

WESLEY  
AND  
METHODIST  
STUDIES



THE  
PENNSYLVANIA  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
PRESS

VOL. 9, NO. 1  
2017

#### EDITORS

William Gibson, *Oxford Brookes University, UK*

Geordan Hammond, *Aberystwyth University, Manchester Wesley Research Centre, and Nazarene Theological College, UK*

#### ASSISTANT EDITORS

Rachel Cope, *Brigham Young University, USA*

Joseph W. Cunningham, *Saginaw Valley State University, USA*

Kenneth M. Loyer, *Otterbein United Methodist Church of Spry and United Theological Seminary, USA*

#### BOOK REVIEWS EDITOR

Martin Wellings, *World Methodist Historical Society, UK*

#### EDITORIAL BOARD

J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Trinity Theological Seminary, Ghana*

Paul W. Chilcote, *Ashland Theological Seminary, USA*

Robert D. Clements, *Wycliffe College, Canada*

Kenneth J. Collins, *Asbury Theological Seminary, USA*

Joanna Cruickshank, *Deakin University, Australia*

Dennis C. Dickerson, *Vanderbilt University, USA*

Peter S. Forsaith, *Oxford Brookes University, UK*

Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Duke Divinity School, USA*

Phyllis Mack, *Rutgers University, USA*

Randy L. Maddox, *Duke Divinity School, USA*

Mark H. Mann, *Point Loma Nazarene University, USA*

Herbert B. McGonigle, *Nazarene Theological College, UK*

Philip R. Meadows, *Nazarene Theological College, UK*

Thomas A. Noble, *Nazarene Theological Seminary, USA*

Peter B. Nockles, *University of Manchester, UK*

Glen O'Brien, *Booth College, Australia*

Isabel Rivers, *Queen Mary University of London, UK*

Jason E. Vickers, *Asbury Theological Seminary, USA*

Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, *Boston University School of Theology, USA*

Eryn M. White, *Aberystwyth University, UK*

# WESLEY AND METHODIST STUDIES

---

VOL. 9, NO. 1, 2017

## ARTICLES

*John Wesley and History* / 1

JEREMY BLACK

*Beauty in Creation: John Wesley's Natural Philosophy* / 18

DAVID RAINEY

*An Early Methodist Revival in the West Indies: Insights  
from a Neglected Letter of 1774* / 36

ROBERT GLEN

*A Local Study of the Dynamics of Wesleyan Methodist  
Revival in North Cumbria, 1840–1920* / 57

EMMA RACHEL BRAY

## BOOK REVIEWS

Ted A. Campbell (ed.), *Letters III (1756–1765)*  
(*The Works of John Wesley*, volume 27) / 80

REVIEWED BY HENRY D. RACK

Geordan Hammond and David Ceri Jones (eds),  
*George Whitefield: Life, Context, and Legacy* / 82

REVIEWED BY SIMON LEWIS

Martin K. Batstone, *The Fruitful Mother and the Forgotten  
Son: The Story of William Clowes and the Rise of Hull as the  
Centre of the Primitive Methodist Movement* / 84

REVIEWED BY TIM WOOLLEY



Mary Riso, *The Narrative of the Good Death: The Evangelical Deathbed in Victorian England* / 86

REVIEWED BY MARTIN WELLINGS

Keith D. Stanglin, Mark G. Bilby, and Mark H. Mann (eds), *Reconsidering Arminius: Beyond the Reformed and Wesleyan Divide* / 87

REVIEWED BY JUDITH ROSSALL

David B. McEwan, *The Life of God in the Soul: The Integration of Love, Holiness and Happiness in the Thought of John Wesley* / 89

REVIEWED BY JENNIFER SMITH

Thomas Jay Oord, *The Uncontrolling Love of God: An Open and Relational Account of Providence* / 90

REVIEWED BY RICHARD CLUTTERBUCK

Robert Webster (ed.), *Perfecting Perfection: Essays in Honor of Henry D. Rack* / 93

REVIEWED BY JONATHAN DEAN

#### SHORT NOTICES

William Gibson and Thomas W. Smith (eds), *George Whitefield Tercentenary Essays* / 96

REVIEWED BY ANDREW ATHERSTONE

David Dickinson, *Yet Alive? Methodists in British Fiction since 1890* / 97

REVIEWED BY MARTIN WELLINGS

**THE MANCHESTER WESLEY RESEARCH CENTRE  
AND THE OXFORD CENTRE FOR METHODISM  
AND CHURCH HISTORY / 98**

*Wesley and Methodist Studies* (WMS) publishes peer-reviewed scholarly essays that examine the life and work of John and Charles Wesley, their contemporaries (proponents or opponents) in the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival, their historical and theological antecedents, their successors in the Wesleyan tradition, and studies of the Wesleyan and Evangelical traditions today. Its primary historical scope is the eighteenth century to the present; however, WMS will publish essays that explore the historical and theological antecedents of the Wesleys (including work on Samuel and Susanna Wesley), Methodism, and the Evangelical Revival. WMS is a collaborative project of the Manchester Wesley Research Centre and The Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Oxford Brookes University, and is published biannually by Penn State University Press. WMS Website: [www.mwrc.ac.uk/wesley-and-methodist-studies](http://www.mwrc.ac.uk/wesley-and-methodist-studies).

