waked to pray the Lord would help him to remember it.⁶ But [he] could not, so on Tuesday night he dreamt again that he must read the 107th Psalm and make use of it, which he did when he came to us and much affected wept and stopped and could not go through it, but called Ancona to come and read it. I find great fellowship of spirit with them, and the exercise of hearing them is made very pleasant. Mr. Jones seems in haste to get the ship ready, but find[s] it must be some weeks first. We have a great feeling for him, as we find no one cares to join him as partner, so that it will fall very heavy if they should not get safe home.

I have seen a very kind letter from a captain that has been lately come from their brother.⁷ He tells them he is well, and that there has been a war amongst them, but that they are now at peace. They have all given up these [two] for dead.

We are now in care about poor Mrs. Pawson, who seems at the very point of death.⁸ Last night we all gave her over. However she is yet alive. She is very happy, is ready, and seems willing to go. This is no small comfort.

I hope this will find you and your family well. I am obliged to you for yours,⁹ and shall endeavour you shall have another packet before our friends leave, and am, with best respects,

⁵The letter is not dated. CW's endorsement suggests September. But it appears to be her cover letter in a packet that included the Aug. 17 letters by Ancona Robin and Little Ephraim Robin John; and shortly after JW has left Bristol (which he did on Aug. 15).

⁶See the account in Little Ephraim's letter to CW, Aug. 17, 1774 (Aug. 16 was a Tuesday).

⁷The letter Ancona mentions to CW in his letter of Aug. 8, 1774.

⁸John Pawson had married Judith Davis (1743–83) of Bristol in July 1773. Whatever her current illness, she recovered. See CW's hymn on her death a decade later in *AM* 7 (1784): 337–38.

⁹CW likely wrote to Johnson of July 31st, as he did to Ancona Robin Robin John. The letter is not known to survive.

Your unworthy servant,

E. Johnson

Mrs. [Judith] Purnell is mostly in the country for health. Sister joins with me in due respects.¹⁰

Address: “To / the Revd. Mr Wesley.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[etty] Johnson / Ephraim’s Dream / Sept. 1774.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/502/2/23.

¹⁰Elizabeth Johnson lived with her sister Mary Johnson (1717–83), who also remained single.

From Elizabeth Johnson and Little Ephraim Robin John

[Bristol]
August 27, 1774

Dear Sir,

I do not doubt but you think we are very remiss, the reason of which is our packet lies at Mr. Mill's. It was carried a day too late, so that it waits to come with the next books. The young men are very grateful, desirous of doing everything they can to oblige. They are as studious as they can be both to read and understand. It is an arduous task for them to take in the sense. But I bless God, I see he does assist them. Ephraim is greatly altered, more thoughtful and humbled. He often speaks of feeling in his heart. They have given you the best intelligence they can. I endeavoured to assist them, and thereby hear a pitious *case*¹ indeed. I find much has been concealed *about the* barbarity by poor Mr. [Thomas] Jones, who has incurred much ill-will amongst the merchants. As it is, they seem to have pleasure in the wreck of the ship;² and want to, if they could, have prevented his getting another, but could not. He has been very earnest in getting one, and now in fitting it out. This makes me as earnest to keep them to their books, as I fear another loss if they are not sufficiently grounded, as it seems as if they are appointed for usefulness.

You would be pleased to see how they see the idleness and stupidity of their past lives. Ephraim comes some mornings to the preaching from over the down. They think they shall sail in about three weeks. I frequently see great heaviness of heart upon Ephraim. I believe he sees and fears approaching difficulties. Seems is full for Mr. Jones's expenses, which Mr. Jones sees and uses him as a brother. Ancona is as easy as a bird, without a care or fear. He reads exceeding well. It becomes easy to him. Pronounces proper. They both understand the word preached better and are frequently at the hearing. I have great pleasure in assisting them. Some of our preachers felt great union with them, talked with them, and prayed for them. As Ephraim desires to write a few lines, I shall conclude, with my sister [Mary]'s united respects to Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley and yourself. I am

Your humble servant,

E. Johnson

Reverend Sir,

One question I have to ask you before we leave England which is most on my mind. That is how shall I pay my good friend Mr. Jones, who has been so kind in paying out so much money to serve us. If we must not sell slaves, I know not how we shall pay him, which I have a great desire to do. I bless God I find I understand more of his word, and hope shall yet learn more before we go hence, which we believe will be about three weeks. Ancona joins with me in duty to Mrs. Wesley and yourself, and love to Masters and Miss.

Your obedient, humble servant,

Little Ephraim Robin John

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

Postmark: "29/AV" and "Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW, "Aug. 27. 1774 / B Johnson & Ephraim / Question – my answer."³

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/9.

¹Covered by wax seal.

²The sinking of *Maria*, which first tried to return the brothers to Africa.

³The answer was a letter dated Sept. 2; written in shorthand at the bottom of the page.

Little Ephraim Robin John to Charles Wesley Jr.

Bristol
September 26, 1774

My Dear Charles,

I take this liberty to return thanks to you for your kind letter, and should with you have rejoiced to have seen you but must wait till some other time, if God permit it may be so. Our trust is [in] him for safety. I have received your favour in England, which we hope never to forget and hope we shall often hear from one another. I shall take the first opportunity of writing to let you know how we get home. Our kindness and love await your sister and brother. Accept the same yourself and [I] am

Your affectionate friend,

Little Ephraim

S.P. [sic] I desired your sister to write to me sooner. I just mention this to you for to put her in mind.

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

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/10.

Hetty Rutter to the Wesley Children¹

[Bristol]
October 9 [1774]

Dear Charles, Sally, and Sammy,

Why are you so ceremonious with me who loves you tenderly? Not one line for me by your papa. Indeed I take it unkind, and I wrote to tell you so. But my letter was too late for him. His stay was so short in Bristol that I had only time just to speak to him and ask how you all were.² We had not even the pleasure to see [him] at our house. I spoke once to him at the [New] Room and once met him in the street. I was rejoiced to hear his voice and only wish for you all to make my happiness (in *that* particular) complete. When will that time come? I hope it is not at a great distance. I want to see [you] exceedingly and am sorry I cannot correspond with you so frequently as I wish. You should not let my silence prevent your writing, as you well know your letters will always meet with a welcome reception from her who remains (with united love to all) friends,

Your affectionate,

H. R.

I must write a few lines to my dear Sammy to thank him for kindly remembering me.³ Write me often my dear, and do not follow the example of Charles and Sally who are naughty children. I wish they would come to Bristol, so I might chide them. I have not lately seen our African friends.⁴ They are both well, often call on friend [Elizabeth] Vigor, and seem much concerned at her illness. I showed her thy letter Sammy, which pleased her. They *all* desire their love. I remain,

My dear Sammy's affectionate friend,

H. R.

If Sammy cannot read this curious scribble, *bring* it to me and I will help thee out. Friend Vigor's family and ours unite in kind respects to thy aunt's.⁵

Address: "C. Wesley Junr / Chesterfield Street / Mary Bone / London."

Endorsement: "Mrs Rutter / a Quaker."

¹Hester Rutter (1730–1810) was the daughter of Benjamin and Jane Rutter, Quakers in Bristol; cf. *MS Journal*, Aug. 28–Sept. 18, 1739.

²CW was in Bristol from early September to Oct. 9.

³Samuel's letter to Rutter is not known to survive.

⁴The Robin John brothers.

⁵The family of James and Elizabeth (Gwynne) Waller.

The Robin John Brothers to Charles Wesley Jr.

Bristol
October 10, 1774

Dear Charles,

I fear this will be the last I shall be able to write to you, the ship being gone down and we expect [to leave] every hour. You have been so good to us that we can never thank you enough for your love to us. But now we must take our leave with letting you know how kind our Bristol friends have been to us. We have abounding of necessary [supplies] as well as books and pictures. We had a very blessed time last night with Mr. [Charles] Wesley, who offered us up in a very solemn manner to God. And we humbly hope his prayer will be heard. I must conclude with kindest love to all and [am]

[Your] affectionate friend

Ancona Robin Robin John

Excuse dear Charles, for I have got the toothache very bad.

My Dear Charles,

I take part of my brother Ancona's letter to return thanks for your kind letter.¹ I have not time to write to you as now we are packing up. I hope, if shall do well, we shall hear from one another again. I bid you farewell dear Charles and Samuel and Miss Sarah, and am

[Your] obliged friend,

L[ittle] Ephraim Robin John

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

Endorsement: by CW, "Ephraim & Ancona's last / to Charles [Jr.] / Oct. 10. 1774."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/11.

¹CW Jr. 's letter is not known to survive.

From Elizabeth Johnson

Bristol
October 10, 1774

Dear Sir,

The within is a letter left by Ephraim for your son [Charles Jr.] before they left us.¹ We heard nothing yet from them. We are glad to hear your son is given to you again.

I think you will blame me for not writing to you. It is not for want of thinking of you, but want of matter. Your friend Mrs. James and we are good neighbours.² I hope she is in a good way. She is a truly conscious sinner.

Our friends are dying daily. This I find you have been told. I much conclude with my sister [Mary]'s united love and respect to yourself and family, and am

Your unworthy servant,

E. Johnson

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

Endorsement: by CW, "Ephraim & Ancona's last / to Charles [Jr.] / Oct. 10. 1774."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDCW 2/11.

¹Actually the letter enclosed was from both Robin John brothers to Charles Jr. (see above).

²Mary (Samuel) James lived in the Stokes Croft neighbourhood, as did Johnson, Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor, and her three surviving sisters.

From Ann Chapman

[Bristol]
[c. October 15, 1774]

If my dear and honoured friend has not received my last few lines (sent by Mr. Wesley's man) before this time, he must be out of all patience with me. Dear Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor is much worse, has taken to her room. Nurse James attends her, and it is not expected she can hold it long. She is so very ill and weak that few are admitted to see her. I yesterday had that favour, when she said, "I wanted to see you. I want to thank all my friends for their kindness to me." I asked her how she was. She said, "I want a cleaner sense of pardon, but I have no doubt my Saviour will take me if I should not be so favoured. I have no fear of death, but for the passage." At that her heart shrinks.

She gave me your letter to her, to read.¹ The whole (except one sentence) was a cordial to her. But when I came to that which might imply a doubt whether she loved you and yours as much as ever, she burst into tears of distress and said, "If I forget him, I must forget myself. Not love dear Mr. Wesley, Mrs. Wesley, and the children! Can Mr. Wesley doubt my love?" I endeavoured to pacify her, assuring her you did not, you could not. When she was a little recovered she said, "My love increases to all, but especially to dear Mr. Wesley and family. They are above all near and dear to me." I heard afterward that when she first read it she was almost in a fit. What a pity that sweet letter should have had anything in it to give so much pain. Her sisters were grieved that you should give such an hint too. They are very affectionate to her.

Since writing the above I have been over to know how she is this morning. Mrs. Ann Stafford told me she is still worse. [She] had a dreadful night, and being almost totally helpless, it is with the greatest difficulty, and a pain to her, they can move her. Her life is now indeed a burden. But she will soon shake it off. She was asked yesterday if you and Mrs. Wesley should come and see her. She answered, "I am thankful, very thankful, I saw Mr. Wesley so lately.² Had they been upon the spot, I should have been glad. But now" (weeping) "the sight of my dearest friends would be more that I can bear. It would overpower me."

Dear sir, be pleased as soon as possible to write again to her to assure her you have no doubt of her love, increasing love, to you and yours. It will compose her spirit, which all affection to her friends and kindness to all about her.

Upon reviewing what I have wrote concerning our dear Friend Vigor, I am quite displeased. It is in such unconnected scraps. I am sorry I have not time to write it over again. [I] am just going to Mrs. Willis's to fulfill an engagement of long stand, with Mrs. [Elizabeth] Farley and another neighbour.

I forgot to mention before that little Dr. Edwards³ has been very ill, and took it much to heart his dear Mr. Charles Wesley did not call on him when it lay so much in his way. He is recovering now, and desires to be remembered to you and the family in the kindest manner. Our black brethren [the Robin John brothers] you have a full account of by sister [Elizabeth] Johnson, their faithful friend. They called on me Wednesday last, to take leave and set out home Thursday with a fair wind.⁴ It is now changed, but I cannot yet learn how far they are got. We remember them at the [New] Room, and doubt not but you do still more at London.

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²CW was in Bristol from early Sept. through Oct. 9, 1774.

³This may be an endearing name for the son of Mrs. Edwards of Bristol; see Chapman to CW, Nov. 4, 1774

⁴Correlated with the letter of Oct. 10 from Elizabeth Johnson, they apparently sailed on Oct. 13.

Mrs. [Anna] Southcote's father is dead. They hope well concerning him. An aged woman at Amesbury rejoices in the salvation of God. Also an aged man at Chew Stoke that has long groaned under the burden of unbelief is now set at liberty. This I know you are always glad to hear.

I must conclude. With Mrs. Vigor's and Mrs. Staffords duty to you,⁵ and love to Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, lads, and Miss [Sarah], permit me to join.

Your obliged and affectionate servant,

Ann Chapman

Endorsement: by CW, "Oct. 1774 N[ancy] Chapman / Vigor tender, all love."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/77.

⁵Ann, Mary, and Susanna Stafford (addressed as Mrs. due to their age).

The Robin John Brothers to Charles Wesley Jr.

[Bristol]
[c. October 15, 1774]

My Dear Sarah,

We received your letter and are sorry your are angry with us for not writing to you when we did your brother,¹ but hope you will forgive us for it and hope your prayer will always be for us and hope God will make us have strength and knowledge to serve him.

Our love to your father, mother, and brothers, and all our brethren and remain

You loving brothers,

Ephraim Robin John
Ancona Robin Robin John

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 24/7.

