



The University of Manchester

GUIDE TO METHODIST RESOURCES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER



Statue of John Wesley, Historic Reading Room, The John Rylands Library: image ref. JRL022584tr.

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Introduction

The collection of Methodist printed and archival material deposited at the John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester, is generally acknowledged to be one of the finest research resources in the world for the study of evangelical religion in its broad social, political and economic context. The importance of the collection rests on the following foundations:

1. As the official archive of the Methodist Church of Great Britain,¹ the collection charts the development of the denomination in all its aspects from its beginnings as an eighteenth-century revival movement until the present day.
2. The collection contains approximately 70,000 printed items and several million manuscripts. While it is not the largest Methodist archive in the world,² it is certainly the richest in its coverage of the first half century of Methodism's existence.
3. The scope of the collection is global in nature. From the 1760s, the Wesleyan movement spread outside the British Isles, first to North America and the Caribbean and then to other areas of the world. The Methodist holdings of the Rylands document this dramatic growth, both through institutional and personal papers and also through published histories, biographies, digital records and microfiche copies of the records of overseas missions.
4. The focus of the collection is greater than the purely religious. Methodists have been involved in every area of British public life and the archive reflects this diversity, containing material across a wide spectrum of subjects from secular education and the armed forces, to anti-slavery, industrial relations and political agitation.
5. The material crosses denominational boundaries reflecting Methodism's origins within the Church of England together with its strong links with other evangelical groups and nonconformist Churches. Methodists have played a major role in promoting inter-church and latterly inter-faith co-operation and these activities are well documented within the collection.

Scholars using the Methodist archives and printed collections have an unrivalled opportunity to study the detailed evolution of the oldest evangelical denomination in the English-speaking world and can do so in one of Britain's

¹ In addition to the collection owned by the Church and deposited with the Rylands Library on permanent loan, the Library owns a number of Methodist collections and individual items that are managed as part of the general holdings of archives and printed books.

² This position belongs to the Archives of the United Methodist Church (USA) located at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey.

most beautiful libraries. Researchers use the material for many reasons, from family history to learning about the history of a house, but it is also important to point out that the collection can support formal academic study from undergraduate degree to postdoctoral research. There are few universities in the world that can match the tradition and reputation of the University of Manchester as a centre of academic excellence for the study of religion in its widest aspects.

A number of people assisted in the compilation of this guide. In particular, Peter Nockles contributed text for the section on Methodist printed books, with assistance from Ed Potten and Thomas Gordon. Valuable feedback and suggestions were also provided by Clive Field, John Hodgson and Dorothy Clayton.

Dr Gareth Lloyd
Methodist Archivist
2014

a. Historical Background



19th century watercolour of the Foundry Chapel, London: image ref. JRL030354tr.

Methodism was one of the products of the Evangelical Revival, an explosion in popular religion that first became apparent in the middle of the 1730s and the effects of which are still being felt today. The brothers John and Charles Wesley, the founders of what became the Methodist Church, were ordained Anglican ministers who experienced conversion in the spring of 1738 based upon the simple but transforming revelation that they would be saved by faith alone. Within a year, they were preaching in

the open-air to crowds numbering in tens of thousands and by the end of 1739 the brothers had established the first Methodist preaching houses in Bristol and London.

The Wesleys claimed that their movement was a force for spiritual renewal within the Church of England and certainly, despite the hostility of some bishops and parish clergy, many eighteenth-century Methodists were practising Anglicans and this so-called Church-Methodist tradition survived into the nineteenth century. However, from its beginnings, Methodism was very different from its parent Church; the Wesleys welcomed converts from other Christian traditions, introduced worship practices that had no Anglican precedent and made use of a network of lay preachers and meeting houses that were independent of the parish system. Within a few years of John Wesley's death in 1791, it was apparent that British Methodism was a de facto independent denomination. The separation of American Methodists from the Anglicans had already occurred several years before Wesley died.

By 1800 there were 110,000 Wesleyan Methodists in Britain and Ireland and 75,000 more in the United States, British North America and the West Indies. This rate of expansion is even more striking when one considers that these figures do not include the many people who attended worship without seeking formal membership. As impressive as the movement's expansion had been during the lives of its founders, it was the nineteenth century that was the new Church's golden age. By 1850 there were 323,000 Wesleyans in Britain and when other Methodist denominations are included, membership of the denominational family stood at well over half a million. The movement that John and Charles Wesley had founded just over one hundred years previously could legitimately claim to be the most important Protestant denomination in Britain after the Church of England. In the United States, the Methodists by the middle of the nineteenth century had the highest membership and arguably the greatest influence of any Church.

Methodism was born at a time of economic and social upheaval. Over the course of the eighteenth century, the population of Britain increased at an

unprecedented rate and this demographic surge combined with rapid industrialization to place strain on socio-economic and political systems. Methodism, with its flexible structure and emphasis on ministry to the poor was well placed to respond to the religious requirements of the new age. It is no coincidence that the movement was at its strongest in emerging industrial communities, especially in the North and Midlands.

Methodism spread overseas with almost equal rapidity. The movement was carried by migrants to North America and the West Indies and then from the early nineteenth century to other regions, particularly those that came under the influence of the British Empire. Missionary efforts directed from Britain were joined by those of the American Churches, with the result that today there are an estimated 75 million Methodists in more than 130 countries. In many cases, denominations in non-English speaking areas of the world are now enjoying greater popularity than in those countries from which the missionaries first sailed.

The energy and expansionist impulse of the Methodist movement could not easily be contained, even within its own structure. In 1797 the Methodist New Connexion split from the parent Wesleyan body and this was the first of many such divisions in the sixty years that followed. Separations occurred over a number of issues such as friction within the leadership, the wish by the laity to have a say in the making of policy, and the clash between charismatic worship and more restrained observance. By 1870 there were five Methodist denominations in Britain that enjoyed national status in terms of membership,³ together with many smaller groups that also regarded John Wesley as their spiritual father.⁴ Divisions also took place in the United States; the most important of these occurred over the related issues of race and slavery.

The high-water mark of Methodism in Britain came in the early 1850s after which all the major Methodist Churches started to decline, at first in terms of the percentage of the population who were members, and then in membership numbers, particularly after World War I. The reasons for this reversal in fortunes are complex, although it can be seen as part of a general decline experienced by all major Christian denominations in Britain and other areas of the English-speaking world.

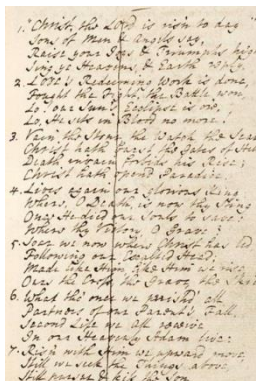
The last quarter of the nineteenth century also saw the start of the movement for Methodist union and this bore fruit in 1907 with the coming together of the three smallest national denominations to form the United Methodist Church, which in 1932 combined with the Primitive and Wesleyan Methodist Churches

³ Wesleyan Methodist Church, Methodist New Connexion, Primitive Methodist Church, the Bible Christians and the United Methodist Free Churches.

⁴ For example, the Independent Methodist Connexion. This group of break-away congregations from the original Methodist body retained their independence and in 2006 had 1,900 church members in 87 congregations, mainly in the North of England.

to form the Methodist Church of Great Britain. Today, there are nearly 300,000 members of the Methodist Church in Britain and an additional 500,000 people have an active connection with the Church.

b. Provenance⁵



Manuscript in the hand of Charles Wesley (1707-88) of the hymn "Christ the Lord is risen today": image ref. JRL1005599dc.