#### SUBMISSION INFORMATION

All submissions should be sent to the editors using the journal's online submission and peer review system: <http://www.editorialmanager.com/wms/>. Detailed guidelines for submission are available for download from the menu in Editorial Manager.

#### SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

*Wesley and Methodist Studies* is published biannually by the Pennsylvania State University Press, 820 N. University Dr., USB 1-C, University Park, PA 16802. Subscriptions, claims, and changes of address should be directed to our subscription agent, the Johns Hopkins University Press, P.O. Box 19966, Baltimore, MD 21211, phone 1-800-548-1784 (outside USA and Canada: 410-516-6987), [jrnlcirc@press.jhu.edu](mailto:jrnlcirc@press.jhu.edu). Subscribers are requested to notify the Press and their local postmaster immediately of change of address. All correspondence of a business nature, including permissions and advertising, should be addressed to Penn State University Press, [journals@psu.edu](mailto:journals@psu.edu).

The Pennsylvania State University Press is a member of the Association of American University Presses. This journal is indexed in the ATLA Religion Database® (ATLA RDB®), a product of the American Theological Library Association, 300 S. Wacker Dr., Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60606, USA. Email: [atla@atla.com](mailto:atla@atla.com), www: <http://www.atla.com>.

#### RIGHTS AND PERMISSION

The journal is registered under its ISSN (2291-1723 [E-ISSN 2291-1731]) with the Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Dr., Danvers, MA 01923 ([www.copyright.com](http://www.copyright.com)). For information about reprints or multiple copying for classroom use, contact the CCC's Academic Permissions Service, or write to the Pennsylvania State University Press, 820 N. University Dr., USB 1-C, University Park, PA 16802.

Cover: Manuscript page of Charles Wesley's sermon 'Remembering the Sabbath' reproduced courtesy of the Librarian and Director, The John Rylands University Library, The University of Manchester.

Copyright © 2017 by the Manchester Wesley Research Centre and the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History. All rights reserved. No copies may be made without the written permission of the publisher.

# JOHN WESLEY AND HISTORY

JEREMY BLACK



## ABSTRACT

This article considers John Wesley as a historian through his *Concise History of England*. Wesley's *History*, which has been neglected by scholars, offers a religious account of history. It adopts a biographical approach while making moral assessments. Wesley focused on monarchy and their personalities while bringing vice and virtue to the forefront. His *History* has resonances with Bolingbroke's Toryism. Wesley explores the 'genius of the nation' as a factor in conflict and colonial expansion. His interest in overseas military conflicts can be seen as one of the ways in which Tory interest and ideas were maintained.

Keywords: Wesley, History, Reformation, Charles I, Toryism

John Wesley's *History of England* is best discussed not in terms of the writings of famous historians who were his contemporaries, notably Edward Gibbon, David Hume, and William Robertson; it is more fruitful to see it as an important instance of the more frequent and populist type of historical publication during the century. The scholarly coverage of Wesley's lengthy historical work is limited. Aside from a very short piece in 1900 on Wesley's strong and lengthy defence of the reputation of Mary Queen of Scots, a piece critical of his work as an historian,<sup>1</sup> the *History* has been essentially ignored. Thomas Herbert did little for it by writing in 1940 that 'as a history his book is of course utterly

This article is the text of the annual Wesley Lecture delivered at Lincoln College, Oxford on 25 May 2016. I am most grateful to Bill Gibson both for his friendly encouragement and for commenting on earlier drafts.

1. R. Butterworth, 'Wesley on Mary Queen of Scots', *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, 2/5 (1899–1900), 111–14.

# BEAUTY IN CREATION

*John Wesley's Natural Philosophy*

DAVID RAINEY



## ABSTRACT

John Wesley's compendium on natural philosophy is comparable to a second book of revelation about God; the first book is scripture. In light of this, scripture can only function as a hermeneutic for creation; it is not a textbook for the discovery of creation. Wesley used the language of Thomas Aquinas to explain that there is a revealed cause and effect, which leads to a First Cause. With this understanding, creation reveals a beauty that is derivative from God and this type of beauty is an interconnected relationship within all of creation. Because of humanity's limitation of knowledge, empiricism cannot assume a primary source of knowledge for natural philosophy since it can become a misleading source. Natural philosophy, as a result, remains its own objective source of knowledge.

Keywords: creation, beauty, book of creation, First Cause, empiricism

John Wesley believed that the Christian faith was 'plain and intelligible'.<sup>1</sup> This conviction he affirmed as he drew to a close his five volumes on natural philosophy. The Trinity was a scriptural objective truth; Christ provided salvation for all humanity and the Holy Spirit was the source of sanctification. For Wesley

A version of this article was presented as the eleventh annual Manchester Wesley Research Centre Lecture, Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, UK, June 2015.

1. John Wesley, *A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation: Or, A Compendium of Natural Philosophy: In Five Volumes*, 4th edn (London: J. Paramore, 1784), V:209 (hereafter NP).



## AN EARLY METHODIST REVIVAL IN THE WEST INDIES

*Insights from a Neglected Letter of 1774*

ROBERT GLEN



### ABSTRACT

In 1773, Francis and Mary Gilbert travelled from England to Antigua to visit Francis's brother, the planter Nathaniel Gilbert III. After the couple arrived, they helped to promote one of the earliest Methodist revivals in the Caribbean. By the time the Gilberts returned to England in 1775, the island's Methodist membership had increased by more than threefold. Because it was so poorly documented, however, the revival has received little attention. This article presents a full transcription of a manuscript letter on the revival written by Mary Gilbert in August 1774 and discusses the significance of the information it contains.

Keywords: Antigua, Mary Gilbert, Francis Gilbert, revivals, missions

The religious awakening that swept over Antigua from late 1772 to early 1775 was one of the earliest Wesleyan Methodist revivals in the West Indies, and as such, it deserves to be regarded as an event of considerable significance in the history of transatlantic Methodism. Because it was so poorly documented by contemporaries, however, it has been little studied or even noticed. By considering a letter that an English woman, Mary W. L. Gilbert, wrote in the midst of the revival, that neglect can now be remedied. Gilbert's letter furnishes valuable new information on this religious outpouring and, at the same time, provides additional insights into her notable career, as well as that of her husband, Francis.

# A LOCAL STUDY OF THE DYNAMICS OF WESLEYAN METHODIST REVIVAL IN NORTH CUMBRIA, 1840–1920

EMMA RACHEL BRAY



## ABSTRACT

This article examines the internal dynamics of revival in Wesleyan Methodism in north Cumbria in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It seeks to identify whether those who were converted in specific revivals were drawn from within the existing Methodist community or from outside. In one example, Sunday scholars' rolls were used in conjunction with an exercise in household penetration to show that momentum for the revival took hold among those already participating on the fringes of a Wesleyan society. It will be argued that revival remained popular in these Cumbrian Methodist societies into the twentieth century.

Keywords: Wesleyan Methodism, revival, Cumbria, Matterdale, Patterdale

Revival may operate in two ways: its effect may be felt beyond the fringes of existing congregations, bringing outsiders in, or it may capture those already participating on the periphery of a religious group, motivating them to take a fuller spiritual role in a congregation with which they have already been loosely involved. Reconstructing the operation of historical revivals, however, is problematic because the dynamics of revival are often opaque; even the occurrence of a revival may not have been referred to specifically in contemporary documents. The challenge for historians is to lay bare the internal dynamics of revival by finding methods to identify the converts and discover whether they came from outside or inside the wider congregation. It has been argued that to comprehend the true nature of revival, focus must be shifted from

THE MANCHESTER WESLEY RESEARCH CENTRE  
AND THE OXFORD CENTRE FOR METHODISM  
AND CHURCH HISTORY

---

*The Manchester Wesley Research Centre (MWRC)*

The MWRC supports the research of scholars in Wesley and Methodist Studies, particularly from MWRC partner institutions. Each year visiting research fellows are welcomed for short periods of intensive research in Manchester. The MWRC helps facilitate access to the world-renowned Methodist Archives and Research Centre at The John Rylands Library in Manchester. It also has its own specialist library with research space for visiting research fellows and PhD students studying at MWRC partner institutions. The Centre hosts student-led research colloquiums, an annual lecture by a leading scholar in Wesleyan Studies, and occasional international conferences. For more information about the Centre and upcoming events, go to: [www.mwrc.ac.uk](http://www.mwrc.ac.uk) or contact the Centre's Co-director, Dr Geordan Hammond: [ghammond@nazarene.ac.uk](mailto:ghammond@nazarene.ac.uk)

*The Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History*

The Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History is a research centre of Oxford Brookes University which embodies the relationship between the University and the trustees of the former Westminster College, Oxford. The Centre is home to important resources, including the Wesley Historical Society Library and a number of archive and art collections, including the Methodist Collection of Modern Art. The Centre offers a small number of visiting research fellowships each year to enable scholars to come to Oxford to use its resources. The Centre also has a number of research students working in the broad field of religious history and culture. It also sponsors lectures, conferences, and other research activity. For more information go to: <http://history.brookes.ac.uk/Research/Centre-for-Methodism-and-Church-History/> and the Centre's blog: <https://ocmch.wordpress.com> or contact the Centre's Director, Professor William Gibson: [wgibson@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:wgibson@brookes.ac.uk)

*Methodist Studies Seminars*

The Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Oxford Brookes University, and the Manchester Wesley Research Centre have worked in partnership for several years. In 2012, the centres established a biannual seminar series that has now extended to include the Wesley Study Centre, St John's College, Durham University; Wesley House, Cambridge; Cliff College; and The Queen's Foundation, Birmingham. The seminars provide an opportunity for established and emerging scholars of Methodist Studies to present the findings of their research. We conceive of Methodist Studies broadly and aim to provide opportunities for students of history, theology, literature, art, material culture, and other fields related to Methodism. For further information, visit: [www.mwrc.ac.uk/methodist-studies-seminars/](http://www.mwrc.ac.uk/methodist-studies-seminars/)