¹See their letter to CW Jr. of Oct. 10, 1774.

From Ann Chapman

[Bristol]
[October 25, 1774¹]

[...²] one, before but that Mrs. Ann Stafford told me Miss Jones would write yesterday.³ Then I thought “A line a few days hence will be more acceptable as it will give a fresh account of dear Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor.” Upon enquiry, I find Miss Jones has not been there, so I think it best to defer it no longer, lest you should be uneasy.

Our beloved friend is still in the body. And in her own opinion (as well as the apothecary and her friends) not likely soon to be set at liberty. She says she sees no sign of death, nor yet of life. She may drag on a wearisome time in misery, but the Lord has wise ends in all he does. Mentioning “let patience have its perfect work,”⁴ she said, “That is a great work. I want patience, but I believe the Lord is willing to give it [to] me. O if I might depart! I long to go, for I believe I shall be happy. But my God knows best.

She seems to have great simplicity and sweetness in her spirit, and love to everybody, thinking herself so much obliged to them. She is almost continually talking (as her strength will bear) of you, Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, and the children severally. [She is] pleased with Master Samuel’s pretty affectionate letter,⁵ thinks Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley has not wrote [in] a good while. Upon reading your letter today to her, she burst into tears. “Thank, thank dear Mr. Wesley,” said she, “And give my kindest love to him, Mrs. Wesley, and family, Miss [Rebecca] Gwynne, and all my friends. Thank them for their love and kindness to me.” Mrs. Stafford also desired to be remembered.

I had like to have forgot again, Mrs. [Mary] Reeve desires her best respects, with abundance of thanks for your kind remembrance of her, and hopes your many prayers in her behalf will be answered.

I have now to thank dear Mr. Wesley for the double favour of his letters, which beside the comfort and pleasure of them give me admittance to see Friend Vigor more often than any other except her sisters, her weakness preventing them letting anyone up but of necessity. She is taken up every day with great difficulty, as much as three can do, and so sore and in pain that it is a great trial to her and them to move her. Great is her suffering. Her sisters think it uncommonly great and sympathize with her much.

Dear sir, I must draw to a conclusion. My time is short. I beg my best respects to Mrs. Wesley, Masters and Miss, and with all duty and affections subscribe myself

Mr. Wesley’s most obliged but unworthy correspondent,

Ann Chapman

Excuse me, I cannot pray for your death as your life is most valuable.

Endorsement: by CW, “[Chapman October] 25”; and added later, “Oct. 5. 1774 / M[rs]. Vigor, weaker, na- / ture more and more loving.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/79.

¹Dated by CW’s annotation, taking his original shorthand annotation as most reliable; CW was still in Bristol on Oct. 5.

²The opening of the letter, including salutation, is missing.

³Apparently the Mary (“Molly”) Jones, referred to by CW in letter to SGW of Sept. 10, 1778.

⁴James 1:4.

⁵Neither Samuel’s letter nor CW’s to Vigor; or CW’s to Mary Reeve are known to survive.

William Boyce to Samuel Wesley (son of CW)

[London]
c. October 28, 1774¹

Dr. Boyce's compliments and thanks to his very ingenious brother-composer Mr. Samuel Wesley; and is very much pleased and obliged by the possession of the oratorio of *Ruth*, which he shall preserve with the utmost care, as the most curious product of his musical library.

Address: "To Mr. Samuel Wesley"

Source: published transcription; Daines Barrington, *Miscellanies* (London: J. Nichols, 1781), 294.

¹The date is determined by when Samuel finished the oratorio *Ruth*.

From Dorothy (Furly) Downes¹

[Bristol]
October 28, 1774

From the time that we began to spend our evenings (which was about this time twelve month [ago]) in reading the Scriptures and prayer, Mr. Downes's soul was greatly blessed. And he was soon shown that he must preach again, which call of God with great thankfulness and deep humiliation he obeyed. And [he] always testified he had the approbation of God in a particular manner. Every time he preached were always days of close meditation and prayer, as well as of deep communion with God. And yet he always went to preach much bowed down, and in great fear, though mixed with much trust in God that he would be with him. Insomuch that he used to say he believed the martyrs did not suffer more when going to the stake than he did when going to preach (and yet his heart delighted in it).

But this last day he said he was entirely delivered from all that fear and suffering. Says he, "I go today triumphing into the pulpit. I find the Lord so with me that I can't doubt of a blessing. He tells me he so approves of my going. Though," says he, "if I was to consider my illness and weakness I should not venture out today. But I will try to speak to them." He mentioned one thing as remarkable, that he had such a particular communion with the Holy Spirit all day as he never had experienced before, and that all his petitions were addressed to the Holy Ghost and therefore he expected some extraordinary blessing. Ever since he began to preach again he said he found the West Street [chapel] people particularly laid upon his heart, and used to wrestle in prayer, with many tears, for them.

As far as his own soul, I have often heard him say that if it would be a blessing to their souls he would be glad to die in the pulpit before them—if it would be a means to persuade them to lay aside all hindrances and give themselves up to God to be wholly his. And [he] often expressed his soul grieved that we were not as a people in closer communion with God and more dead to the world. And [he] often desired if the Lord would give him strength to assist Mr. Wesley in this great work now in your old age. "I think," says he, "the Lord would give me to be faithful to Mr. Wesley and not seek my own things, but the things of Jesus Christ, and to serve with him as a son. He has long," says he, "been wanting this people to live to God, but he wants help and I would be glad to assist him and strengthen his hands."

For some months past his soul has been taken into an exceeding close communion with God. For he said formerly he used to find his mind apt to wander from God, and that it was a labour to keep it to God, but that of late he found it was become as it were natural to him to rest in God, and that when his attention at any time by business was diverted, yet as soon as that was over his soul *naturally* returned to God. He mentioned his experiencing in a particular manner the first verse of the 125th Psalm,² and remarked it does not mention an exemption from storms, etc., but being so fixed on God as to stand firm. "O," says he, "what will that religion avail that, when trials etc. come, does not keep the soul in peace and power to abide it?"

O how did his spirit mourn over formal professors that had Christ and the power of religion to seek when they most want³ it, and thereby dishonoured instead of bringing glory to the Lord Jesus. He often said he was ashamed that his preaching formerly was too doctrinal and not simple enough, and that he did not enough lead the people to Christ to perform *in* them what he had purchased *for* them (but all his later sermons tended to this!). In the course of the two or three months last of his life, he often expressed that he found his soul now just right, for he saw everything in God; that he expected nothing,

¹Downes is writing to inform CW of her husband John Downes's death. Downes was buried in Bunhill Fields on Nov. 2, 1774.

²"They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever."

³I.e., lack.

nor desired anything from any creature or thing but what God would have them to be to him. “And therefore,” says he, “I now find rest.”

He dwelt often upon the word “rest,” and perhaps it was that made him choose the 28th and 29th verses of the 11th of Matthew for his text that night he went to glory.⁴ His last words in his sermon, when speaking of that rest Christ promised, were that “by following his example and treading in all his steps as set forth in his precepts in the Scriptures we should enter into that rest, and that there was no other way to obtain unto it.” He then stopped and sang a verse or two of that hymn “Father I lift mine eyes to thee”,⁵ endeavoured to pray, and died to seal the truth of his doctrine.

Follow after he cries,
As he mounts to the skies,
Follow after your friend,
To the blissful enjoyments that never shall end.⁶

May I, may all, follow him as he followed Christ! Amen, Lord Jesus, amen.

D. D.

Endorsement: by CW, “J[ohn] Down’s Death / Oct. 28 1774.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/52.⁷

⁴“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

⁵CW, “Hymns for Believers, XXX,” *HSP* (1749), 244–45.

⁶CW, Hymn 15, st. 3, *Funeral Hymns* (1746), 22.

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

From Ann Chapman

Bristol
November 3, 1774

My dear and honoured friend will excuse my not having troubled him with a letter for a week past, as I hear Miss [Mary] Jones, Mr. [John] Southcote, and Miss [Sarah?] James have all wrote, and the two first particularly about dear Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor. She is yet in the body but weakens daily, as her appetite and digestion are gone. She probably cannot hold it much longer, Her sisters and Mr. Simpson think she may linger on for sometime.¹ Nurse [James] is of a different opinion, and I am apt to believe that nurse's judgement (in the present case) is the best. She supposes the swelling and tightness in her stomach to be water, which if it is, will soon put an end to a wearisome painful existence. Happy indeed will be the release, and welcome the rest to her. She often expresses her longing to depart, and at times in a kind of meditation (that she does not know is heard). They can so far understand that she is talking about God and heaven. I have not seen her since Friday last, with Miss Jones. Since that I have called, I believe, every day. And yesterday was up in her room but did not see her. I had been sent for while I was out, as she heard I was going to write. But before I returned, she was incapable of speaking to me and her sister beckoned to me not to appear in sight. Mrs. Ann came downstairs with me and told me how exceeding bad she was. That you and Mrs. Wesley had been so kind as to send her a letter each, Saturday last,² but that they could not show them to her that day. But when she saw them she was greatly affected, and said, "Tell my dear Mr. and Mrs. Wesley it is not want of love—no, it is my great love for them—that I cannot see them. My weakness could not bear it. It would be too much. I love them with an increasing love. I shall love them to eternity."

Many endearing expressions drop from her lips to her sisters, thanking them for their tenderness and love to her; and even to nurse, saying "She is fit for the queen." At times she mentions everybody that she has any acquaintance with by name and says, "I love them dearly. I have the love of God. I know it is his love."

Mrs. Stafford and Mrs. Ann desire to be most affectionately remembered to you, Mrs. Wesley, Masters and Miss. They thank you for sympathizing with them in their affliction.

I called today on Mrs. Howel.³ She is not yet released, but waiting till her change comes in a blessed peaceful way. The enemy would often disturb her, but the shield of faith and hope of salvation are her defence and keep her soul unhurt. It was to me a very solemn and yet a sweet sight. She seems scarce in the body—by her fainting, then struggling to believe, and then praising the Lord. O may I give all diligence to make my calling and election sure. Even then it will be enough to do to die.

It just now comes to my mind that the post goes out early tonight. I must haste to a conclusion, begging an interest (with my friends) in your prayers.

Mrs. [Elizabeth] and Miss [Hester] Farley, Mrs. Edwards, and honoured Dr. Edwards join in duty to you and love to Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley and family with, dear sir,

Your truly affectionate child in Christ,

Ann Chapman

Endorsement: By CW, "Nov. 3. 1774 N Chapman / of Vigor loving God."

¹Thomas Simpson (d. 1806), a native of Scotland, served as a travelling Methodist preacher from 1765 to 1771. At that point JW appointed him as Headmaster of Kingswood school, where he remained until 1783. See *WHS* 54 (2003): 33–34.

²These letters are not known to survive.

³Sarah Howell, who was buried on Nov. 11 in Bristol; see Chapman's next letter to CW.

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/35.⁴

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

From Ann Chapman

Bristol
Saturday night, November 12, 1774

Dear and Honoured Sir,

The long expected news of dear Mrs. [Elizabeth] Vigor's happy release I have now to acquaint you of. She died this morning, a quarter before 11:00.¹ The Lord was better to her than her former fears. He granted her particular request in an easy and quiet dismissal from the body. She had little or no pain for a week past.

Last Monday she expressed an inclination to have Dr. [Abraham] Ludlow's advice (occasioned by dreaming about him in the night), which was satisfactory to her sisters as they had often pressed her to have him before but she would say, "What can any physician do for me? I cannot take medicine." However at that time she consented. He came and prescribed something, which she took, and by God's blessing it gave ease. She was perfectly sensible to the very last, but so very weak that Mrs. Ann Stafford (who hears the best) with the greatest difficulty could understand what she said; and that was very little, it being painful to her to speak.

She was favoured with great composure of mind. Death was indeed disarmed of its sting and with good old Simeon she departed in peace.² So exceeding gentle was the transition that her sisters in the room, and almost close by, did not know when she breathed her last. Surely it is no hard thing to say, "O, let my last end be like hers."³

I had like to have forgot to mention one very pleasing circumstance. She received a great deal of comfort by your last letter.⁴

Mrs. Staffords are all as well as can be expected and desire their best respects to you and Mrs. Wesley, and love to Masters and Miss.

Finding that I could have no access to Mrs. Vigor, as she was so very weak, I went to my friend Griffin's for a few days and returned this morning. Being a little fatigued, I must beg to be excused from a longer letter at this time. Please to give my best respects to dear Mrs. Wesley and love to the family, with all duty and affection to yourself, from, dear sir,

Your sincere though unworthy friend and servant,

Ann Chapman

P.S. That late poor prisoner Mrs. Howell is also fled.⁵

Endorsement: by CW, "N Chapman. / F[riend] Vigor released ! Translated ! / Nov 12 1774."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/36.⁶

¹See CW's funeral hymn on her death in *MS Funeral Hymns (1756–87)*, 73.

²See Luke 2:28–32.

³Cf. Num. 23:10

⁴This letter is not known to survive.

⁵Sarah Howell was buried on Nov. 11 in Bristol.

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

From Peter Jaco

[London]
November 17, 1774

Reverend and Dear Sir,

As I understand that you wished to have some particulars concerning the fire on Sunday night,¹ the following struck me, as they seemed to be strongly marked with an interposing providence.

First, had the fire broke out two hours later, when the people had been in bed and asleep, it would have got to such a head before assistance could be procured as to mock all attempts.

Secondly, had not the wind changed at the critical moment when the fire was at the height, and blew the flames directly upon us, both corners would speedily have taken fire, and the house (being almost all of wood) would soon have been reduced to ashes.

Thirdly, had not Mr. Judd found out the pump in our yard,² which contrary to all expectation supplied the larger engine with water for upwards of an hour, we should after all have been burnt down!

May we never forget that salvation cometh from the Lord!

I am, dear sir,

Your affectionate son,

P. Jaco

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

Endorsement: by CW, "Jaco on the Fire / Nov. 17. 1774."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 2/26.

¹This fire, on Nov. 13, 1774, at the Foundery in London, is recorded in JW, *Journal, Works*, 22:437.

²William Judd, of Hoxton, married Elizabeth Marriott (1719–78, sister of Thomas Marriott) in 1742.

From Ann Chapman

Bristol
Thursday, November 24 [1774]

Dearest Sir,

I join with you in thinking there are few here who are altogether as we could wish equal to our dear departed friend. Her loss is deeply felt by all her friends, though more particularly by her sisters.¹ They are very low and ill. The shock they received will not soon be got over. It is a house of mourning indeed.

I did fully intend being at the funeral,² but I was at that time ill myself and the weather was misty and cold. I therefore desired Hetty Farley to give me as particular [of] an account as she could of what Mr. Rutter said,³ which was the following:

He spoke from those words, “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.”⁴ After giving a general exhortation, [he] said, “I shall be wanting in duty if I do not bear a testimony for our departed friend, who I am satisfied died in the Lord, and while living was an example worthy of imitation. She lived and died in the faith, and made it her constant, steady care to be found in the practice of every religious duty, being ever desirous of fulfilling the full will of God. May all here present follow her as she followed Christ. Then you will doubtless experience the truth of those words as she did ‘The end of the perfect man is peace.’ From long acquaintance I knew her to be an humble hearted follower of her crucified Master, which she testified to the last by an unshaken faith in him.”

Much more he said to the same purpose. What I have already mentioned proves his good opinion of her and satisfaction in her death.

Mrs. Ann Stafford desires me to give their duty and love to you, and begs you and Mrs. Wesley will both excuse her not answering your kind letters,⁵ as she never does write to anybody, and is now more than ever indisposed for it. She desires me to acquaint you of the legacies dear Mrs. Vigor has so kindly left you and yours: Mr. John Wesley, ten guineas; yourself, fifty pounds; Mrs. Wesley, ten guineas; Master Charles, twenty pounds; Miss Sally and Master Sammy, fifteen pounds each. It is not set down in her will, but given in person to Mrs. Ann Stafford, whom she has left executrix. Something else as a keepsake is left for Mrs. Wesley. I don’t know what.

I have just now been to see Mr. [John] and Mrs. [Margaret] James. I find he is and has been for these three weeks rather worse in his breath. I did not see him. I believe he seldom sees anyone. Mrs. James thinks she is something better today. She sends her kindest love and respects to you and Mrs. Wesley. Miss Jameses also.⁶ They are much obliged to you for your enquiry after them.

I forgot to mention Mrs. Ann Stafford said she could not call in the money directly, and she must give six months warning according to the agreement, so she hopes to see you back in Bristol before that time—as you do not say your only tie is gone. I have hope, and if the earnest prayers of preachers and people is a proof of their love, my dear and honoured friend to whom I am writing is favoured with them

¹Ann, Mary, and Susanna Stafford

²Elizabeth (Stafford) Vigor was buried Nov. 17, 1774.

³This was likely Thomas Rutter (1741–1800), a son of Benjamin and Jane Rutter, who would marry Hester Farley (1750–1806), the youngest daughter of Felix and Elizabeth (Grace) Farley, in 1780.

⁴Ps. 37:37.

⁵These letters are not known to survive.

⁶I.e., Margaret James Jr. and Sarah James.

in public and private.

My materials are bad. I wish you may be able to read this wretched writing. My best respects to Mrs. Wesley, in which Mrs. [Elizabeth] Farley and Hetty [Farley] join. The latter thanks Miss Sally for her letter. Please to excuse all faults, and believe me to be, dear sir,

Your affectionate though unworthy servant,

A. Chapman

Endorsement: by CW, “Nov. 24. 1774 / N. Chapman / Rutter’s Testimony / Legacies.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/78.

From Mary (March) Berkin¹

Sutton
November 30, 1774

Dear Sir,

The chief use of prayer to a Calvinist is to beg of God resignation and acquiescence to all his appointments. We are also to pray for all things needful, and for all men, simply because he hath commanded us so to do. But observe he only heareth his own Spirit always, and our spirits according to his will. There is no fear he should alter his eternal purpose to please our fancies. But it is a token for good when we are allowed to make our petition before him. Blessings are sweeter when received as answers to prayer, because faith and hope are encouraged, and the soul kept in exercise. God forbid our prayers should alter the decree of eternal wisdom. But with submission to his will we may leave our every minute desire at the throne of his grace, to be answered as he sees fit, knowing he doth all things well, tho according to the counsel of his own will.

Knowing the heart of a parent, I feel for you and Mrs. Wesley.² Fearing the snares and dangers of this life, I can make more prayer for your resignation than the child's life. Your prayer for a dying child in the hymns best expresses my sentiments. I dare pray absolutely for nothing. May the God of all consolation support comfort and strengthen you both, and may the child live or die, as is best for ye and him. I have no doubt of his redemption, if now taken from the earth. And not sufficiently knowing him, to be biassed by affection, whilst you request his tuneful life on earth I almost exult in the thought of his becoming a harper in heaven, and singing that song which only the 144,000 can learn (Rev. 14th).

I shall be glad to hear when the worst is past. Thanks for your two letters.³ Mr. [William] Berkin hath been poorly with a fever. I, you know, am never well—much as usual. Remember me in all your prayers, especially for more lively ordinances and power to enjoy them. Remember also your promise of taking a bed with us. Believe me with much sympathy

Your obliged friend and servant,

M. Berkin

Address: “Mr C Wesley / The Chappel House / 〈West〉 Street / 7 Dials Holborn.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Nov. 30 1774 M. Berkin / on prayer, resign[atio]n etc.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/501/25.⁴

¹Mary March (1736–1812), sister of Jane Catherine March, married William Berkin (1731–96) in London in 1756. The family eventually moved to Clifton, Gloucestershire, and were drawn increasingly to the Calvinist wing of the movement.

²Their son Samuel was ill, likely with smallpox (as his cousin Elizabeth Waller Jr. had been a few months earlier).

³These letters are 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/>

1775

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
January 16, 1775

My Very Dear Brother,

Thank you for your letter and your very friend[ly] postscript to that of your brother.¹ I am glad you did not altogether disapprove my *Essay upon Truth*. The letter I² grant profiteth but little, (until the Spirit animates it) or makes it quick and (? I had, some) weeks ago, one of those (touches, which realize) or rather spiritualize (the letter, and it con)vinced me more than (ever, that what I say in) that tract of the (Spirit and of faith is truth.)

I am also persuaded (that the faith and spirit which) belong to *perfect* Ch(ristianity, are at a very low ebb, even) among believers. (When the Son of man cometh to) set up his king(dom, shall he find Christian faith) upon the ear(th?³ Yes; but I fear as little as he) found (of Jewish faith when he came in the flesh.) I believe you (cannot rest either with the easy) antinomians or the busy pharisees. You and I have nothing to do, but to die to all that is of sinful nature, and pray the power of an endless life springing up in our hearts by faith. God make us faithful to our convictions, and keep us from the snares of outward things. You are in danger from m(usic,) children, poetry; and I, from speculation, (controversy, sloth, etc., etc.) Let us watch (against the deceitfulness of self) and sin in all its appearances.

(...) are before if I had (...) I was to direct to London (...) to answer these queries.⁴

(What power of the Spirit do) you find among the (believers in London? What open)ings of the kingdom? (Is the well springing up in ma)ny hearts? Are many (souls dissatisfied, and) looking for the king(dom of God in power? Watch)man, what of the (night? What of the day?) What of the dawn?

(I feel the force of what you say) in your last (about the danger of so encouraging) the inferior (dispensation, as to make people rest) short of (the faith which belongs to perfect Christian)ity. I have tried to obviate it in some places of the *Equal Check*, but hope to do more so in my reply to Mr. Hill's *Creed for Perfectionists*.⁵ I desire you would read and carefully correct, as a divine and a grammarian, my answer to the Arminian creed.⁶ I hope it is calculated to strike a blow at Calvinian and Arminian bigotry. [But you are a better (judge ...) in general I say aim at (...)ing over the difficulties (...)m. I think this unfair (...) up those difficulties.⁷ Proba(bly I shall get nothing by my polemic labours) but losses of friends, and (charges of "novel chimeras") on both sides. I expect a (letter from you on the) subject; write with openness ((and do not fear to) discourage me by speaking (your disapprobation of) what you disapprove). (...) of the *Scripture Scales*⁸ (...) my duty; the prom(ise ...) in her. When in (...) am in her

¹Neither CW's letter to Fletcher nor JW's letter with CW's postscript are known to survive.

²Major portions of the surviving manuscript are missing. A more complete manuscript was apparently available at the time a transcription was published in *Posthumous*, and the text missing in the current manuscript is reconstructed from that source when possible.

³Se Luke 18:8.

⁴This paragraph does not appear in *Posthumous*.

⁵Richard Hill, "A Creed for Arminians and Perfectionists," in *Three Letters* (1773), 25–29.

⁶Published in Fletcher, *The Fictitious and the Genuine Creed* (London: Hawes, 1775).

⁷The preceding three sentences do not appear in *Posthumous*.

⁸Fletcher, *Zelotes and Honestus Reconciled, or Equal Check, Part I of Scripture Scales* (London: R. Hawes, 1774); and *Zelotes and Honestus Reconciled, or Equal Check, Second Part of Scripture Scales* (London: R. Hawes, 1775).

debt ⟨...⟩ ascend by that la(adder?⁹ My aim is to be found at the feet of) all, bearing and forbearing, ⟨until truth and love bring better days.⟩

I wish you joy about Sammy.¹⁰ My Christian love wait upon M[aste]rs Wesley, my goddaughter, and your Handel.¹¹

⟨... *Fictitious and Genuine C*reed and upon the ⟨...⟩ I can possibly ex⟨...⟩ Pray for and ⟨...free⟩dom you sing in your hymns.¹²

[I am, rev. and dear sir,

Your most affectionate brother and son in the gospel

J. F.^{13]}

[P.S.] You did not write about John Downes.¹⁴ Professors die here rather like Jacob than like Stephen.¹⁵

Address: “⟨To / The Rev. Mr. Charles⟩ Wesley / ⟨at the⟩ Foundery / ⟨in upper Moor⟩fields / London.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Fletcher / Jan. 16. 1775.”¹⁶

Source: imperfect holograph, Oklahoma City, OK: The Green Collection, GC.PPR.002511; collated with Fletcher, *Posthumous* (1791), 223–24.

⁹The preceding three sentences do not appear in *Posthumous*.

¹⁰He had recovered from an illness; likely smallpox.

¹¹I.e., CW’s children, from youngest to oldest; Samuel, Sally, and Charles Jr. These two sentences, on the top of the address page, do not appear in *Posthumous*.

¹²These lines, of which remnants remain on the bottom of the address page, do not appear in *Posthumous*.

¹³This closing appears in *Posthumous*; but there is no surviving evidence of where it fit in the manuscript.

¹⁴See CW’s account of the death of John Downes, c. Oct. 31, 1774.

¹⁵This note, added at the top left corner of the first page, is not found in *Posthumous*.

¹⁶CW also made a brief list of items in shorthand on the address page; if they were notes of his reply, they are too sketchy to develop: [[[JF’s Scripture] Scales moravians solofidians]] / [[forgery]] / [[Scales for Lady Huntingdon]] / [[ssvr comp you trntrn]] / [[f. to ld]].

Joan Gwynne to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[Brecon]
February 18, 1775

Dearest Niece,

Having this opportunity, I was not willing to let it pass without thank you for your letters. I am glad to find that the geese prove good. I can now tell you I have one bed and that is at your service if you and Sally will come to see me. I have nothing to promise but [a] hearty welcome. My sister Sally,¹ Mrs. [Mary] Musgrove, and self join in our best respects to you, Mr. [Charles] Wesley and the children as if named.

I am, dearest niece,
Yours most affectionately

J. Gwynne

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/36.

¹I.e., her sister-in-law, Sarah (Maclene) Gwynne, who married Sackville Gwynne (c. 1696–1766) in 1736.

From the Rev. John Fletcher

[Madeley]
May 21, 1775

My Dear and Honoured Brother,

I thank you for your last.¹ It came late, which made it rather the more welcome, as I thought you dead, or sick, or removed from London. Glory be to God for keeping us still here, and glory be to him for promising to remove us in his good time! I go on scribbling with a desire to reconcile the Augustinians and the Pelagians. You will soon have the second part of my *Scales*, where I answer the capital objections of the Calvinists.² Your full critical and theological remarks will do me a deal of good.

I throw myself at your feet to put my manuscript upon perfection into your hands,³ and I implore your corrections for Christ's sake, and for the sake of truth and souls. I give you *carte blanche* to add, or lop off; but to none but you. Your brother saw it as he went to Ireland, and I believe approved of it in general. I hope you see it improved, as I have made many alterations, I trust for the better. I have not skill to make my book shorter and full. God has given you the gift to be sententious; my way is the reverse of yours, correct it.

I shall set about the application as soon as possible.⁴ Give me your directions, corrections, reproofs. You cannot think how much I am helped by a hint. A Calvinist clergyman (Mr. Glazebrook⁵) read my manuscript, threatened me with an answer—but I was glad to see that his objections were all trifling.

I have had several domestic and parochial trials. But hitherto the Lord has stood by me, and I believe he will not forsake me. I find it good to keep to the fundamentals of religion. They are firm and yield all the comforts that can be desired. They all center in our baptismal vow, which contains the sum of Christianity and the height of Christian perfection. I see life going as I never did before. What a dream would it be if it were not connected with eternity. Well we have all in Christ. Let us make more of him and of his fullness. The Lord fill you full of his perfect love.

Adieu.

I should perhaps write more if I did not send you so long a postscript or rather prescripts where you will see many of my thoughts.

O let us make the best of every moment. Salute kindly Mrs. Wesley, your sons, and my goddaughter [Sarah Jr.], who I hope grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and our life.

Farewell.

Address: "Rev. Mr. C. Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "Fletcher / May 21. 1775."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/51.⁶

¹This letter is not known to survive.

²*Zelotes and Honestus ... Second Part of Scripture Scales* (London: R. Hawes, 1775).

³I.e., Fletcher's *Last Check: A Polemical Essay* (London: R. Hawes, 1775).

⁴Likely the addresses to four categories of readers concluding the *Last Check* (pp. 223–342).

⁵James Glazebrook (1744–1803) had been a student at Trevecca under Fletcher.

⁶A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 321–22.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

Londonderry
June 2, 1775

[[Dear Brother,]]

I thought it strange that poor Samuel Franks should leave me nine hundred pounds in debt. But it is stranger still that John Atlay should have paid sixteen hundred out of nine, and that I am an hundred and sixty pounds in debt notwithstanding!²

Mr. [Samuel] Wathen's method of radical cure I shall hardly try.³ I am very easy, and that is enough.

I am persuaded Billy Baynes's eye is single; therefore he will be useful.⁴ Our other friend [Edward Davies] should have known his own mind. We parted only for four pounds a year.

I am exceeding glad that Thomas Rankin does not print till his papers have passed through our correction.⁵ I was afraid he would not have been so patient. Just what I thought at first, I think still of American affairs. If a blow is struck, I give America for lost, and perhaps England too. Our part is to continue instant in prayer.

Sammy will not only be better but quite well—if you do not kill him with kindness.⁶

Has my friend taken an house at Bristol? Is Noah with her?⁷ What are they doing? Mr. [Martin] Madan has behaved well. *Res ipsa reduxit in gratiam.*⁸

Preach as much as you can and no more than you can. You never will be much stronger till you add change of air to exercise, riding two or three hundred miles point blank forward. Now you have an opportunity. Meet me at Leeds with honest John Murlin.⁹ When you are tired, you may change places with him. You would return a stout, healthy man.

I purpose writing to Mr. [John] Fletcher shortly. I do not remember that he has touched the corner-stone of their hypothesis, “the covenant of redemption.” One would not wish to be easy without it. Just here we must stop reasoning or turn Calvinists. This is the very strength of their cause.

Peace be with you and yours!

¹JW is replying to a letter of CW, not known to survive, where CW mentioned receiving a copy of the tract written by Rankin.

²John Atlay (1736–c. 1805) became a Methodist in the 1758 and a travelling preacher in 1763. When Samuel Franks died in Sept. 1773 Atlay took over as JW's book steward in London. See *DEB*, 36; and Vickers, *Dictionary*, 14.

³For his hydrocele.

⁴William Baynes had obtained ordination from the Bishop of Bath and Wells in 1772, and was replacing Edward Davies as the ‘curate’ assisting the Wesley brothers in serving the London chapels.

⁵Rankin had prepared a tract calling the colonies in North America to repentance, in part because of their embrace of slavery, and sent a copy to CW for comment (see JW to Rankin, June 13, 1775). There is no evidence that the tract was ever published. Cf. Richard E. MacMaster, ‘Thomas Rankin and the American Colonists’, *WHS* 39 (1973): 25–33.

⁶CW's son Samuel had recovered from an illness; likely, smallpox.

⁷Mary (Goldhawk / Vazeille) Wesley had separated from JW, for the second time, in mid-Aug. 1774; see JW's letters to her of Dec. 9, 1774 and Sept. 1, 1777. JW is inquiring about Mary and her youngest son Noah Vazeille (1747–1809).

⁸Cf. Terence, *The Brothers*, V.iv.46: “He has been reconciled by events.”

⁹Murlin was currently the Assistant appointed in Bristol.

[[Adieu!]]

Address: “To / The Revd Mr C. Wesley / in / Bristol / xp [i.e., crosspost] Gloster.”

Postmarks: “IV/5” and “L[ondon]derry.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother]. June 2. 1775.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/43.

From Joseph Bradford

Derriaghy¹
June 19, 1775²

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

I suppose you received my letter, dated the 16th, in which I informed you of your brother's sickness.³

From the time I wrote he continued very ill. On Saturday morning, with much entreaty, he was prevailed with to call in a physician. The medicines which he proposed gave present ease, and I was in hopes he would have soon recovered. In the afternoon he grew much worse, and continued so all night. About 3:00 yesterday morning, to all appearance, he appeared to be in the agonies of death. I think his pulse beat at least one hundred and thirty time in a minute, and his flesh was like fire, and he was convulsed from head to foot. But blessed be God, he hath continued him so long, and hath endued his servant with much patience to suffer. What will be the event of this, God only knows. I fear. We sent for a physician yesterday; and for another this morning, which we expect every moment. I think the fever is not so violent, but [he] continues very ill.

I have prevailed with him to desist from travelling. Yesterday we left Tanderagee and came to Mr. Gayer's,⁴ Derriaghy about a mile from Lisburn. The family are Methodists, and live in as handsome a manner as any in the kingdom, and have an estate which brings in some hundreds annually to support it. The people are friendly, and with pleasure provide all things necessary. Here he is to stay until the Lord is pleased to restore him, which I would hope will be soon. Mr. Wesley is very happy and composed under this afflicting providence. He has no choice, [whether] to live or die, but with submission to the divine will. Yesterday morning one of our sisters, not knowing he was ill, came from Armagh to Tanderagee to hear him preach. He, seeing her come into the room, said, "Sister Russell came to hear me preach, but did not think she should come here to see me die." He added, "The Lord does all things well."

I shall send by the next post. I am, reverend and dear sir,

Your unworthy servant,

Joseph Bradford

When informing your brother that I was writing to you, he desired [I express] his love to you and tell you that he gains no ground, but is of the opinion that when the fever is turned he will gain ground fast. The Lord hasten the time!

P.S. A word of advice would be thankfully received. Direct it to me in Dublin; if [I am] not there it will be forwarded.

¹Orig., here and in letter, "Deraghy"; a village northeast of Lisburn, Ireland.

²The holograph is misdated as "July 19" (and in *Life of Bradford*); but corrected in CW's annotation. JW became quite ill in mid-June 1775, while on a preaching tour in Ireland; and it was June 18 that he left Tanderagee; see JW, *Journal*, June 13–July 10, 1775, *Works*, 22:455–58.

³Bradford's letter of June 16 is not known to survive.

⁴Orig., "Gryr." Edward Gayer (d. 1799), a clerk of the House of Lords in the Irish Parliament, lived in an estate in Derriaghy. In 1758 Gayer married Henrietta Jones (c. 1729–1814). Staunch members of the Church of England, Henrietta in particular was drawn in Methodism about 1772. JW met her the following year while in Ireland. The Gayer home became a hub for Methodism in the area, hosting travelling preachers, and Henrietta took a lead role in promoting the cause among her peers. See *ODNB*, and Vickers, *Dictionary*.

Address: “The Revd. / Mr. Charles Wesley / at the New Room / in the Horse Faire / Bristol / with speed.”

Postmarks: “\IV\22” and “Lisburn.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Joseph of B[rother] in extremis / June 19. 1775.”

Source: published transcription; Bradford, *Life of Bradford*, 6–7.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Bath
June 28, 1775

My Dear Sir,

The relentings of every Christian affection charge me to inquire after my old friend your brother [JW], whom I have heard this day (and not before) is so ill.¹ Not being well myself, the hearing of his danger has affected me very much, as I find that charity that works faith abides by my heart for him. I do grieve to think his faithful labours are to cease here on earth. How does an hour of loving sorrow swallow up the *just* differences our various judgments make, and cause all things but what an eternity of love must produce to reconsider that ignorance our wretched condition here below miserably allows for us. I have loved him this five and thirty years, and it is with pleasure I find he remains in my heart as a friend and a labourious and beloved servant of Jesus Christ. I will hope that the Lord may spare him. This pleasure give me, as soon as you know it.

Distance(?), while is man's praise(?) has the best reason(?) for that unhospitable kind of friendship it maintains.

May the Lord bless you and yours, and cause the inseparable bond of his Spirit so to unite all our hearts to himself as to make us one in him and one with each other, and that even while the rugged and crooked paths of mortality may separate for his wise and best purposes. I beg all that is kind to dear Mrs. Wesley, and I must ever alike remain

Your most obliged friend,

S. Huntingdon

Forgive the hurried script, wrote with bad eyes, pain of body, and of mind.

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

Endorsement: by CW, "Lady Huntingdon / June 28. 1775."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/504/1/81.

¹See JW, *Journal*, June 13–July 10, 1775, *Works*, 22:455–58.

From Philip Hayes¹

London
June 30, 1775

Dear Sir,

I am not a little glad to find that you all got safe to the end of your journey.² If any attention of mine towards you and your family hath been at all pleasing to you, I am made very happy by the kind manner in which you are pleased to acknowledge it; and can assure you with the sincerity of a friend that I have done nothing but what has been perfectly consistent with my own feelings.

I hope when my friend Sam reflects that whatever may have passed with respect to Handel was founded upon truth and a motive of friendship, he will readily forgive—which is the true part of a Christian so to do, whether bigot or otherwise. And assure him moreover that I revere the great man's genius equally with his productions, many of which are beyond human invention. Thus much might suffice, but I am still willing to ease his tender mind by declaring farther that no compositions have upon the whole so affected me as the never to be forgotten Handel's. In short, they are like a firm rock, never to be removed. After this declaration, I think Sam and I must, or ought to, be friends.

However, I would wish by gentle degrees to shake his bigotry, as in my humble opinion no person so disposed can relish the finer touches of genius and art, in a general sense, with true satisfaction. For example, was I a bigot, I could not receive satisfaction in the early productions of nature, even though my dear little friend should, through the vehicle of imagination, strive to charm me with his sweet strains of harmony. Which could not fail to mortify him, as we all wish to please. This disposition the Almighty hath implanted in our nature, and it certainly is our duty to promote it by every manner of means in our power.

But my dear sir, to whom am I writing this! Why truly to one who is infinitely more capable of reasoning upon the subject than myself. However, as it is written for the perusal of the little gentleman, I will not apologize for having said ⟨so mu⟩ch,³ but rather hope that it may ⟨have⟩ the desired effect.

I heartily wish Sam success in his pursuit of the Latin, which when understood will make him ample amends for the pains he bestows. My friend Charles need be under no difficulty about the anthem, as I am not in a hurry for it. I shall be very happy to meet you all again, either in Oxford or London. And in the meantime, [I] wish you health and happiness. With kindest remembrances to you, and yours, I remain, dear sir,

Your very affectionate obedient servant,

Phil. Hayes

P.S. Thank you heartily for your kind letter, and [I] hope to be favoured with another line soon [...]

Address: "To / The Revd. Charles Wesley / in St. James's / Bristol."

Postmark: "30/IV".

Endorsement: by CW, "Hays June 30 1775."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/80.

¹Philip Hayes (c. 1738–97) was born in Oxford. His early musical education was overseen by his father William Hayes. He was awarded the degree of B.Mus. in 1763 and received his doctorate in 1777. He sang at the Chapel Royal in London from 1767 (where he met CW's son Samuel), but returned to Oxford in 1776 to take up the post of organist at New College, Oxford and to assist his ailing father; whom he succeeded as Heather Professor of Music in 1777.

²CW's family were all back in Bristol. The letter to Hayes reporting this is not known to survive.

³A small portion is torn away by the wax seal, affecting two lines. These reconstructions seem quite likely.

From the Rev. John Fletcher¹

Madeley
July 2, 1775

My Very Dear Brother,

The same post which brought me yours brought me a letter from Ireland informing me of the danger of your dear brother, my dear father [in Christ], and of his being very happy in and resigned to the will of God. What can you and I do? What, but stand still and see the salvation of God? The nations are, before him, but as the dust that cleaves to a balance. And the greatest instruments of good have been removed. Abraham is dead. The fathers are dead. And if John come first to the sepulchre, you and I will soon descend into it.

The brightest, the most burning and shining lights, like [John] the Baptist, Mr. [George] Whitefield, and your brother were kindled to make the people rejoice in them “for a season,”² says your Lord. “For a season,” the expression is worth our notice. It is just as if our Lord had said, “I give you inferior light that ye may rejoice in them for a season. But I reserve myself the glory of shining forever. The most burning lights shall fail on earth; but I, your Sun, will shine forever to all eternity.” Come, my dear brother, let the danger of our light make us look to our Sun more steadily. And should God quench the lights of our Jerusalem below, let us rejoice that it is to make it burn brighter in the Jerusalem which is above—and let us triumph in the inextinguishable light of our Sun, in the impenetrable strength of our Shield, and in the immoveableness of our Rock.

Amidst my concern for the church in general, and for Mr. Wesley’s societies in particular, I cannot but acknowledge the goodness of God in so wonderfully keeping him for so many years; and in preserving him to undergo such labours as would have killed you and me ten times over, had we run the same heats of labourious usefulness. The Lord may yet hear prayer and add a span to his useful life. But for as much as the immortality of the body does not belong to this state, and he has fulfilled the ordinary term of human life, in hoping the best, we must prepare ourselves for the worst. The God of all grace and power will strengthen you on the occasion.

Should your brother fail on earth, you are called not only to bear up under the loss of so near a relative but, for the sake of your common children in the Lord, you should endeavour to fill up the gap, according to your strength. The Methodists will not expect from you your brother’s labours, but they have (I think) a right to expect that you will preside over them when God spares you in the land of the living. A committee of the oldest and steadiest preachers may help you to bear the burden, and to keep up a proper discipline both among the people and the rest of the preachers. And if at any time you should want my mite of assistance, I hope I shall throw it into the treasury with the simplicity and readiness of the poor widow, who cheerfully offered her [next to] nothing. Do not faint. The Lord God of Israel will give you additional strength for the day, and his angels, yea his praying people, will bear you up in their hands, that you hurt not your foot against a stone—yea that, if need be, you may leap over a wall.

I am by this time grey-headed as well as you, and some of my parishioners tell me that the inroads of time are uncommonly visible upon my face. Indeed I feel as well as see it myself, and learn what only time, trials, and experience can teach. Should your brother be called to his reward, I would not be free to go to London till you and the preachers had settled all matters. My going just at such a time would carry the appearance of a vanity, which I abhor. It would seem as if I wanted to be somebody among the Methodists.

We heartily join here the prayers of the brethren for your brother, and for you and the societies. Paper fails, not love. Be careful for nothing, Cast your burden upon the Lord and he will sustain you and

¹Fletcher may be replying to CW’s letter of June 14, or to one in late June mentioning JW’s present danger that is not known to survive. See JW, *Journal*, June 13–July 10, 1775, *Works*, 22:455–58.

²John 5:35.

us.

Farewell,

J. F.

Address: “To / The Revd. Mr. C. Wesley / at the new Room / Horsefair / Bristol.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Fletcher / July 2. 1775.”

Source: holograph; New Room (Bristol), NR2001.180.³

³A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher’s original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 322–24.

From Selina (Shirley) Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon

Bath
Tuesday night, 10'oclock
July 4, 1775

Dear Sir,

I have just received your very welcome account of Mr. [John] Wesley's prospect of recovering, for which I thank you most kindly.¹ May the Lord renew his strength and cause his labours yet to be in the Lord and abundantly blessed. Doctor [Abraham] Ludlow has been with me today and had mentioned those particulars you oblige me with tonight. Under the great Physician I am greatly indebted for his skill and attentions to my health. I pray and wish for all spiritual blessings to his heart. All that is most kind to dear Mrs. [Sarah] Wesley, and may every best and increasing blessing be added daily to you; and which will ever be the sincere wish of dear sir,

Your obliged friend,

S. Huntingdon

Source: holograph; Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Department of Manuscripts and Records, NLW MS. 7005c.

¹CW had clearly sent a subsequent message to that dated July 2, 1775, wherein the dire fear of the former was allayed.

From John Russell¹

Mortimer Street [Westminster]
July 16, 1775

Reverend and Very Dear Sir,

We found ourselves much affected indeed at the news which came from Ireland²—for you, for the church of God, and for ourselves. But thanks be to our gracious Lord, who has spared the valuable life of your Reverend brother, and has dried the tears of many who most sincerely love him.³ I pray God his latter end may greatly increase in all good works, to the glory of him in whose hands he has already been a blessing to mankind—perhaps more than anyone existing.

Your kind letter gave us much pleasure, as to hear you are well will always do. I trust I can never forget, never help loving, or fail to serve if ever in my power, any who are near or dear to so kind a friend as Mr. Charles Wesley. This is an answer to your last. Your sons' kindness to my brother will never be forgot.⁴ He is gone into the country, but begs his best respects. Our respects to them, to Mrs. and Miss Wesley. I am, reverend sir,

Your most obliged and affectionate,

John Russell

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

Postmark: "15/IY."

Endorsement: by CW, "Russel / July 1775."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDP 1/68.

¹John Russell Jr. (1745–1806) was born in Guildford, to John and Ann (Parvish) Russell. He was drawn into the evangelical movement in his late teens. Russell settled in Westminster, where he became acquainted with Lady Huntingdon. In 1770 he married Hannah Fadden (1745–1817). Russell gained a reputation as a leading portrait painter. He became acquainted with the Wesley family in 1771, when he began work on a portrait of Charles Jr. (see CW to Ann Foard, Aug. 30, 1771).

²It had been reported in newspapers like the *London Chronicle* (on the first page of its June 29 to July 1, 1775 issue): "On Friday the 23rd of June died at Dublin the Rev. Mr. John Wesley."

³Russell is replying to a letter (not known to survive) wherein CW informed him of JW's recovery from his long illness during his preaching tour in Ireland.

⁴William Russell (1755–1839), the youngest son of John and Ann (Parvish) Russell of Guildford, was an organist. He would make Guildford his home, where he taught music.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

Leeds
July 31, 1775

[[Dear Brother,]]

I must not delay answering your important question, “What can be done with William Pine?” If he still, after my earnest warning, “every week publishes barefaced treason,” I beg you would once more warn him in my name and in your own; and if he slights or forgets this warning, then give him his choice either to leave us quietly or to be publicly disowned. At such a time as this, when our foreign enemies are hovering over us and our own nation is all in a ferment, it is particularly improper to say one word which tends to inflame the minds of the people.

My strength is gradually increasing. Except the shaking of my hand, I am now nearly as I was before my illness, but I hope more determined to sell all for the pearl.

Peace be with you and yours!

Adieu!

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

Postmark: “2/AV” and “Leeds.”

Endorsement: by CW, “July 31. 1775 / B[rother].”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/44.

¹JW is reply to a letter from CW, c. July 26, which is known only from the excerpt quoted in this reply. William Pine (1739–1803) had been one of the printers for Wesley publications in Bristol since the mid-1740s. After the death of Felix Farley he became their main printer there, including most recently JW’s collected *Works*. But since 1767 Pine had also been publisher of the *Bristol Gazette*, a weekly newspaper strongly aligned with the Old Corporation of Bristol and the Whig party. With growing open rebellion in the colonies in North America, Whigs (and Pine’s *Bristol Gazette*) became vocal defenders of the colonists—and critics of the monarchy.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Leeds
August 4, 1775

[[Dear Brother,]]

The Conference (a blessed one) was concluded this morning,¹ and I am as strong as I was when it began. I do not advise you to accept of the invitation.² I read a letter today which I do not like.

Nay, Mr. Saunderson is 'settled in Bristol', that is, as a local preacher.³

Such an address to the Americans would be highly seasonable.⁴ Have you heard anything of the Africans?⁵

I hope to be in London on Tuesday evening and the Thursday in the following week at Brecon.

As matters are now, I let the Orphan House alone, lest the remedy should be worse than the disease.⁶ I have likewise a good letter from Thomas Rankin. He and all our brethren expect sufferings. Hitherto they have behaved extremely well. I must write by post to sister Castleman and my other Bristol friends.⁷ Peace be with you and yours! τὸ ἐν ποιῶ.⁸

[[Adieu!]]

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

Postmark: "7/AV" and "Leeds."

Endorsement: by CW, "B[rother]. Aug. 4. 1775."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/45.

¹See *Minutes* (1775) in JW, *Works*, 10:438–51.

²The invitation likely concerned where CW would reside during his visit to Bristol; see JW to CW, Aug. 10, 1775.

³Hugh Saunderson had been stationed in Bristol by Conference in 1774 (see *Works*, 10:448). He was due to be moved, but apparently resisted (see JW to Mary Lewis, July 28, 1775), leading JW to declare him "settled." He was listed again as appointed to Bristol by Conference in 1776 (10:453), then formally desisting from travelling in 1777 (10:465).

⁴The reference may be to Thomas Rankin's unpublished tract (see JW to CW, June 2, 1775). Instead, JW soon began work on *A Calm Address to our American Colonies*, which he published in late Sept. in Bristol.

⁵The Robin John brothers, who had sailed back to Old Calabar.

⁶JW is likely referring to the Orphan House in Newcastle, which had been experiencing some challenges (see JW to Christopher Hopper, Mar. 21, 1773; and July 25, 1774). LH had come under attack from Anthony Benezet in 1775 for retaining slaves at the Orphan House in Bethesda Georgia she had been bequeathed by Whitefield, but it is unlikely JW would have judged this as a minor disease!

⁷Letitia Fisher (1738–1822), a pupil of Mary (Francis) Maddern at Kingswood, married John Castleman (d. 1801), a Bristol surgeon, in 1758. She and her husband were Methodist supporters in Bristol.

⁸"One thing I do."

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
August 8, 1775

My Very Dear Brother,

The Lord is good and gracious; he hears prayer. Your brother is preserved, and I trust you are spared for good also. On what a slender thread hang everlasting things! O let us make the best of every moment, for our place here will soon know us no more. I hear your brother is as well as ever. This shake will open the ears and hearts of the people to his directions more than ever. I have sent to him the four addresses which conclude my essay on perfection.¹ So he has seen the whole, except the section against Martin's book.²

I send you here enclosed a letter to Lady Huntingdon,³ which I beg you will send with a copy of the *Scales*, if they have reached Bristol. If you did not send her the former part, let the two parts be half-bound together. Mr. [John] Southcote will pay for the half binding and lay it to my account. You may read what I say to her, and seal the letter with a wafer. The piece I speak of to her is a tract which will give a view of the whole controversy, and I trust end it before the judicious, by scripturally joining the doctrines of grace and justice, and holding forth the gratuitous election and reprobation of partial grace together with the remunerative election and reprobation of impartial justice.⁴ If you send me your criticisms upon the *Scales*, you will do me much good. You cannot think how I am helped by a word of reproof or direction.

You have procured me a letter from Mr. [Francis] Okeley, for which I thank you. He seems to me an honest expectant of Christian perfection, and such I prefer to the forward witnesses of it. I am going to see Mr. Hill, my *quondam* pupil,⁵ who is now Member [of Parliament] for this county, and who wants me to educate his son.⁶ I thought he had enough of me. I go to put off the unwelcome charge. My soul is desirous of truth and love. O may we grow in both. Help me by your prayers, and direct me—who wants your prayers and assistance, and should be glad to groan out the rest of my days with you, if your soul groans as your hymns do.

My kind love to Mrs. Wesley, to your sons, and my goddaughter [Sarah Jr.].

Address: "Revd. Mr. C. Wesley."

Endorsement: by CW, "Fletcher / Aug. 8. 1775."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/52.⁷

¹See Fletcher, *Last Check*, 223–342.

²*Ibid.*, 170–71.

³This letter is not known to survive.

⁴This tract was delayed by debate over JW's *Calm Address to Our American Colonies*; appearing in 1777 as *The Doctrines of Grace and Justice equally essential to the Pure Gospel* (London: Moore).

⁵Noel Hill (1745–89), son of Thomas and Susanna Maria (Noel) Hill.

⁶Thomas Noel Hill (1770–1832), later 2nd Baron Berwick of Attingham.

⁷A close transcription of this letter, showing Fletcher's original spelling, cross-outs, and the like is available in Forsaith, *Labours*, 330–31.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

London
August 10, 1775

[[Dear Brother,]]

I would do everything to oblige those on either side, except speaking evil of the other.

My route is this: Monday, August 14, Witney; Tuesday, 15, Gloucester; Wednesday, 16, The Hay; Thursday and Friday, Brecon; Saturday, Carmarthen (*Deo volente*²); Monday, 28, Bristol.

I sent your order to James Kenton.

I believe it will be best to accept of Mr. Castleman's invitation at Bristol, and to go straight to his house.³ I come back through Cardiff; if you could get thither, I could bring you home. It is not safe to live or die without love.

Peace be with you all!

[[Adieu.]]

I wish Tommy Lewis would meet me on the 28th at the Old Passage.

Endorsement: by CW, "Aug. 10. 1775 B[rother]."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/46.

¹JW is replying to CW's letter of Aug. 7, 1775.

²"God willing."

³John Castleman, husband of Letitia (Fisher) Castleman; see JW to CW, Aug. 4, 1775.

Sarah Wesley Jr. to Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley

[Brecon]
September 3, 1775

My Dear and Honoured Mama,

As the post goes out today I thought it would be a satisfaction to you to hear I am well, and very much pleased with my situation.¹ My uncle Duke is exceedingly kind and Mrs. Gwynne seems assiduous to render everything agreeable. My cousins appear more cheerful, many have observed.² Duke is at present at Felin Newidd, the place Miss Williams lives at.³ I wish he would stay more at home (though it must be disagreeable) as his father may in time, by having him constantly with him, be brought *to see* things are *not* as bad *as they are represented*.

The morning you went I breakfasted at my aunt Juggy's, and dined there Saturday. She seemed pleased to meet me at church in the morning. Miss [Louisa] Darby came yesterday. She looks very well and desires to be kindly remembered to you all. Mrs. Gwynne and my cousins insist on my having my things washed here. I have sent the letter (which I believe came from Miss Crowley) to Hereford. I suppose you have received it before this time. I am going this evening to tea at Mr. James's,⁴ and after that to the Walton.

Charles's little horse, which was left in Mr. [Hugh] Bold's field, broke over to some other people's grounds and would have been put in the pound, had not the person in whose field he was found heard he belonged to Mr. Wesley—upon which he came to me, at my aunt's, and asked if I knew the horse, which I told him was ours. Mr. Bold has him now again in his possession.

My aunt [Joan] Gwynne, Charlotte, my uncle Duke and Mrs. Gwynne, Mr. James's family, my cousins, etc. etc. join with me in proper dues to papa and you, and my dear Charles, my aunt [Joan] Price, and cousins. I beg I may have a letter while you are at Hereford. I am, my dear mama,

Your dutiful and affectionate daughter,

S. Wesley

P.S. I shall be much obliged to you if you will desire my aunt Price to give you the pattern of Charlotte's worsted gauze apron.

Address: "Mrs Wesley / at the Revd. Mr Hugh Price's / in Milk Lane / Hereford."

Postmark: "B'knock."

Source: holograph; Pitts Library (Emory), Charles Wesley Family Papers (MSS 159), 1/40.

¹Sarah was visiting the home shared by her great-aunt Joan ("Juggy") Gwynne (1703–86) and her uncle Marmaduke Gwynne (1722–82), who had remarried the previous year (after the death of his second wife) to Mary Simpson (c. 1740–1816)—whom Sarah refers to as "Mrs. Gwynne."

²Marmaduke's three daughters (Charlotte, Jane, and Sarah) and his son Marmaduke, all by his first marriage.

³Marmaduke Gwynne Jr.'s son Marmaduke (1749–86) would marry Bridget Williams (1755–87) on Apr. 4, 1776 at Felin Newidd, Breconshire. See SGW's letter to him of c. Apr. 15, 1776.

⁴Capt. John and Margaret (Jenkins) James kept a home in Brecon, Wales.

From John Atlay

London
September 5, 1775

Reverend and Dear Sir,

I have had some hopes of receiving a letter from you for many days, but am not happy enough to meet with it. Notwithstanding that (if I had been able), I would have wrote to you before now. But since I returned to London I have passed over four of five days in sickness and pain such as I never knew in my life before. I should have been glad to have found refuge in death, if the Lord has seen fit. But his will be done. I am in his hands, and there I am determined to lie.

As my disorder is the stone, I have little reason to expect any other than to have frequent returns of it. But the Lord has full convinced me that he can more than support me under it. I never found such confidence in him, nor such love to him, as I did when exquisite pain wrung sweat from every part of my body for days and nights together. O precious Jesus! I find him to be ease in pain and health in sickness. I am left free from pain, but exceeding weak. Only the Lord is the strength of my soul and my portion forever. I hope you will excuse me for speaking to you in this manner. It is what I am not accustomed to in general. But at present it is well with me.

I have not seen our John since ⟨I have¹⟩ came to London.² He is in Scotland, and has been for many weeks. I will be sure to deliver your message to him when he comes. Our family is well, only Mrs. [Elizabeth] McDonald is lame of the leg that was bad last year. Mr. [William] Baynes is well-liked in London,³ and I hope will be useful. My wife⁴ joins me in love to you, Mrs. Wesley, and the children. I am, dear sir,

Your unworthy but affectionate,

John Atlay

Address: “The Rev’d Mr. Charles Wesley / Bristol.”

Postmark: “5/SE.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Atley happy in ye storms / Sept. 5. 1775.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 2/4.

¹A small portion is torn away by the wax seal. This reconstruction seems likely.

²The reference is not to JW, who was in Wales and Cornwall during Sept.; it might be to John Helton, currently assigned along with John Atlay to assist JW in London.

³Ori., “Baines.”

⁴John Atlay married Martha Stainthorpe in Birstall in 1769.

From Sarah Wesley Jr.

Brecon
September 10, 1775

Dear and Honoured Sir,

I sit down to inform you I am happier than I expected to be in this, or any other, place from home. And though I still give the preference to the latter, the care and tenderness of my aunt [Joan], the kindness of my uncle [Marmaduke] and Mrs. Gwynne, and the affectionate attention of my cousins render my situation perfectly agreeable.¹

We were much alarmed Friday by an earthquake, which shook this house.² I found the ground move and my chair rocking.

My aunt Juggy and my uncle Duke send their love. Mrs. Gwynne, her respects, and my cousins join me in duty to you, my dear Papa, to Mama, and kindest love to my brothers.

I remain, honoured sir,

Your dutiful and affectionate daughter,

S. Wesley

I received my dear Mama's letter Friday.³ That day I dined with my aunt. I came (as I generally do) back to supper. As soon as it was over my uncle and cousins went to bed. Mrs. [Mary] Gwynne and I remained in the parlour. About ten o'clock we hear a great noise overhead. (I thought all the chairs and tables were falling) and almost directly after the room shook, our chairs reeled, and the ground seemed to be falling in. Neither I nor Mrs. Gwynne were able to speak for some time. I jumped up and caught hold of her. Had I before been standing, it would have been impossible to have kept my feet. Mrs. Gwynne, as soon as she could, told me she believed it was an earthquake.

We then called the servants, who appeared very much terrified. They felt it more smartly than we did. The pewter rattled, and the roof in the kitchen seemed falling. The neighbours were all out in the streets. My uncle, who was fast asleep, found himself awoke by something <soundin⁴>g violent; what, he knew not. My cousins, who were in <their> room heard and windows and saw the drawer shake. <They> thought it was the wind.

My aunt [Joan] Gwynne did not perceive it. All their servants felt it. By what I have heard, it has been felt in most places near Brecon. After it was over my fright, which had been too great to let me speak, slung me in an hysteric fit of laughing, which was violent though not lasting.

Mr. and Mrs. Gwynne of Tarthlin(?) sent an invitation to my aunt Juggy and me to dinner.⁵ Then Friday, which my aunt luckily refused accepting. Cousin Molly Musgrove is gone there. She desired me to tell you to tell Mrs. Fisher to send by you, to the Passage (when you meet me there) a gown of hers that was, or is to be, dyed. As Ned can convey it here.

¹Sarah was visiting the home shared by her great-aunt Joan Gwynne (1703–86) and her uncle Marmaduke Gwynne (1722–82), who had remarried the previous year (after the death of his second wife) to Mary Simpson (c. 1740–1816)—whom Sarah refers to as “Mrs. Gwynne.”

²The earthquake on Sept. 8, 1775 was centered near Swansea, Wales; but felt as far away as Devon and Surrey.

³This letter is not known to survive.

⁴The bottom corners on both sides of the sheet are missing a small triangular section.

⁵Sarah likely means Roderick Gwynne (1695–1777) and his wife Ann (Howe) Gwynne, who lived at the Buckland estate, near Talybont-on-Usk. Roderick was Joan Gwynne's eldest brother.

I dined yesterday at Mrs. [Margaret] James's who is very poorly. Miss[es] James set out today for Gloucester.⁶ Each of their family send their loves. Sally Gwynne would add a line to you, but fears your paying double.⁷ She is now by me (to this ascribe my blunders, for she has been talking ever since I began writing) and bids me acquaint you she shall always think with gratitude on your's and Papa's ⟨help⟩ in speaking in behalf of poor Duke. He is all ri⟨ght.⟩ He sent word he was going to Llanelweth,⁸ to see ⟨uncle⟩ Howell.

Jenny joins her sister Charlo⟨tte⟩ and me in duty to you and kind love to Charles (who I intend writing to by the next post) and Samuel.⁹ I am, my dear Mamma,
Your dutiful affectionate daughter,

S. W.

I hope you got safe to Bristol. I beg my love and ⟨duties⟩ to Mrs. Staffords¹⁰ and all friends as due. ⟨...⟩ Prudence [Box].

Address: "To / The Revd. Chas. Wesley / at the new room / Bristol."

Postmark: "B'knock."

Endorsement: by CW, "Sept. 10. 1775 / Sally."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 14/1.

⁶Margaret James Jr. and Sarah James.

⁷I.e., Sarah Gwynne (1744–1809), the daughter of Marmaduke Gwynne Jr.

⁸I.e., Howell's estate, Llanelwedd Hall, near Builth.

⁹Other daughters of Marmaduke Jr.: Jane Gwynne (1746–1816); and Charlotte (whose birth record has not been located).

¹⁰The Stafford sisters in Bristol.

From William Smith¹

Newcastle [upon Tyne]
September 13, 1775

Honoured and Reverend Sir,

I was sorry to hear by Mr. [John] Murlin, when at Leeds, of your very poor state of health. Being desirous of have some further information herein has induced me to trouble you with these few lines. My mind is apt to forebode some severe visitation closely following the removal of God's eminent servants from the earth. When an ambassador is called home from a nation, it bespeaks no good to that people.

I was much affected with the account of your brother's late illness and am unfeignedly thankful for his recovery. I trust infinite mercy will spare your lives yet longer for some important purposes—that you may still be guides and patters to the flock of Christ, and be further useful in the church of God.

In this degenerate age oh how few characters are found eminent for piety and virtue! How very few zealous for the truth upon the face of the earth. Does it not, dear sir, evidently appear that God has a controversy with this land? Pray what do you think of the present state of this nation? What is likely to be the end of this quarrel between the Crown and the colonies? When I reflect on the luxury and effeminacy that abounds amongst a part of mankind; the murmuring, impatience, and discontent that prevails among another part; and that almost total neglect and contempt of sacred and divine things which so conspicuously appears among all the ranks and degrees of men among us—especially the universal opposition made by men of power and influence against that glorious effort made within these forty years to establish real religion in these lands; I am ready to think surely the Lord will visit [us] for these things. He must be avenged on such a nation as this.

Yet instead of that wrath we have justly deserved, I am glad to tell you we have here had several tokens of the Redeemer's love and approbation; some sweet refreshing seasons from the presence of the Lord. Mr. [Joseph] Benson's labours here since the Conference has been attended with very considerable success. Great numbers attend the word, and deep impressions are made on the mind of many. O for more labourers of his spirit. We should then see Zion in greater (pros)perity.

Do you ever see Mrs. Mary Wesley?² I wonder how she received the account of her husband's being at the point of death? I doubt there is little hope of a reconciliation. About three months ago she wrote me she had published those letters with which we have been so long threatened; but I suppose the publication was only intentional as I have never heard of their public appearance. Through mercy my little family and I enjoy better health this year than we did last, though my dear wife is at present in a feeble state. She joins me in kindest respects to you and your dear family, desiring to be affectionately remembered to them all.

Hoping soon to be favoured with a line from you, I remain, dear sir,
Your affectionate friend and servant,

Wm. Smith

Several of our old disciples frequently ask, "Shall we never see Mr. Charles in these parts again?" Our friends at the Fell often mention your name with the greatest affection and esteem.³ I think they are ripening fast for glory.

¹William Smith (1736–1824) was a stalwart among Newcastle Methodists, and a close friend of Joseph Benson in particular. In 1764 he married JW's step-daughter Jeanne Vazeille (1736–1820), after the death of John Matthews, her first husband. The couple had two daughters, Mary Smith (b. 1769) and Jane Vazeille Smith (b. 1770).

²Mary (Goldhawk / Vazeille) Wesley was Smith's mother-in-law.

³Gateshead Fell was a coal mining area about 2 miles from Newcastle, where CW had preached; see *MS Journal*, Dec. 28, 1746.

Address: “The Revd. Mr. C. Wesley / at the New Room / Horse Fair / Bristol.”

Postmarks: “16/SE” and “Newcastle.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Sept 13. 1775 / Smith.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDPr 1/74.

Rebecca Gwynne to Charles Wesley Jr.

[Marylebone¹]
Saturday, September 23 [1775]

I sincerely thank my dear Charles for a second favour² (which I own I was not entitled to, therefore think myself doubly obliged), and am glad to hear you spent your time so agreeably in Wales and at Hereford; though your passing through Gloucester at such a season must have been a little mortifying. However I hope some amends will be made you this winter, as the operas I am told will be very grand and both Mr. Leoni and Miss Caecelia Davies are engaged at Covent Garden,³ where I never wish to go but for a musical entertainment.

I am sure you will all be glad to hear that your friend Dr. [Samuel] Arnold is now in possession of a fine fortune, which fell to him at his father-in-law's death.⁴ They are still in the Gardens, where I have been once only the whole summer, and at no other public place of diversion whatever. Lady Ann [Hamilton] and we generally meet once a week, either here or in Newport Street. She has great affection and love for us all and joins me in wishes for your speedy return. My brother [Charles] Wesley and your mother [Sarah] will be sorry to hear I am at present a constant visitor at their house, as it is owing to poor Mrs. Laning,⁵ who was taken very ill again on Monday, and continued so till this morning, when it pleased God to give her a little ease. She then fell into a fine sleep and awoke a new creature. Mr. Spence, who attends her, says he hopes she will recover this and may linger on (as she has hitherto done) for years to come. She has one daughter, who is dutiful and careful both of her and the house, in keeping it clean, etc. Sister [Elizabeth] Waller also is very kind, and I hope it will please God to spare her at least till she has given up her charge. We began to fear the beds might have been neglected, owing to her late ill state, but on enquiring found she had not omitted one week without having each of them shook and turned. I told her I was going to write and she begged I would remember her best respects to all the family.

I wish I had a frank to convey this in. Lady Ann [Hamilton] gave me one directed to your sister which, as I have now mentioned it, I will make use of the next time I write. My brother [James Waller], sister [Elizabeth] Waller, Tom, and Becky join me in love and duty to your dear father, mother, yourself, and brother.⁶ I am, with great truth my dearest Charles,

Yours most affectionately,

R. G.

Remember me to Prudence [Box].

Address: "To / Mr. Wesley Junr. / Charles Street / Bristol."

Endorsement: by CW Jr., "Dear Aunt Gwynne / of blessed memory."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 7/26.

¹The Waller family had recently moved to High Street, St. Giles, in Marylebone.

²Neither of CW Jr.'s letters to Rebecca Gwynne at this time are known to survive.

³Myer Lyon (c. 1750–97), better known by his stage name Michael Leoni, was a tenor opera singer; Cecilia Davies (c. 1756–1836) was an English classical soprano.

⁴Archibald Napier M.D., of Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, died on Aug. 27, 1775. The majority of his assets went to his daughter.

⁵The woman currently employed to care for their house.

⁶Sarah Jr. had remained for a while in Wales. See her letter to her parents of Sept. 10.

From the Rev. Vincent Perronet

Shoreham
September 27, 1775

My Reverend and Very Dear Brother,

It is now a long time since I had the pleasure of seeing thee, or hearing from thee. The news of your dear brother's recovery from the grave (to which the public papers consigned him¹) prevented a letter of condolence from being sent you, which wanted only sealing up. Since that time we heard both of your own sickness and restoration;² upon which accounts we congratulate with you and my dear daughter³ and your whole family, as well as with the whole society.

The Lord has more work for you both! When that is finished, the crown is ready! Go on and prosper! All glory to God, there has been a very extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit amongst us, though altogether in a silent manner. We have not only a very large number of hearers (especially on Sunday evenings, so that in the summer a great many stand in the garden) but, blessed by God, we have many growing and increasing in divine grace! May the Lord still increase the numbers and increase their grace!

This must give you a particular pleasure, if you recollect that this very day, just 29 years ago (1746), we were saluted with noise, dirt, and stones and rotten eggs after you had preached in the church (for the first time), and which salutation continued long after we were returned home.⁴ How are times happily altered! Glory to God!

As to myself, I am a standing monument of the divine goodness! Be you the judge: an ancient (unworthy) divine, near the 83rd year of his age, who never kept any assistant (for so the Lord decreed) is carried through his Sunday's labour, forenoon and afternoon; sometime a large communion, with other incidental duties such as christenings and burials; and afterwards speaking and praying in the room—but so assisted by divine goodness as seldom or ever to experience any fatigue or weariness. What miracles of mercy are these! May I ever retain a dear and grateful sense of them! And may I ever labour to walk worthy of them! I know you will joint heartily in the same petitions. May the Lord hear both of us!

I hope shortly to congratulate our dear brother [JW] *vivâ voce*.⁵ I wrote not to him, as being assured he was overwhelmed with letters. We shall be glad when providence brings you and yours this way. However, I know a time is coming when we shall all meet, and never part again. Our love and respects are with you all. The Lord be with us!

Thine affectionately,

V. P.

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

Endorsement: by CW, "V. Perronet / Sept. 27. 1775."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/472/16.

¹E.g., the *London Chronicle* reported on the first page of its June 29 to July 1, 1775 issue: "On Friday the 23rd of June died at Dublin the Rev. Mr. John Wesley."

²CW had a brief bout of illness in later July 1775.

³Perronet consistently referred to SGW as "his dear daughter."

⁴Perronet is adjusting for the change to the Gregorian calendar in 1752; see CW, *MS Journal*, Sept. 16, 1746.

⁵"by voice" i.e., in person.

Sarah (Gwynne) Wesley to Sarah Wesley Jr.

Charles Street, Bristol
October 2 [1775]

As Mr. Symon gives me an opportunity, I must send a few lines to my dearest Sally, though I doubt you won't receive the purport with pleasure, as it is by your papa's desire that you may return to Bristol next week. I would have given you to the beginning of the following, but there is two objections: The first is we can hardly expect so long a continuance of such fine weather. The next is that he proposes going for London the latter end of this month and you will require a little time to get your things in travelling order and to see some of your Bristol friends. Indeed, your father has been very indifferent this week past, with a pain in his back which makes him unwilling to postpone his journey later, lest the could weather should make him worse. Though I hope he will soon get well, as he is better today by following a prescription which I trust will remove it entirely.

I was glad to find you had the pleasure of accompanying my aunt [Joan] Gwynne to the Hay,¹ and meeting my sister [Joan] Price, etc. there. I would readily have given leave for you to have gone to Hereford, but that the difficulty would have been *more* to have had you brought to Bristol, as the Passage is not so formidable to you on your road as it was to your father. I hope you will come over it in a fine day. Therefore we wish you to take the first in next week that *(is avail)able*² for travelling.

We are very much obliged to my brother [Marmaduke] and Mrs. Gwynne for their great kindness to you.³ I heartily wish dear Mrs. [Margaret] James better. I desire you'll give my duty to my aunt Gwynne and love to my brother, kind respects to Mrs. Gwynne, and love to my nieces and nephew (when you see him).⁴ Pray remember us all most cordially to Mrs. James and family, and Mrs. Bold, etc.⁵ I am,

My dear Sally's ever affectionate mother,

Sa. Wesley

P. S. We shall leave the determination of any conquest you make in Wales to my brother's and Mrs. Gwynne's discretion. Give our kind love to cousin Mary Musgrove.

Address: "To / Miss Wesley / at Duke Gwynne's Esqr. / Brecon."

Source: holograph; Pitts Library (Emory), Charles Wesley Family Papers (MSS 159), 1/41.

¹I.e., Hay-on-Wey, Brecknockshire.

²A small portion is torn away by the wax seal, but the missing text is obvious.

³Sarah Jr. was visiting the home shared by her great-aunt Joan Gwynne (1703–86) and her uncle Marmaduke Gwynne (1722–82), who had remarried the previous year (after the death of his second wife) to Mary Simpson (c. 1740–1816)—whom Sarah Jr. and SGW refer to as "Mrs. Gwynne."

⁴The nieces and nephew and Marmaduke's three daughters and his son Marmaduke (1749–86).

⁵Hugh Bold married Elizabeth Simon of Trowbridge in 1764.

From John Russell

Mortimer Street [Westminster]
Friday, October 6,¹ 1775

Reverend Dear Sir,

My delay in answering your kind epistle shames me as much as your repeated favour obliges in showing you pardon my offence.² Mrs. Russell most heartily rejoices with me to find our Bristol friends will soon become our London neighbours as usual.³ We have been much out of town this summer. Have been studying landscape for backgrounds in Windsor forest for near a month. I was afterwards at Kingston House for some time,⁴ and from thence went to Guildford and made some copies from a picture I have printed of the Duchess of Kingston.⁵

At Guildford [I] am in hopes of opening a place for God[’s] service, though hindrances are arisen in the way which has taken up much time and attention, and has been one cause of preventing respectful behaviour to you. I have been grieved by some of our patriots false assertion concerning your reverend brother’s having espoused the American rebels’ cause.⁶ [I] am happy to find by his own confession it is entirely groundless, that he is still loyal to his king and a friend to his country, by opposing unreasonable men who, in my firm opinion, resist the just demands of the best government in the world.⁷ *The Ledger* is a sad prostitute who, with a modest face “Open to all parties, but influenced by none”⁸ is full of (re⁹)bellion and deadly poison. There is a snake in the grass. The editor, I believe, is an enemy to his God, his king, and county. When the fountain is corrupt, how can the streams be pure? But this by the by.

Mrs. [Hannah] Russell is turned with her father. The amiable woman does not think in this matter with me, but with me heartily uses this prayer: “Give peace in our time, O Lord.”¹⁰ Let the sword return into its scabbard. Let the mother and the daughter be reconciled once more and forever.

I wish you would send something to the paper. I believe they will insert what you shall send. A certain person, in fear of being injured, insists upon more moderation than for some time past. Nothing lately, I believe, has appeared so very inflammatory. It is a critical time. The Lord give you and others wisdom.

Pardon as usual blots and blunders. I am obliged to hasten. Yet, with great love and esteem am, reverend sir,

Your obliged and affectionate,

John Russell

¹Orig., “7”; a mistake as shown by the postmark.

²CW’s letter to Russell is not known to survive.

³Russell married Hannah Fadden (1745–1817) in 1770.

⁴An estate immediately south of Hyde Park in London.

⁵Elizabeth (Chudleigh) Pierrepont, Duchess of Kingston (1721–88).

⁶In fact, up until the colonists resorted to attacking British troops in the summer of 1775, JW was sympathetic to their concerns; cf. JW, *Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs* (1770), III.9, “I do not defend the measures which have been taken with regard to America. I doubt whether any man can defend them, either on the foot of law, equity, or prudence.”

⁷JW’s *Calm Address to Our American Colonies* had been published right at the end of Sept. 1775.

⁸This was the motto of *The Public Ledger*, established in London in 1760 by John Newbery.

⁹A small portion is torn away by the wax seal, but the missing text is obvious.

¹⁰BCP, Morning Prayer.

I can thankfully say my father and friends are become friendly with the cause at Guildford.¹¹ Pray sir that God may take them as his friends.

Address: “Revd Charles Wesley / Bristol.”

Postmark: “6/OC.”

Endorsement: by CW, “ Oct. 7. 1775 / Russel.”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 2/81.

¹¹John Russell [Sr.] (1711–1804) was a printer, book-seller, and accomplished artist, who lived in and served five times as the mayor of Guildford. He married Ann Parvish (1719–75) in 1740. His son is hoping they will be drawn into the evangelical movement.

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

Ramsbury Park
October 18, 1775

[[Dear Brother,]]

It takes time to set people's heads right. But we must despair of nothing. I have cast my bread upon the waters,² and should have been content though there had been no *present* fruit. Some hours this morning I devote to "Americanus."³ What is material I shall endeavour to answer. It is well if I can give as good an account of everything else as of my change of judgement.

I find a danger now of a new kind, a danger of losing my love for the Americans: I mean for their miserable leaders; for the poor sheep are "more sinned against than sinning,"⁴ especially since the amazing informations which I have received from James Ireland.

Yet it is certain the bulk of the people both in England and America mean no harm. They only follow their leaders, and do as they are bid without knowing why or wherefore.

On Friday I hope to be in London and to talk with the committee about building a new Foundry.⁵ This is a lovely spot and a lovely family.⁶ It is pity but you could call here. It is four miles from Marlborough, and only a mile north of the London road.

Peace be with you and yours!

[[Adieu!]]

Endorsement: by CW, "B[rother]. Oct. 10. 1775."

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/47.

¹JW appears to be replying to a letter of CW that is not known to survive.

²See Eccles. 11:1.

³This was the pen-name used by Rev. Caleb Evans for the first edition of *A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, occasioned by his 'Calm Address to the American Colonies'* (Bristol: William Pine, 1775).

⁴Shakespeare, *King Lear*, Act 3, Scene 2, ll. 62–63.

⁵This is the first mention in JW's letters of building what would be City Road Chapel.

⁶Ramsbury Park, a farm near Ramsbury, Wilthshire, was the home of James Nind (1741–1822) and his wife Sarah (Ward) Nind (1747–83), who wed in 1772. James was a paper-maker, a local preacher, and general steward for the local Methodist circuit; Sarah was a frequent correspondent with JW until her untimely death in 1783.

From the Rev. John Wesley

Newbury
October 19, 1775

[[Dear Brother,]]

Last night I received a curious anecdote from Mr. Marchant, the Independent minister here.¹ He told me, “Mr. Evans of Bristol (the elder) informed me that he dined with you (JW) at a merchant’s house in Bristol.² That he asked you how you was affected when you read the answer to your late tract and you answered, ‘Not at all; for you had never read it, and never would.’ To which he replied, ‘That was not fair.’”

Where lies the mistake? The answer to my late tract is dated October 2.³ But I left Bristol October 1.⁴ Consequently no such conversation could exist. I fancy I have caught hold of the thread, and can unravel the whole. Last year a gentleman I did not know (who I suppose was Mr. [Hugh] Evans) dined with me at Mr. Wraxall’s;⁵ and probably he might speak to me (though I do not remember it) of some tract which I had then published. If so, there is only an harmless mistake of Mr. Marchant’s, who misunderstood what Mr. Evans said.

But this makes it still more probable that his son [Caleb] is the author of the letter to me. It is [a] pity! Some of our friends at Bristol should tell him that he has quite lost himself; that he has forgotten all decency and good manners, and writes like a pert, self-conceited young man. I think a man of sense that could command his temper would make him a little ashamed.

[[Adieu!]]

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

Postmark: “Newbury.”

Endorsement: by CW, “B[rother] Oct. 19. 1775.”

Source: holograph; MARC, MAM JW 5/51a.

¹Rev. James Marchant (c. 1742–97) was minister of the Independent congregation in Newbury, 1771–84. See Walter Money, *A Popular History of Newbury* (London: Simpkin, et al, 1905), 158. JW spelled “Merchant.”

²Rev. Hugh Evans (1712–81), minister of a Particular Baptist congregation in Bristol, was the father of Rev. Caleb Evans (aka ‘Americanus’)

³This date is given at the beginning of “Americanus,” *A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, occasioned by his ‘Calm Address to the American Colonies’* (Bristol: William Pine, 1775).

⁴Technically, JW departed Bristol early in the morning, Oct. 2.

⁵Nathaniel Wraxall (1722–81) was a Bristol merchant, married to Anne Thornhill (1727–1800); among their children was Nathaniel William Wraxall, 1st Baronet (1751–1831).

From the Rev. John Wesley¹

London
October 28, 1775

[[Dear Brother,]]

I am just returned from Bedford. I have not seen the king these dozen years. I don't know what you mean by Dr. Smyth's book.² It *was* best to take no notice of the angry ones.

At Ramsbury Park, about a mile to the left of the high road, lives James Nind, local preacher, and general steward for the circuit, on a farm of five hundred pounds a year. His wife, Sally Nind, is one of the most amiable women I know. They mightily desire that you would spend a few nights with them.³

I am just putting into the press "a new edition of the *Address*, corrected"; in which *my change* is accounted for, and two of the questions fully answered.⁴ To the third, "Why did not the parliament tax them before?" Mr. [Martin] Madan answers, 'Because they were wiser; they knew the mischief that would ensue.' Dr. [Samuel] Johnson is in France.

I have not heard lately from Shoreham. If the worst comes, you must make shift at the Foundery for a week or two.⁵ I can put up another bed in that which was Jenny's room.

I do not think you are wise in destroying those papers. Some of them might have been useful to many.⁶

When I was in Bristol, I ordered that Hugh Saunderson should preach on Thursday night.⁷ None but you should take his place. Joseph Pilmore may preach on Friday or Monday.⁸ Some much like, others much dislike, Hugh Saunderson; but his audience generally is not small. However I will refer him to you, but I wish you would fix Thursday.

Mr. [John] Fletcher would not be safe without you or me. I should like a conference with Mr. [Martin] Madan. I have a second friendly letter from him today.

Peace be with you and yours!

[[Adieu!]]

¹JW is replying to a letter of CW that is not known to survive.

²CW had probably mentioned Rev. Dr. William Smith, *A Sermon on the Present Situation of American Affairs* (Philadelphia; reprinted in Bristol: William Pine, 1775). Perhaps because the initial draft of *Calm Address* ran only 19 printed pages (short of a quire), JW added an appendix pointing out how his preceding text confuted many claims in Smith's *Sermon*.

³Cf. JW to CW, Oct. 18, 1775.

⁴In Vol. 15 of JW, *Works*, this is designated the [3rd] edn. One significant change was insertion of a preface responding to accusations of plagiarism of Samuel Johnson's tract, and JW acknowledging that he had changed his mind concerning the legitimacy of the colonists' complaint about taxation. There were also some changes to §§7–8 that can be consulted there.

⁵CW was preparing to come to London, ahead his family, and had likely inquired whether he might stay with the Perronets in Shoreham until his house on Chesterfield Street was ready.

⁶It has not been possible to determine on what papers JW was commenting.

⁷See JW to CW, Aug. 4, 1775.

⁸Joseph Pilmore (1743–1825), an itinerant whom JW sent to North America in 1769, had been recalled by JW in 1774 and temporarily "settled" at Bristol.

Pray give my love to Thomas Lewis, and tell him I thank him for his letter. If the persons now taken up are hanged, it may be the saving of the nation.⁹

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

Postmark: “28/OC.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Oct. 28. 1775 / B[rother].”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/49.

⁹On Oct. 23, 1775 Stephen Sayre, an American resident in London who was a political ally of John Wilkes, was arrested and charged with high treason for conspiring to overthrow George III. This was actually a hoax, aimed to test the constitutionality of a recent proclamation of the king. See James Lander, “A Tale of Two Hoaxes in Britain and France in 1775,” *Historical Journal* 49 (2006): 995–1024.

Marmaduke Gwynne Jr. to Sarah Wesley Jr.

Brecon
November 3, 1775

My Dear Sally,

Many things have occurred to prevent the earlier acknowledgment of your very kind and obliging letter.¹ Thanks, though slow in motion, are not the less cordial, and I now trust to your acceptance of them in the true and sincere form that they are offered.

I will suppose you in the metropolis [i.e., London], and this to find you all safe, well, and happy in Chesterfield Street. Our wish is to that extent.

Mrs. Gwynne² and I are got to our evening's tete-a-tete. You are often the subject of our conversation, and we as often comment that the trio subsists no more. Our hours slipped pleasantly, and me thinks not anyone grew tired of the company or conversation of the other. Let us hope you have made no representation such as to deter brother [Charles] Wesley, sister [Sarah] Wesley, Charles, or my godson Sammy from making an experiment of us at a future time.

With our united respect to roots and branches, I am, my dear Sally,
Your most affectionate and faithful friend and servant,

MDuke Gwynne

Address: "Miss Wesley / at the Revnd Mr Charles Wesley's / Chesterfield Street / Marylebone / London."

Postmark: "6/NO"

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWF 22/9.

¹This letter, following up on Sarah's visit with Marmaduke's family, is not known to survive.

²Mary (Simpson) Gwynne, Marmaduke Jr.'s third wife.

From the Rev. John Wesley

London
November 3, 1775

[[Dear Brother,]]

The proposals and prefaces will be sent on Monday.¹

In the preface to the new edition of the *Address* (which I will send with the proposals) there is, I think, a sufficient answer to Mr. Evan's letter.² But Mr. Raikes is right: if it bears no name, it has no title to any answer.³

No man is a good judge in his own cause. I believe I am tolerably impartial. But you are not (at least *was* not some time since) with regard to King Charles the First. Come and see what I say. If the worst comes, we can agree to disagree.⁴

The *History* has been some time in the press. The first volume is nearly printed. The paper is good. So is the type. And, what is stranger, the execution too. So much for your first letter.⁵

Still I know not whom you mean by Dr. Smyth, unless it be the young clergyman in Ireland, who is a poet, but not of the first magnitude.⁶

"Why were they not taxed for an hundred and fifty years?" How shockingly ignorant of the law are our lawyers! Yea, and the whole body of the lords and commons into the bargain! To let Lord Chatham, Mr. Burke, etc., etc.,⁷ so long triumph in this *argumentum palmarium!*⁸ Why, it is a blunder from top to bottom. They *have been taxed* over and over since the Restoration, by King Charles, King William, Queen Anne, and George II. I can now point out chapter and verse.⁹

I think Mr. [Martin] Madan grows more and more loving. *Res ipsa jam reduxit in gratiam.*¹⁰ I shall be right glad to see him.

I hear nothing from Cornwall; and no news, you know, is good news.

Pray tell brother [John] Southcote I like his treatise well.¹¹ I am writing something nearly on the subject. I am desired to preach at Bethnal Green Church on Sunday sennight, and purpose to print my

¹JW was sending CW: 1) printed copies of a proposal for his four-volume *Concise History of England*; and 2) printed copies of "To the Reader" that JW was adding as a preface to the "New, Corrected, and Enlarged" edition of his *Calm Address to Our American Colonies*.

²JW was now sure that Caleb Evans was the author of *A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, occasioned by his "Calm Address"*.

³Robert Raikes (1725–1811) had inherited from his father the role of editor of the *Gloucester Journal*; he would be particularly remembered for championing Sunday schools.

⁴CW was proof-reading JW's text for the *Concise History of England*, and had protested one of JW's comments on Charles I; see CW to JW, Dec. 29, 1775.

⁵JW was apparently replying to two recent letters of CW, the first about Oct. 31; neither are known to survive.

⁶See JW to CW, Oct. 28, 1775.

⁷William Pitt (1708–88), 1st Earl of Chatham; and Edmund Burke (1729–97) were two leading critics of the policy of taxing the colonists in North America.

⁸"Prizewinning argument," or supposedly unanswerable argument

⁹JW inserted an enumeration of these instances as a new §9 when he reprinted the 3rd edn. of *A Calm Address to Our American Colonies* in late Nov. 1775.

¹⁰Cf. Terence, *The Brothers*, V.iv.46: "He has already been reconciled by events."

¹¹This was likely a manuscript; no published treatise by Southcote has been located.

sermon. You may guess a little of the tenor of it by the text: “Lo, I have sinned and done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done?”¹²

I hope Sally is better. Peace be with you all!

[[Adieu!]]

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

Postmark: “3/NO.”

Endorsement: by CW, “Nov. 3. 1775 / B[rother].”

Source: holograph; MARC, DDWes 3/50.

¹² Sam. 24:17. This sermon at St. Matthew’s church, Bethnal Green, preached on Nov. 12, was promptly issued as a tract (see JW, *Works*, 3:564–76).

From the Rev. John Fletcher

Madeley
December 4[–10] 1775

My Very Dear Brother,

I see the end of my controversial race. And I have such courage to run it out that I think it is my bounden duty to run, and strike my blow, and fire my gun, before the water of discouragement has quite wetted the gunpowder of my activity. This makes me seem to neglect my dearest correspondents. Old age comes faster upon me than upon you. I am already so grey-headed that I wrote to my brothers to know if I am not 56, instead of 46. The wheel of time seems to me to move so rapidly that I seem to be in a new element. And yet, praised be God, my strength is preserved far better than I could expect. I came home last night at 11:00 at night tolerably well, after reading prayers and preaching twice and giving the sacrament in my own church, and preaching and meeting a few people in society in the next market-town.

The Lord is wonderfully gracious to me; and what is more to me than many favours, he helps me to see his mercies in a clearer light. I have so far leaned to Calvinism as not to dare to be thankful in years past for mercies which now make me shout with joy. Calvinism had taught me to call them “common mercies,” and I made as little of them as the apostates do of the blood of Christ, when they call it a “common thing.” But now the Calvinian veil begins to rend, and I invite you and all the world to praise God for his patience, goodness, truth, and loving-kindness which have followed me all my days, and prevented me, not only in the night watches but in the past ages of eternity. O how I hate that delusion which has robbed me of so many comforts. I hope I shall have yet a blow at the very heart of it before I die.

I have answered Mr. Toplady’s *More Work* for your brother, where he has more show of argument than in any of his other works.¹³ I have sent my manuscript to Mr. [John] Atlay, London, and hoped it was in the press. I beg you will correct it very carefully, and send me your critical remarks. Nobody (below) helps me but you, and you know how little you do it. Deprive me not of that little. Your every hint is a blessing to me. After a week of resistance I have yielded to a desire of supporting your brother’s *Address*. I have, of course, vindicated it in three letters to Americanus, which will make a 6-penny pamphlet.¹⁴ I have sent my manuscript to Lord Dartmouth, who will send it to your brother if he thinks proper. We are debtors to the king, as well as to God. The government protects us with the civil sword, and we ought to protect it with the spiritual sword. If that piece is published, it must be published immediately. See to it. Correct it, and prefix the following Preface.

Preface

It will probably seem strange, that a clergyman should meddle with a controversy which has hitherto been considered as merely political. But the reader’s surprise in this respect will probably cease if he gives himself the trouble to read these letters. He will then see that the American controversy is closely connected with Christianity in general, and with Protestantism in particular; and that, of consequence, it is of a religious, as [...¹⁵]

P.S. The preface I mention, I send with a letter from your brother to Lord Dartmouth, who I suppose will send it to your brother with some remarks. I am told the mob burns him in effigy in some

¹³See Fletcher, *An Answer to Mr. Toplady’s ‘Vindication of the Decrees’* (London: Hawes, 1776).

¹⁴Fletcher, *A Vindication of the Rev. Mr. Wesley’s ‘Calm Address to our American Colonies,’* in *some Letters to Mr. Caleb Evans* (London: Hawes, 1776).

¹⁵The transcription of the preface ends here at the bottom of the page, and there are vertical lines drawn through the paragraph. Given the postscript that follows, Fletcher apparently realized that CW would already have access to a copy.

places. So, it is time to stand by the dreadful heretic [i.e., JW] once more. His *Address* can defend itself. But it may do good to unfold it for the inferior class of readers, and to stop the mouth of cavilers. Besides, it is as much as the Methodist cause is worth in America to have it fully supported. While your brother is in the fire, don't stand idle by; pray, and correct and strengthen my vindication. Soften what is harsh, and strengthen what is weak, and see it be well printed.

(I had this week a letter from one of the lay preachers, who finds great fault with me for having published in my book on perfection your hymn called "The Last Wish."¹⁶ He calls it dangerous mysticism. My private thoughts are that the truth lies between driving Methodism and still mysticism. What think you? Read the addresses which I have added to that piece and tell me your thoughts).

I am going to write a few thoughts upon Mr. Toplady's *Scheme of Necessity* as an appendix to my *Reply* to his *More Work*.¹⁷ And then I shall finish, if God spares me my last piece but one. I have written my essay on election and reprobation.¹⁸ God had given me light to do it. All the mischief in our controversy from Au[gu]stin[e] till now was sprung from the darkness in which that doctrine has been kept. Never did an Arminian go so near Calvinism; but it is, I hope, to give it one of the deepest wounds it ever received. God direct my heart into truth and my pen into the joints of Calvin's armour!

(Let us pray that God would renew our youth as that of the eagle. That we may bear fruit even in old age. The Lord strengthen you to the last. I hope I shall see you before my death. If not, let us rejoice at the thoughts of meeting in heaven.)

Dec.¹⁹ 10. I have received a letter from Lord Dart[mouth] saying he does not object to my printing if Mr. [John] Wesley approves of it. I have also just received another letter from your brother, saying that what is printed must be printed immediately. Correct it immediately and put it in the press as soon as you can (if your brother is not in London), and correct the press. Please in the second letter insert what I say of your brother's answer to Mr. Evans, in a note—not in the text. In the third letter I put a close sharp question to Mr. Evans as a dissenter, please soften it. We must not stir up the lions to wrath. You may do it by leaving out the words "you" and where I say "is a question which you and your warm admirers may answer better than I," or something like it.²⁰ Adieu.

(Give my kind love to Mrs. Wesley, to my goddaughter [Sarah Jr.], and to her brothers, who I hope remember all their Creator in the days of their youth. Adieu).

Address: "Rev. Mr. Ch. Wesley / Foundery / Moorfields / London."

Postmark: "13/DE."

Endorsement: by CW, "Dec. 4. 1775 / [[John]] Fletcher."

Source: holograph; MARC, MA 1977/495/90–91.

¹⁶CW, "The Last Wish," *HSP* (1749), 24.

¹⁷This ended up being a separate book: Fletcher, *A Reply to the Principal Arguments by Which the Calvinists and the Fatalists Support the Doctrine of Absolute Necessity Being Remarks on the Rev. Mr. Toplady's "Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity"* (London: Hawes, 1777).

¹⁸I.e., Fletcher, *The Doctrines of Grace and Justice equally essential to the Pure Gospel* (London: I. Moore, 1777).

¹⁹Orig., "Oct."; an error.

²⁰Neither this quotation nor mention of JW's *Answer* appear in Fletcher's tract as published.