The institutional archives of Methodism first took shape as a discrete body of records at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This early collection consisted of the personal papers of John Wesley and other members of his family, together with the records of Conference (the policy-making body of the Church), its constituent committees and the Wesleyan publishing concern known as the Book Room. Over the course of time the collection was augmented by the personal papers of many Wesleyan

itinerant preachers, consisting mainly of sermons, diaries and letters. The archives were kept at City Road in London either at John Wesley's House and Chapel, or a short distance away at the Book Room and Conference Office.⁶

As the Methodist Church expanded, so did the number and sophistication of its administrative structures and this is reflected in the huge expansion in the archive during the Victorian period. Within the denominational family, it was the Wesleyan Methodists who paid the greatest attention to record keeping and the archives of that Church represent the bulk of material created during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. When the several national Methodist Churches united in 1932, the archives of the constituent denominations were merged, although the integrity of each sub-collection was preserved. In 1961 the Church placed the Archive on a more formal footing with the establishment of The Methodist Archives and Research Centre (MARC).

In 1977 it was decided by the Methodist Conference that the MARC could no longer be located at City Road in London. This decision was prompted by the need to make financial savings and the realisation that the physical conditions in which the collection was housed were inappropriate for an archive of its size and international significance. After lengthy negotiations, the Conference transferred the collection on indefinite loan to the John Rylands Library, the University of Manchester, and this remains the home of the MARC.

⁵ Readers should be aware that this section applies only to the provenance of records and printed material deposited by the Methodist Church in 1977. There are other Methodist collections in the library that are not owned by the Church and have a different provenance, although some of these are administered as part of the MARC.

⁶ Personal papers such as the correspondence of John Wesley appear to have been kept at Wesley's House and Chapel, while more institutional papers were retained at the Conference Office and Book Room.

The size of the collection transferred from London was estimated at over 26,000 printed items and approximately 600 feet of manuscript shelving. Since 1977 the Archive has expanded considerably, with approximately 10,000 deposits of new material. Many of these acquisitions are deposited by the Methodist Church in an ongoing process whereby modern administrative records are selected for permanent preservation once they are no longer required by their creating department. Deposits made by other individuals or institutions supplement this material; these new acquisitions are either donated to the MARC or are placed there on indefinite loan.

c. Scope and Access



Elsevier Reading Room, The John Rylands Library: image ref. JRL0710119dc.

Closure periods

The Methodist Church, as the owner of the collections within the MARC, imposes a closure period on archives and manuscripts, and some printed material, created within the last 30 years; for certain categories of confidential document, such as disciplinary records, this closure period may be extended to 100 years at the discretion of Library staff. Researchers may apply to the Secretary of the Methodist Conference for permission to access closed collections, but such permission can only be given in writing and in advance of material being issued.

The provisions of the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act are applicable to the collection.

Categories of Methodist record held in other institutions

The Methodist holdings at the John Rylands Library comprise the records of the British Church as a national institution, together with some material owned by the university and typically acquired before the transfer of the MARC in 1977.

The collections do not include records created by individual chapels and circuits, such as registers of baptisms, marriages and burials. These records are most often to be found in local authority record offices or remain in the custody of the chapel or circuit. Preaching plans are an exception to this rule and can often be consulted at the John Rylands Library as well as local authority record offices – see the section below entitled [Circuits, chapels and preaching plans](#).

Researchers should also note that the records of Methodist overseas missions are deposited at the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), The University of London. However, the John Rylands Library does have microfiche copies of much of the material dating prior to 1932 and these can be consulted by prior arrangement with the Archivist.

2. Manuscripts and Archives



19th century watercolour based on a pen and ink sketch by Sally Wesley (1759-1828) of worshippers outside St James's Church near Bristol, circa 1775: image ref. JRL0701043dc.

Finding Aids

Many Methodist archives and manuscripts deposited at the Library are catalogued on the following two internet-accessible databases:

(i). *Electronic Gateway to Archives at the Rylands (ELGAR)*.

This contains detailed catalogues of many of our archives, including some of the most significant eighteenth and early nineteenth-century collections of Methodist personal papers, including those created by the Wesley family, John and Mary Fletcher and Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, founders of the Primitive Methodist Church.

ELGAR can be accessed online at:

<http://archives.li.man.ac.uk/ead/>

(ii). *Methodist Archives Collections Catalogue*

This PDF file comprises a descriptive list of over eleven hundred individual manuscript and archival collections deposited in the Methodist Archives and Research Centre (MARC) from 1977 until 2010. It covers the majority of the archival and manuscript holdings in the MARC and many of the collections are listed to item level.

The catalogue is searchable by name and place and can be accessed online at:

http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/searchresources/guidetospecialcollections/methodist/methodistarchivescollectioncatalogue/_files/Public-Report-of-All-Accessions.pdf

The Collections

The manuscripts and archives of the MARC can be divided into the following major sub-collections and categories of record:

a. Wesley Family Archive and related papers

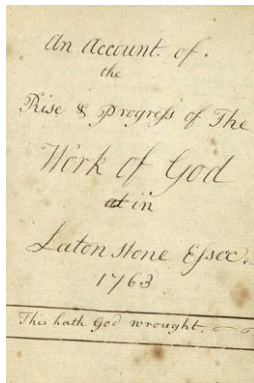
This collection contains approximately one third of John Wesley's extant correspondence, comprising just over 700 autograph letters, together with his diaries, sermons, annotated printed material and miscellaneous notebooks. John's brother Charles is represented by over 650 manuscript letters, the manuscript of his journal, all of his extant sermons and other miscellaneous papers. Of particular note is the fact that the collection contains several thousand of Charles Wesley's manuscript poems including such well-known hymns as 'Love Divine, All Love Excelling' and 'Hark the Herald Angels Sing.' Also within the collection are correspondence and associated papers written by John and Charles Wesley's parents, brother and sisters, and Charles Wesley's wife, children and grandchildren, including the musicians Charles Wesley junior (1757-1834), Samuel Wesley (1766-1837) and Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-82).

Additionally, the Wesley archive includes papers created by other leaders of the Evangelical Revival, including George Whitefield (1714-70), Benjamin Ingham (1712-72) and the Countess of Huntingdon (1707-91). Many of these papers were letters that were written to, or received from, the Wesley brothers. There are also early examples of institutional records such as the Stewards Book of the London Society compiled between 1766 and 1803. This valuable but little-used manuscript volume provides a unique and detailed insight into how Methodism was run at a local level and is one of the earliest financial records of what became the Methodist Church.

The papers contained within the Wesley collection are of tremendous significance for the study of early Methodism and the Church of England, but they are also a rich source of information for other aspects of the eighteenth century from the conventional to the unusual. As an example of a document within the Wesley papers, which has value beyond the purely religious, one can cite the manuscript account of the Epworth Rectory ghost, considered to be one of the best-documented poltergeist cases in British history.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); ELGAR (online); calendars of the Charles Wesley papers (2 volumes) and of the Wesley family (3 volumes); Colman collection box list.

b. Fletcher-Tooth collection



Manuscript "An account of the rise and progress of the work of God in Latonstone [Leytonstone], Essex, 1763" by Mary Bosanquet (1739-1815); image ref. JRL0700521cb.

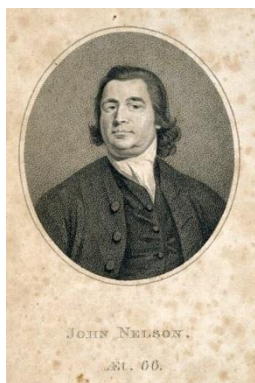
This is the largest single collection of personal papers in the Methodist archives and represents an exceptionally rich resource for the study of religion and society in one parish. The collection is the creation of the well-known ordained Anglican evangelical John Fletcher (1729-85), his wife the female preacher Mary Bosanquet-Fletcher (1739-1815), and Mary's long-time housekeeper and companion Mary Tooth (1773-1843).

The archive consists of 43 boxes of manuscript material comprising several thousand letters, journals, diaries and commonplace books together with spiritual autobiographies, sermons, scripture notes and associated papers. The collection spans almost one hundred years from 1760 to 1843 charting in detail the effects of the Evangelical Revival, particularly but not exclusively as it impacted on the parish of Madeley in Shropshire. The papers illustrate a wide range of themes from the interface between evangelical Anglicanism and Methodism to overseas missions and ecumenical relations. Furthermore, it places these religious developments into the social and economic context of a town that was an early centre of the industrial revolution.

The collection is of particular interest to students of gender studies. Mary Bosanquet-Fletcher was one of the earliest women preachers of Methodism and for over fifty years was regarded as a paradigm of spiritual leadership. Through her papers and those of her exceptionally wide circle of correspondents, one can see the transition of Methodism from Anglican revival movement to independent denomination and the effects this had on the women who formed the majority of the movement. The archive includes several hundred manuscript sermons preached by Bosanquet-Fletcher and these constitute the only collection of sermons preached by a female that have survived from the eighteenth-century Evangelical Revival.

Finding Aids: Calendars of the Fletcher-Tooth archive (10 volumes); unpublished box lists; ELGAR (online).

c. Miscellaneous personal papers



19th century portrait engraving of the itinerant preacher John Nelson (1707-74): image ref. JRL030353tr.

The Wesley and Fletcher-Tooth Archives are complemented by several thousand smaller collections of personal papers created by Methodists or people associated with Methodism. These range in size from tens of thousands of items to individual manuscripts and date from the early eighteenth century to the present.

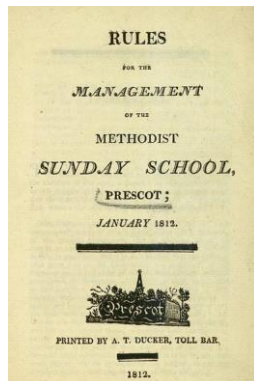
There are a large number of medium-sized personal collections relating to significant ministers, missionaries, laymen and educators, including the controversial nineteenth-century leader of Wesleyan Methodism Jabez Bunting (1779-1859), the pioneer of Methodist overseas outreach Thomas Coke (1747-1814), the lawyer and anti-slavery campaigner Thomas Allan (1774-1845), the China missionary and President of Conference Harold Burgoyne Rattenbury (1878-1961) and the minister and scholar Alfred Raymond George (1912-98). The papers include sermons, letters, diaries, illustrations and drafts of printed publications. The focus is not exclusively Methodist or religious - the Allan collection for example includes material relating to emancipation and the fight for religious and political toleration in the early nineteenth century, while the papers of the well-known artist Frank Salisbury (1874-1962) contain versions of many of his portraits, together with signed correspondence with clients such as US President Dwight D. Eisenhower (1890-1969) and British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill (1874-1965).

In addition to large and medium-sized collections, there are smaller deposits relating to nearly 4,000 individuals – lay people, preachers and ministers whose significance ranged from being founders of large break-away Churches like the Primitive Methodist Hugh Bourne (1772-1852) to ordinary members of chapel congregations.

The collections include diaries, letters, sermons, memoranda books and collections of verse. These document not simply the growth and decline of Methodism, but also illustrate the society and times in which the movement existed, from the reign of the first Hanoverian King to the dawn of the twenty-first century.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); ELGAR (online); Homer Calkin, *Catalog of Archival and Manuscript Collections* (Part 6) (World Methodist Historical Society 1986); card catalogue; detailed lists of the personal papers of the following Methodist worthies, many of whom are included in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography: Joseph Benson (1748-1821), Hugh Bourne (1772-1852), William Clowes (1780-1851), Adam Clarke (1760?-1832), Thomas Coke (1747-1814), Rupert Davies (1909-94), Alfred Raymond George (1912-98) and Harold Burgoyne Rattenbury (1878-1962).

d. Education



"Rules for the management of the Methodist Sunday School, Prescott; January 1812": image ref. JRL061083cb.

The Methodist movement had extensive involvement with the education of both children and adults from the middle of the eighteenth century. John Wesley established a school for the children of preachers at Kingswood in 1748 and two years later published the first volume of the *Christian Library*, an ambitious fifty-volume abridgement of classic devotional writings for the education of his preachers.

Archives and individual manuscripts concerned with education are scattered throughout the wider Methodist holdings, but the following significant discrete collections can be identified:

(i). *Division of Education and Youth*

Oversight of Methodist schools and colleges rests ultimately with the Methodist Conference. Responsibility for implementation of policy and daily oversight has been vested since the early nineteenth century in a number of Conference-appointed committees, which expanded and evolved over a period of time into the Division of Education and Youth.

The records of the Division form a part of the general collection of Methodist divisional records and include papers relating to oversight of colleges and schools, ministerial candidates' examination results, correspondence files, university chaplaincies, financial records relating to funding of education and papers documenting many areas of outreach to young people, such as Methodist youth organizations and Sunday schools.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); detailed paper list of the Division of Education and Youth collection

(ii). *Colleges*

The first British Methodist ministerial training college opened at Hoxton in London in 1834. Colleges at Didsbury near Manchester and Richmond near London replaced this facility in 1842 and 1843 respectively. As the need for ministers grew, additional training colleges were established at Headingley near Leeds in 1868, Handsworth in the Midlands in 1881 and Wesley House Cambridge in 1926. All these Wesleyan institutions operated as branches of the Wesleyan Theological Institution, which exercised centralised overall control on behalf of Conference.

The major non-Wesleyan denominations had their own ministerial training institutions, although they tended to be single colleges because of their smaller size. The Primitive Methodists opened the Sunderland Institute in 1865, replaced by Hartley College near Manchester in 1881. The Methodist New Connexion trained its ministers at Ranmoor near Sheffield from 1864 until 1907 when it

merged with the United Methodist Free Church Victoria College (opened 1872) in Manchester. After Methodist union in 1932 Victoria College merged with Hartley and over the following decades as denominational membership fell, several colleges were closed down including Richmond, Headingley, Didsbury, Handsworth and Wesley College Bristol. Future ministerial training for the Methodist Church of Great Britain will be centred on distance learning.

Records of ministerial training comprise the archives of the following institutions: Didsbury, 1848, 1910-1914; Handsworth, 1879-1970; Hartley Victoria (including records of its predecessor institutions Hartley and Victoria Colleges), 1876-1973; Richmond, 1838-1971 and Sunderland, 1865-81. The MARC also has the archives of the Wesleyan Theological Institute dating between 1834 and 1961. Additionally, there is a large collection of archive material from the Methodist teacher training institution of Southlands College spanning the dates 1929 to 1992.

These college records contain an exceptionally wide spectrum of material, including student admission records, committee minutes, financial papers, class photographs, disciplinary records, examination results, student magazines and papers relating to alumni. The most complete collections are those relating to Richmond, Hartley Victoria and Handsworth.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); detailed paper lists of the records of Hartley Victoria, Richmond and Handsworth, together with the papers of the Wesleyan Theological Institute contained within the Richmond College collection.

(iii). Day and Boarding Schools

There are very few institutional records on deposit relating to Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove, the two principal nineteenth-century public schools established for the sons of Wesleyan ministers and laity. However, the schools' strong affiliation with the Church means that they are frequently referred to in personal papers and Conference records. There are also printed lists of staff and pupils available in the MARC printed collection and these contain names of parents, dates of pupils' residence and some details of later careers.

Substantial archive collections exist for the Wesleyan Girls schools of Hunmanby Hall in Filey and Trinity Hall in Southport covering the years 1928 to 1992 and 1867 to 1990 respectively. The records include personal files relating to individual pupils and members of staff, committee minutes, photographs, official reports, financial papers and school magazines. The Trinity Hall School collection also contains records from Wintersdorf School, which merged with Trinity Hall in 1926.

There is a large discrete body of papers relating to Wesleyan and post-1932 Methodist administration of schools. The papers include printed annual reports of the Wesleyan Education Committee and archives relating to the management of the following schools: Ashville College, Culford, East Anglian Girls, Edgehill,

Farrington's, Hunmanby Hall, Kent College Pembury, Penzance, Queens College Taunton, Shebbear, Trinity Hall and West Cornwall. The collection contains material dating from 1838 to 1991.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); detailed paper lists of the records of Trinity Hall and Hunmanby Hall Schools; box list of the Methodist Schools collection.

(iv). Sunday Schools

There are no archival collections at the MARC relating to individual Sunday schools as these tend to be found in local authority record offices. However, there are references to Sunday schools scattered throughout the personal collections, the records of Conference and the Division of Education and Youth archive. There are also many published histories and rules for the management of individual Sunday schools in the printed collections and these are listed in the Library's online catalogue.

e. Conference



Manuscript list of preachers attending the Wesleyan Conference of 1791: [image](#) ref. JRL0700902dc.

John Wesley established the Conference of preachers in 1744 to act as his advisory body. Conference became the policy-making assembly of the Church after Wesley's death in 1791 and while there have been many changes in its composition and detailed functions it still retains oversight for the strategic direction of British Methodism. All pre-1932 Methodist Churches in Britain adopted the Conference model.

The Conference archive is one of the largest in the MARC and its importance cannot be overstated. It is divided into a number of constituent conference collections based on the individual pre-Methodist union denominations, together with the original eighteenth-century Conference and its modern counterpart created by the 1932 merger.

The records of Conference cover a wide spectrum. They include the official published minutes kept from 1744 until the present. These document the decisions of Conference and contain details of ministers' circuit appointments, itinerant preachers' obituaries and key financial business. Of even greater interest is the manuscript journal which is the official legal record of proceedings from which the published minutes are extracted. The journal, which survives in a complete series for the Wesleyan Methodists from 1784, contains significantly more detail than the minutes and from the early nineteenth century includes comprehensive coverage of background discussions, disciplinary proceedings, committee reports and financial records. The journal constitutes such a complete record that by the

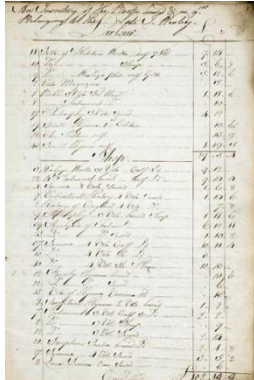
1870s each Wesleyan Conference year was contained within a substantial manuscript volume and in some years this extended to two volumes. The journals, as confidential records of Conference, were never intended for publication, and there remains to this day only one copy of the Conference journal. Associated with the journal and minutes are the Conference agendas containing all the main documents which formed the basis of Conference deliberations, letter books and the "Daily Record".

Conference created a number of committees, the records of which are often contained either within the Conference collection or the archives of the administrative divisions. The committees were charged with consideration of a large range of business that needed to be transacted between Conferences, including education, chapels, home missions, armed forces chaplaincies, church-state relations, temperance and urban mission. As Methodism increased in size and sophistication, the committees spawned sub-committees and governing bodies to provide detailed oversight in such areas as schools, colleges, individual city missions and Lord's Day observance. It would be no exaggeration to say that the records of the Conference and its constituent bodies provide a comprehensive picture of Methodism as a national Church with a local, international and ecumenical outreach.

The Conference collections of the individual pre-1932 denominations vary enormously in scope and date coverage. The largest and most comprehensive is that of the original Wesleyan Methodist body from 1744 to 1932. The other pre-union Churches do not have the same range of material and there are frequent gaps in the coverage, although there are significant collections surviving for the Primitive Methodist and United Methodist Churches, as well as the modern Methodist Church of Great Britain.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); Conference collection catalogue; divisional catalogues; Charles E. Wansborough, *Handbook and Index to the Minutes of the [Wesleyan] Conference* (1890); Brian E. Beck, *An Index to the Agendas of the Methodist Conferences 1932-96* (2002)

f. Publishing



Manuscript inventory and valuation of publications available for sale at City Road Chapel, London, 1791: image ref. JRL0802252dc.

During his lifetime John Wesley was responsible for the publication of about five hundred separate titles, many under his own name,⁷ and this promotion of Methodism through print made an enormous contribution to the movement's expansion at home and overseas. After Wesley's death, Methodist publishing was placed on a more formal basis with the creation of the Book Room committee in 1793. All the major pre-1932 Methodist Churches followed the Wesleyan example to establish publishing concerns. Methodism as a

national and international religious movement became a major contributor to the nineteenth-century explosion in mass-produced periodicals, tracts and pamphlets on both sides of the Atlantic.

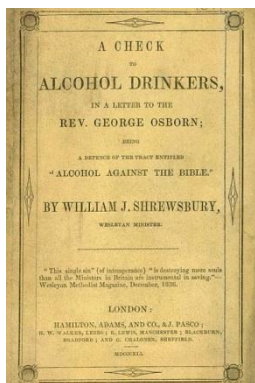
The largest and most significant British Methodist publishing collection is that of the Wesleyan Book Room and its associated bodies, which together comprise a sub-collection within the Conference archive. The minutes of the Book Room committee survive in a continuous series from 1797 to 1932 and there are many supporting documents, such as the committee letter book, cash books, the minutes of the Book Room Finance committee and the Tracts committee. Of particular interest to students of publishing are the stock books, which survive from 1913 to 1922, and the manuscript inventory of the Book Room compiled in 1791 as part of the settlement of John Wesley's estate. This last document lists all titles published by the Methodists at that time, numbers of copies awaiting distribution and the financial value. Also contained within the collection are records of affiliated publishing concerns and subsidiaries, such as the Wesley Press Limited, 1923-27, and the London Quarterly Review Company, 1862-97.

In addition to the records of the publishing concerns, the MARC also contains copies of many of the individual titles – see under published collections.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); Conference collection catalogue.

⁷ John Wesley authored many publications in his own right and also edited and revived works written by other people. Wesley was not always careful about giving credit to original authors and this resulted in occasional charges of plagiarism.

g. Divisional



"A check to Alcohol Drinkers ..." (1841) by William J. Shrewsbury (1795-1866): image ref. JRL061094cb.

The divisional system was the product of a re-organization that took place between 1969 and 1973. This resulted in the formation of seven divisions that were responsible until 1996 for the following aspects of Methodist administration:

- Education and Youth
- Finance
- Home Mission
- Ministries
- Overseas Mission
- Property
- Social Responsibility

Each division has its own discrete archive in the MARC, with the exception of the Overseas Mission collection, which is kept at the Library of the School of Oriental and African Studies, The University of London.

The discrete collections vary in size and coverage – Education and Youth for example is extensive, while the Finance collection is extremely small. The individual archives tend to contain the same core records such as minutes, correspondence files, accounts and annual reports. Some of the divisions have additional types of record that more particularly reflect their special function – for example, the Division of Social Responsibility produced pamphlets stating Methodist views and policy on social issues such as temperance, the death penalty, abortion and industrial relations. Copies of these can often be found in the collection.

The divisional structure was created in the 1970s, but the collections contain a considerable amount of material created by departments that were replaced by the divisions. The records of the Property Division for example date back to the first quarter of the nineteenth century and include the papers of predecessor institutions like the Wesleyan department of chapel affairs.

The divisional archive is one of the least used in the MARC. This is regrettable as it contains a wealth of information that would be of interest to historians of religion, politics, social studies, education and other disciplines, and to a lesser degree, genealogists and local historians. The Property Division collection for example includes lists of Wesleyan chapels with such details as date and cost of construction, while the archive of the Division of Ministries includes papers relating to the acceptance of candidates for the ministry.

In 1996 there was a further restructuring, which led to the creation of a single Connexional⁸ Team led by four Co-ordinating Secretaries with responsibility for the following areas:

- Church life
- Church and society
- Inter-church and other relationships
- Central services

Records created since the 1996 changes tend to be still current and have not yet been deposited in the MARC.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); divisional collection catalogues – these are incomplete and some exist only in electronic form. There are also issues connected with the closure of modern records (see under access restrictions). The archivist should therefore be consulted in advance of a visit made specifically to carry out research using the divisional archives, especially for the period after 1932.

h. Armed Forces Board



The meeting room of the Victoria Seaman's Rest, London, circa 1890: image ref. JRL030571tr

There has been unofficial Methodist ministry to the armed forces since John Wesley's day, but it was not until the 1870s that the work was formally recognised by the Royal Navy, followed by the army in 1881. In the years that followed recognition, the Wesleyans established chaplaincies in garrisons and ports in Britain and overseas, often in association with the establishment of Soldiers' and Sailors' Homes and Seaman's Rests to act as recreational centres away from the temptations of alcoholic drink. In peacetime the Wesleyans were the most active of the pre-union Churches, although the Primitive Methodists and United Methodists also operated chaplaincies during World War I.

After Methodist union in 1932, a Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force Board was created to liaise with government bodies over the appointment of chaplains and, as the Armed Forces Board, this continues to supervise the chaplaincy service. In World War II about 430 ministers served as chaplains, and a few Wesley Deaconesses also served without rank in the Women's Services.

The Armed Forces Board collection incorporates the records of predecessor institutions, such as the Wesleyan Royal Navy and Army Board (established in

⁸ The word Connexion has often been used in Methodism as an alternative term to Church. It originated in the idea that the Methodist preachers and people were 'in connexion' with each other and John Wesley.

1904), together with smaller discrete sub-collections such as the governing bodies of individual Soldiers and Sailors Homes, and semi-independent trusts like the Aldershot Methodist Military Trust dating back to the 1880s, and even earlier in a few cases. The records include minutes, financial papers, membership returns, lists of chaplains with records of service, publications, annual reports, property deeds relating to garrison churches and associated premises, photographs and videos of the chaplaincies at work and government papers relating to Methodist involvement with the military. Unusually, the collection also contains a small number of registers of marriages and baptisms solemnised in garrison churches in Britain, Germany, Cyprus and Iraq – such registers would normally be deposited in a local record office, but that course of action does not exist for chaplaincy records because of their crossing of county and international lines.

The collection contains material relating to the work of chaplains in Britain and many other countries, including India, Malta, Germany, Gibraltar, Aden, Singapore, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Korea and Egypt. The date coverage is from the middle of the nineteenth century to the 1990s.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); Armed Forces Board catalogue. There are issues connected with the closure of some records and the archivist should therefore be consulted in advance of a visit made specifically to carry out research using this collection.

i. Local records (district, circuit and chapel)

(i). District

Circuit	Members	Income
202 Merthyr Tydfil	1,000	1,000
203 Merthyr Mission	1,000	1,000
204 Tredegar	1,000	1,000
205 Aberdare	1,000	1,000
206 Treorchy	1,000	1,000
207 Fforestfach	1,000	1,000

"Returns of accommodation, South Wales District" (1912): image ref. JRL1010323dc.

In 1791, as part of a restructuring following John Wesley's death, Methodist circuits in Britain were grouped together into districts. This unit of organization was analogous to the Anglican diocese and was aimed at promoting more efficient local administration. Instead of bishops, the Wesleyan Conference appointed district chairmen to act as the senior minister and exercise supervision over junior colleagues. District meetings were held each year, and became the chief forum through which circuits submitted reports and statistics, received instructions and discussed a range of financial and administrative business.

The Wesleyan district collection of the MARC is exceptionally large and represents the best source of detailed local information about British Methodism held by any archive institution. The core records are the minutes of the district meetings, which typically survive from the early years of the nineteenth century. Subjects that are covered in the minutes include

disciplinary proceedings, membership returns, financial information, applications to build chapels and comment on local and denominational affairs.

Of particular interest to the family historian is the fact that the minutes record the names and ages of ministers' children up to the age of 14 and also contain recommendations of local preachers for the itinerant ministry, including character assessments and a statement of marital situation. The statistics submitted to the district meeting are also worthy of mention as these, by the late nineteenth century, can be exceptionally detailed; for example, the membership returns for the Bolton district in 1887 included deaths and resignations from each circuit, numbers of new members and even figures for military personnel attending class meetings. Also of note is the schedule of trust property maintained by the district – this document comprises a detailed inventory of all trust property, including date of acquisition, estimated current value and details of trustees.

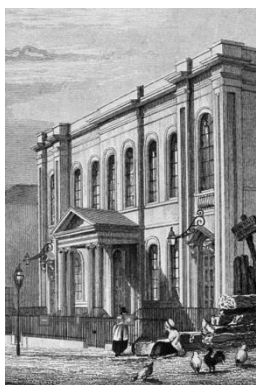
The district meetings over time created additional committees to deal with such matters as home missions, class leaders, local preachers, finance, and support for overseas missions. By the end of the nineteenth century, such was the range and detail of business dealt with by the district that meetings were often held over several days. The sequence of Wesleyan district minutes in the MARC is virtually complete until 1932, although there are many gaps in the series of associated committee records.

All pre-1932 Methodist denominations adopted the district system, but with significant differences in the composition and responsibilities of the district meetings and their officials. Many of these differences arose from greater lay participation in the decision-making of non-Wesleyan denominations and the relationship between the districts and Conference – for example, the Primitive Methodists placed such stress on devolution of power that it was said to be the districts rather than Conference that ran the Church. Inevitably these differences impacted on the range of business dealt with by the district meeting and Conference and on the content of records.

All the pre-1932 denominations have district material in the MARC, but there are considerable gaps in the coverage of the non-Wesleyan Churches, especially with regard to sub-committee records.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); paper district catalogue.

(ii). *Circuits, Chapels and Preaching Plans*



Irwell Street Chapel, Salford
- published in the "Pictorial
history of Manchester" by
George Catt (1844): image
ref. JRL030516bw.

At its most fundamental, the circuit was a grouping of chapels and preaching places under the charge of at least one itinerant preacher assisted by local preachers. The system originated in the 1740s and remains to this day as one of the essential building blocks of local Methodist structure comparable with the Anglican or Catholic parish.

Circuit and chapel records are kept in local archive repositories or remain in circuit custody; the very few exceptions to this rule consist of items of denominational significance, such as the minutes of the first circuit meeting held in 1746. These records are kept in the MARC because of their importance to the Church on a national as well as a local level.

The one major exception to the non-deposit of circuit/chapel records in the MARC is preaching plans, also known as circuit plans. These are timetables for the use of preachers and congregations listing dates, times and places where sermons were to be delivered and by whom. Preaching plans survive from the late eighteenth century and were usually produced on a quarterly basis by virtually every circuit of every pre-1932 denomination. They are still produced today.

Preaching plans are of great value to genealogists and local historians. At their most basic, they contain the names of itinerant and local preachers appointed to preach in a particular circuit, and can be used to chart the growth and decline of Methodism by listing preaching places. From the early nineteenth century the plans often contain additional information, such as times of services, names of circuit officials and home addresses of preachers.

The collection of British preaching plans in the MARC is the largest in the world. Despite the size of the archive, it is not comprehensive in its coverage, although most pre-1932 Wesleyan circuits are represented from at least 1800, but with considerable gaps in the date coverage. All non-Wesleyan denominations are also represented in the collection, but again, only in an incomplete sequence. Modern plans since 1982 are deposited every five years as a representative sample. There are also some overseas preaching plans in the collection.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); preaching plans card index (incomplete); see also the Ward scrapbook in the Conference collection – this contains all plans produced in 1907 by the denominations (Methodist New Connexion, Bible Christians and United Methodist Free Church) that merged later that year into the United Methodist Church. The Society of Cirplanologists also periodically publishes lists of plans with MARC locations.

j. Methodist related institutions

Contained within the MARC are medium and small collections created by bodies that were connected with or affiliated to Methodism, but which were not formally a part of the institutional framework. The following list includes some of the most significant collections of this type:

(i). Local Preachers Mutual Aid Association (LPMA)

The LPMA was formed in 1849 for the financial relief of local preachers and their families. The organization originated within the Wesleyan Church, but included members from other Methodist denominations. As well as providing assistance to people in their own homes, the LPMA and its associated body Mutual Aid Homes operate residential care facilities.

The collection includes minutes, handbooks, correspondence and annual reports from both the LPMA and Mutual Aid Homes and dates from 1849 to the 1980s.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online).

(ii). Itinerant Preachers Superannuation papers

As early as the Conference of 1765 it was accepted that there was a need to provide annuities or other types of financial relief for itinerant preachers retired through age or incapacity from the active work. Within the Conference archive are records documenting and administering such payments, although these appear to survive only from 1799.

There are also discrete collections of records of independent beneficent and friendly societies established for the purpose of providing such payments. The records of the Primitive Methodist Friendly Society are particularly fine examples and include minutes, accounts and annual reports from 1823 until after Methodist union in 1932. Of particular interest to genealogists is the fact that the collection includes a listing for every minister who was in the society between 1849 and 1970 (the membership comprised most ministers in the Church); recorded details include the date of death, cause of death and place of death and there is also information relating to wives and widows. A substantial collection also exists for the United Methodist Church Superannuation and Beneficent Society containing a wealth of administrative and personal information concerning ministers and their partners from the early nineteenth century until the 1980s.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); paper Conference collection catalogue.

(iii). Wesley Guild

The Wesley Guild was established in 1896 as a society for young people 'holding weekly or periodical meetings for devotional, literary and social purposes'. From the 1920s, as part of its commitment to Christian service, the Guild also provided financial support to medical missions in West Africa. The emphasis on service and social interaction proved highly attractive and by 1909 Guild membership stood at 152,000. While the movement was aimed originally at young people, there was no defined age limit and over time the average age of members rose significantly. There are currently about 1,000 local guilds and the movement also has overseas branches.

The papers of the Wesley Guild deposited at the MARC date from 1896 to 1987 and consist of minute books, reports, magazines and correspondence. The collection also contains some local and overseas material.

Finding Aids: paper Wesley Guild catalogue.

(iv). Regnal League

The Regnal League is a non-denominational group that evolved from a 'League of Friendship' founded during World War I. The League's primary aim is the fostering of Christian discipleship through fellowship and service. At its height, the League had nearly 400 local branches known as 'Circles', although this number has considerably diminished in recent years.

The Regnal League archive dates from 1918 to 2002 and includes membership lists, administrative committee minutes, lists of local officers, financial papers, handbooks and papers relating to the annual conferences.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online).

(v). Methodist Peace Fellowship

The Fellowship was founded in 1933 by the minister Henry Carter (1874-1951) as a means of uniting Methodist pacifists and agitating for world peace. It is now incorporated into the inter-denominational Fellowship of Reconciliation.

The archives of the Fellowship cover the period from 1941 to 1971 and include correspondence, working papers, minutes of the executive committee and a register of new members. The archive also contains printed newsletters of the related Christian Pacifist Forestry and Land Units, issued between 1941 and 1945.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online).

(vi). Wesley Deaconess Order

The Wesley Deaconess Order was founded in 1890 by the Wesleyan minister Thomas Bowman Stephenson (1839-1912), who recognized that an Order of dedicated women (referred to as deaconesses or sisters) had a valuable part to play in the life of the Church. The sisters engaged in pastoral, mission, evangelistic, social and prison work, and in nursing, teaching and work overseas. The home work was exercised mainly through attachment to chapels or circuits.

About the same time as Stephenson, the UMFC Conference endorsed proposals for a Deaconess Institute organized along similar lines to that of the Wesleyan Order. In 1907 the Deaconess Institute became part of the United Methodist Church. The Primitive Methodist Church did not have an organized 'order', but there were deaconesses who 'learned on the job.' With Methodist Union in 1932 the WM Order and UM Institute united, with the PM Sisters joining in 1934.

Following the opening of the ordained ministry to women in 1974, recruitment to the Order ceased and remained closed until 1987 when the Order was renamed the Methodist Diaconal Order. In the following year, entry was opened to both women and men.

Prior to the ordination of women, the deaconess work was the principal official means by which female ministry was exercised in British Methodism. The contribution made by deaconesses to the life of the Church was immense and had a particular, but not exclusive, impact on youth work and social ministry, especially in the inner city.

The archive of the Order spans the complete history and consists of official papers, photographs, policy documents, personnel records and the personal papers of deaconesses and supervising staff. The records of annual Convocation and the Deaconess Institute are also well-represented in the collection.

Finding Aids: paper Wesley Deaconess Order catalogue

The above represent only a few examples of some of the larger collections within the category of *Methodist Related Institutions*. This important category of records also includes discrete collections created by the following diverse organisations: The Methodist Society for Social and Pastoral Psychology, 1946-64; The Renewal Group, 1965-70; The Methodist Medical and Dental Fellowship, 1966-81; Pen and Camera Club of Methodism, 1990-92; and the Fernley-Hartley Trust, 1930-38.

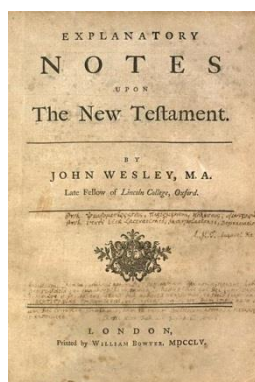
k. Miscellaneous

In addition to archives that fall within the main categories above, there are other collections that can best be described as miscellaneous. These tend to be composite collections, such as the Sheldon Local History Collection of press cuttings, the box of 'special items' from Richmond College or the large collection of

class tickets acquired from many different sources. There are also collections of research material used in the writing of scholarly publications, such as the Beckerlegge-Kimbrough archive of research notes used in the drafting of the three-volume series of Charles Wesley's previously unpublished verse (1988-92). It is also worthwhile to mention the MARC collection of eighteenth-century full-text newspapers referring to the Wesleys, but also containing other reports of more general interest, from the arrival of ships in the port of London to debates in the House of Commons.

Finding Aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online).

3. Monographs, pamphlets and periodicals



"Explanatory notes on the New Testament" (1755) by John Wesley: image ref. JRL0802218dc.

The printed holdings of the MARC comprise approximately 70,000 individual items arranged in a large number of discrete collections and general or subject-based sequences. The material consists of a mix of monographs, tracts, pamphlets⁹ and a small number of miscellaneous publications including theses, leaflets and annual reports. The majority of items were printed before 1850 and tend to fall into the category of pamphlet or tract. For the sake of clarity in the section that follows, pamphlets and tracts will be referred to under the

single term pamphlet.

There is also a large collection of periodical publications comprising newspapers, magazines and journals. Sometimes these occur within pamphlet collections as individual volumes, but most periodicals appear in discrete runs of material arranged by title and date.

For the purpose of this guide, the printed collections will be considered as falling into two broad categories, namely *Monographs and Pamphlets* and *Periodicals*. Where an individual collection overlaps between these types of material, this will be indicated as appropriate.

Finding Aids

Methodist published collections are catalogued on the following two internet-accessible databases:

(i). Library Search

This database contains basic bibliographic details of all the Library's printed collections, including virtually all the holdings of the MARC and of Library-owned Methodist items. The MARC local history boxed collection is the only major sequence not included on this database and individual printed items that occur in the context of archive collections are likewise not listed. Readers should also be aware that the catalogue entries rarely include references to manuscript annotations and that the catalogue does not differentiate between discrete collections.

⁹ Monograph: a treatise on a single subject, as opposed to a periodical (serial) publication. Pamphlet: A short piece of polemical writing, intended for wide circulation, printed and issued as an unbound publication, with either stapled or sewn pages. It may or may not have a paper cover. Tract: A book or pamphlet devoted to one subject, usually of a religious or political nature.

Library Search can be accessed online at:

<http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/searchresources/librarysearch/>

(ii). *English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC)*

The ESTC provides basic bibliographic details for over 460,000 printed items published between 1473 and 1800, printed in all languages in Britain and Ireland, North America and overseas territories governed by Britain. In addition to monographs, tracts, pamphlets and printed ephemera, ESTC lists newspapers and other periodicals published before 1801. Unlike Library Search, it is not restricted to the collections of one institution, but represents the holdings of over 2,000 libraries world-wide.

ESTC is hosted by the British Library and can be accessed online at:

<http://estc.bl.uk/>

The printed collections

The monograph, pamphlet and periodical holdings comprise the following major sub-collections:

a. Anti-Methodist material

This is the largest collection of anti-Methodist material in the world comprising 396 copies of 348 works, published mainly in the eighteenth century, but with some nineteenth-century editions. The collection consists almost entirely of pamphlets and is based on material collected by the bibliographer and Wesleyan minister Richard Green (1829-1907), supplemented by copies from elsewhere in the Methodist holdings. The collection retains the numbering system developed by Green. Most of the items were published in Britain, but there are some North American imprints.

Readers should be aware that while the collection is labelled anti-Methodist and most of the items within it fall within that category, some of the titles were in fact written in defence of Methodism,¹⁰ or from a more impartial viewpoint. It should also be noted that many of the pamphlets, particularly from the early years of the Revival, were published in opposition to Calvinist evangelicals, especially George Whitefield (1714-70), rather than the Wesleys. Similarly, there is material within the collection written by evangelicals attacking other evangelicals, reflecting the sharp divide within the movement on theological grounds.

This material represents an outstanding resource for understanding why Methodism was so popular in some quarters of society, but was hated and feared in

¹⁰ For example, John Cennick, *An account of a late riot at Exeter* (London, 1745).

others. Most of the works were written by laymen and ministers of the Church of England, although other denominations are represented. The subject matter provides a full range of perspective from the learned and theological objections of George Lavington (1684-1762), Bishop of Exeter, to the populist, and no doubt more popular, satire of George Whitefield written by the anonymous 'Mugletonian'.¹¹ Virtually all the authors represented are men, but there are a few women, including the well-known Baptist writer Anne Dutton (c.1691-1765).¹²

The collection is valuable for the insight it provides into the doctrinal and theological basis for the opposition to the Wesleys and their contemporaries. Much of this was founded on the perception that Methodism promoted religious extremism and was destructive of family and social ties. The widespread and sometimes violent reaction to the Methodists illustrates one of Georgian society's most deeply held fears, namely a return to the sectarian violence of the seventeenth century. Other themes that are covered in the collection include reactions to Wesley's standpoint on secular matters like the American War of Independence. Through such collections, the MARC provides a rich source of research material for scholars of disciplines other than religion and theology.

There are several copies in the anti-Methodist collection that appear to be unique to the MARC.¹³ Many of the volumes also bear manuscript annotations by previous owners providing additional opportunities for research into how Methodism was perceived by others and how it viewed itself.

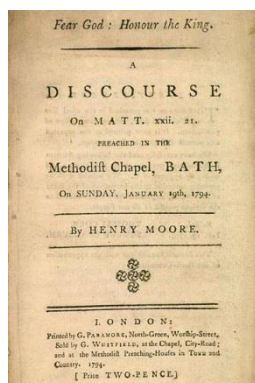
Finding aids: Online catalogue; R. Green, *Anti-Methodist Publications Issued during the Eighteenth Century* (C.H. Kelly, 1902); C.D. Field, 'Anti-Methodist Publications of the Eighteenth Century: A Revised Bibliography', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 73: 2 (Summer, 1991); C.D. Field, 'Anti-Methodist Publications of the Eighteenth Century: A Supplemental Bibliography', *Wesley and Methodist Studies*, 6 ((Paternoster Periodicals: Nottingham, 2014).

¹¹ A Mugletonian, *The amorous humours and audacious adventures of one Wh-d* (London, [1739]).

¹² [Anne Dutton], *A Letter to Reverend Mr John Wesley, in vindication of the doctrines of absolute, unconditional election ...* (London, 1742).

¹³ For example, A Gentleman of Northumberland [James Murray?], *A grave answer to Mr Wesley's 'Calm address to our American colonies'* (Newcastle upon Tyne?, 1775) – there is no entry for this title in ESTC.

b. Wesley pamphlets (Green sequence)



"Fear God: Honour the King: A discourse on Matt. XXII, 21 ..." (1794) by Henry Moore (1751-1844): image ref. JRL061222cb.

This discrete collection consists of 2,865 copies of 1,783 works authored by the Wesley brothers and their associates. There are some monographs, but the bulk of the material consists of pamphlets. The collection is arranged under the Green numbering system, and consists almost entirely of works published in the eighteenth century.

This collection covers a huge range of subjects and types of publication including the following major categories:

- *Hymn books and tune books*: Prior to the Evangelical Revival, congregational hymn-singing was virtually unknown in the English Church, other than in a few dissenting congregations. The evangelicals championed the use of hymns and were largely responsible for their widespread adoption in all major Protestant denominations by the end of the eighteenth century. The pamphlet collection contains hundreds of copies of early collections of hymns. Many of these were authored by Charles Wesley (1707-88), who is commonly regarded as one of the finest hymn writers in the English language. The Green pamphlet collection includes some of the earliest appearances in print of such classics as 'Hark, how all the welkin rings'¹⁴ and 'Love divine, all loves excelling'.
- *Spiritual autobiographies*: Conversion was at the centre of the evangelical experience. The Revival's leadership insisted that their followers pay close attention to recording spiritual progress and this mandate resulted in the creation of thousands of spiritual testimonies. Many of these accounts were subsequently published in pamphlet form. This body of material crosses lines of gender, class and age providing an invaluable insight into society in its wider aspects.
- *Sermons and theological literature*: The collection contains many examples of evangelical sermons, prayer books, theological treatises and bible commentaries. These works were authored principally by John Wesley, but also include his revisions of works by men from across the denominational spectrum.
- *Institutional documents*: This category includes early printed minutes of the Methodist Conference, rules of the societies and bands and John Wesley's accounts of the early history of the Methodist movement.

¹⁴ Earliest version of 'Hark the herald angels sing'.

- *Methodist interaction with the secular world*: John Wesley had an opinion on most subjects and a keen appreciation of the importance of keeping his name in the public eye. He authored pamphlets that commented on some of the major secular issues of his day, such as slavery, the Lisbon earthquake, the American War of Independence and smuggling. Wesley also wrote specific 'words of advice' to a wide cross-section of contemporary society, including soldiers, prostitutes, drunkards and condemned criminals. Special mention should also be made of the published journals of Wesley's travels around the British Isles, which constitute key eye-witness impressions of a society undergoing rapid social and economic change. The journals cover the period from the end of the 1730s until shortly before John Wesley died in 1791.

The list above is not exhaustive and one could say in general terms that this collection reflects the rich diversity of early Methodism and shines unexpected light into many areas of eighteenth-century life.

Copies in this collection that are unique to the MARC include Wesley's edition of William Whateley's *Directions for Married Persons* (1753) and *A short account of the death of Mr Richard Moore* (1756).

Finding aids: Online catalogue. See also: R. Green, *The Works of John and Charles Wesley. A Bibliography* (2nd edn, revised, Methodist Publishing House, 1906); R. Green, *Anti-Methodist Publications Issued during the Eighteenth Century* (C.H. Kelly, 1902); C.D. Field, 'Anti-Methodist Publications of the Eighteenth Century: A Revised Bibliography', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 73: 2 (Summer, 1991); C.D. Field, 'Anti-Methodist Publications of the Eighteenth Century: A Supplemental Bibliography', *Wesley and Methodist Studies*, 6 ((Paternoster Periodicals: Nottingham, 2014); Frank Baker, *A union catalogue of the publications of John and Charles Wesley* (2nd edn, revised, 1991); Samuel J. Rogal, *A Bibliographical Survey of the Published Works of the Eighteenth-Century Wesleys* (Lewiston: Edward Mellen Press, 2008).

c. Methodist pamphlets (general sequence)

In addition to the Green material, there are two significant discrete pamphlet collections that can best be described as 'general sequences' differentiated as follows:

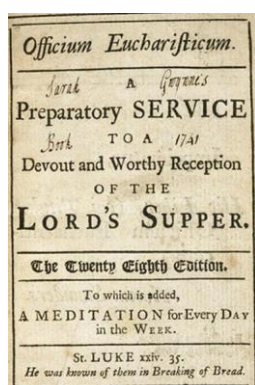
- *Pamphlets arranged by date*: This collection contains 4,830 individual titles published between approximately 1562 and 1958, with the majority printed between 1739 and 1899. The focus of this material is not as Wesley and Wesleyan Methodist centred as the Green collection, although the majority of titles published after 1739 do fall into one of those categories or could be termed general Anglican

evangelical. There are also some secular items such as the *Speech of Edmund Burke on American Taxation, April 19th 1774* (Bristol, 1774). Material printed prior to 1739 often included printed sermons and theological treatises from the Puritan tradition, such as Stephen Marshall's *Emmanuel: A Thanksgiving sermon ...* (London, 1648) and William Bradshaw's *Several Treatises of worship and ceremonies* (Printed for Cambridge and Oxford, 1660). The nineteenth-century part of the collection is particularly interesting for its documentation of evangelical interface with social, political and educational issues, ranging from Sunday schools to temperance, abolition, imperialism and Catholic emancipation.

- *Polemical pamphlets arranged by subject*: This collection of over a thousand items is the finest in the world for its coverage of British Methodist internal strife during the first half of the nineteenth century. This dynamic phase in Methodist history saw the Wesleyan movement divide several times on the basis of personality, doctrine, approaches to evangelism and lay participation in policy-making. The major issues facing Methodism often reflected wider concerns within society such as education, democracy and social injustice. This collection is invaluable therefore not simply for its documentation of the birth of non-Wesleyan Methodism, but also for illustrating underlying forces for change within society at large. Because of the specialised nature of the subject area, much of this material is exceptionally rare or unique.

Finding Aids: Online catalogue and card catalogue. See also, 'Handlist of Methodist Tracts and Pamphlets: Chronological Sequence, 1801-1914; Reform Collections, 1803-56'.

d. Charles Wesley Family Library



"Officium eucharisticum: A preparatory service to a devout and worthy reception of the Lord's supper" (1732) by Edward Lake (1641-1704): image ref. JRL0802249dc.

This collection, consisting principally of monographs, comprises volumes that were formerly in the possession of Charles Wesley (1707-88), his brother Samuel Wesley junior (1690-1739),¹⁵ Charles's wife Sarah Wesley (1726-1822) and children Charles junior (1757-1834) and Sarah junior (1759-1828).¹⁶ The library was put together over the period of over one hundred years from the 1720s, when Charles Wesley was an undergraduate student at Oxford, until 1831 when the collection was sold by Charles Wesley junior (1757-1834) to the minister Thomas Jackson (1783-1873). The collection was purchased in 1859 by the wealthy layman James Heald and was then donated to Richmond College. When Richmond closed in 1972, the library was transferred to the MARC. It is worth noting that at Richmond the collection was shelved with books owned by John Wesley, which are now at John Wesley's House in City Road, London. Research by Randy Maddox indicates that up to ten volumes may have become separated from their original sequence and placed in the wrong collection.

The Charles Wesley family library contains over 430 volumes and nearly 300 distinct titles published between 1561 and 1832. Many of the volumes are signed and dated on the fly-leaf by their former owners, but marginalia is rare. Theological and devotional texts are well-represented in the collection, although within that general subject area there is an exceptionally wide range of Christian tradition and doctrinal viewpoint. There are works by seventeenth-century Anglicans and nonconformists like Edward Stillingfleet (1635-99) and Samuel Shaw (1635-96), a biography of the Jesuit Ignatius Loyola¹⁷ and verse by the Roman Catholic humanist Marco Girolamo Vida.¹⁸ High Anglican sacramental theology is a particular feature of the collection, represented by such titles as *The Great Necessity and Advantage of Public Prayer and Frequent Communion ...* (London, 1709) by William Beveridge (1637-1708) and *The Pious Communicant Rightly Prepared* (London, 1700), written by Charles' father Samuel Wesley senior (1662-1735). It is important to note that not all these high Anglican texts came into the library through Charles Wesley – several of the volumes bear his wife Sarah's maiden name and reflect the

¹⁵ Six of the volumes bear Samuel Wesley junior's signature and were presumably acquired by his brother after Samuel's death.

¹⁶ None of the books bear the signature of Charles' youngest son Samuel Wesley (1766-1837).

¹⁷ Bouhours, Dominique (1628-1702), *The Life of St. Ignatius, founder of the Society of Jesus* (London, 1686).

¹⁸ Vida, Marco Girolamo (ca. 1485-1566), *Marci Hieronymi Vidae, cremonensis, albae episcopi, Christiados libri sex* (London, 1732).

staunch Anglican churchmanship of her upbringing. There are also several titles by Calvinist evangelicals and here again Sarah's contribution to the library's formation and character can be seen.

The library includes many non-religious works illustrating the breadth of the Wesley family's interests. