MS Hymns for Wedding Anniversaries

Charles Wesley celebrated his own wedding to Sarah Gwynne, and the first anniversary of that wedding, in verse (see MS Richmond, 45, 123–24). He apparently also wrote anniversary hymns for some of his close friends. There is one manuscript, in particular, containing three hymns for a couple on the anniversary of their wedding. In the margin next to the first hymn, Wesley adds a note that it is for “Mr. and Mrs. B.” This likely designated Wesley’s close friend Ebenezer Blackwell and either his first or second wife (depending on the date, which is not given).

We have placed this set of verse in the “family” subsection of this collection both because the Blackwells were close family friends and because Sarah Wesley Jr. appears to have read the hymns as also reflecting on her parents anniversary as well (see her notation on hymn two).

MS Hymns for Wedding Anniversaries is part of the collection in the Methodist Archive and Research Centre, DDWes 1/45. The transcription below is provided with permission of the Librarian and Director, The John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester.

---

1This document was produced by the Duke Center for Studies in the Wesleyan Tradition under the editorial direction of Randy L. Maddox, with the diligent assistance of Aileen F. Maddox. Last updated: January 17, 2010.
Table of Contents

Hymn for Two Persons on the Anniversary of their Wedding 1
Another 2
III 3
Hymn for Two Persons  
on the Anniversary of Their Wedding

[1.] Great Author of the Mystick Grace,  
    Whose Providence hath join’d our Hands,  
Hath join’d our Hearts, to seek thy Face,  
    By sure, indissoluble Bands:  
Ordain’d in Life and Death to prove  
The Dignity of Nuptial Love;

2. To Thee, great GOD of Truth and Power,  
    Our Sacrifice of Thanks we pay,  
Thy Grace Unspeakable adore,  
    And bless the glad revolving Day  
Which mix’d our Souls in Bliss unknown  
And made of Twain forever One.

3. Our growing Happiness and Love  
    From Thee we joyfully receive,  
Our Comforts to thy Praise improve,  
    Our Body, Soul, and Spirit give  
Thee, Saviour, Thee to glorify,  
Thine, wholly Thine to live and die.

4. For This we first together came,  
    For This we still continue One,  
T’experience all thy glorious Name,  
    To make thy glorious Nature known,  
To magnify the Sacred Sign,  
And prove the Ordinance Divine.

5. For This we met, with lowly Fear,  
    T’ensure on Earth the Joys above,  
To work out our Salvation here,  
    With chast Delight and purest Love,  
T’injoy the Sense of Sins Forgiven,  
And travel Hand in Hand to Heaven.

6. O may we ever keep in view  
    And labour toward the Blisful End,  
In every Step the Prize pursue,  
    Till Both on Angels’ Wings ascend,  
Both in the Wedding Garment drest  
To share the Lamb’s Eternal Rest.

2Published posthumously in Unpublished Poetry, 3:379–80. Wesley identifies the two person in the margin as: “Mr. and Mrs. B.”
Another

[1.] Being of Beings, Lord of all,
On Thee with trembling Hearts we call,
Thy Favour seek, thy Grace implore,
Till Life’s uneasy Dream is or’e
And Both obtain the Lasting Rest,
And meet in GOD forever blest.

2. Thou know’st the State of shortliv’d Man,
His longest Life is but a Span,
A thousand years are as one Day,
So soon with Thee they pass away,
So soon we all from Earth are gone,
And stand arraign’d before thy Throne.

3. How needless then our anxious Fear
Of Momentary Evils here,
How fondly we our Pains employ
T’ insure a Momentary Joy,
As Life would last for Ages sure,
Or Time eternally endure.

4. So teach us, Lord, to count our Days,
That Both may live but to thy Praise,
In mutual League of purest Love
Our short uncertain Time improve,
To Heavenly Things our Hearts apply,
And wisely live, and calmly die.

5. With that celestial Prize in view,
And guided by thy Spirit’s Clue,
Still may we walk before thy Sight,
Unblameable, in spotless White,
And keep our Wedding Garments pure,
And Faithful unto Death endure.

6. Our Work perform’d, when She or I
Obtain the glorious Grace to die,
Let Neither, long condemn’d to stay,
Expect our Second Bridal-Day
But call us Both in Heaven to join,
To meet within the Arms Divine.

---


4Sally Wesley underlined this line, adding “Amen!” in the margin.
III
To — “’Tis Finish’d, ’Tis Done!”

[1.] Come, let us away
   To Jesus, his Throne,
   On this happy Day
   That made our Hearts One,
   With Prayer and Thanksgiving
   Acknowledge his Grace,
   Delightfully living
   To Jesus’s Praise.

2. His Counsel we see;
   Together we came
   That Both might agree
   In Praise of the Lamb,
   In close Imitation
   Of Him we adore
   And in His Salvation
   Rejoice evermore.

3. Then let us lift up
   Our Voices and Hearts,
   Rejoicing in Hope
   Till Mercy imparts
   That Seal of His Favour
   Who brings us to GOD,
   Renew’d in the Laver
   Of Jesus’s Blood.

4. O Jesus, appear
   Thy Blood to apply,
   And hallow us here,
   And fit for the Sky,
   To glorious Salvation
   Our Spirits receive
   In full Consummation
   Of Rapture to live.

Published posthumously in Unpublished Poetry, 1:274–75.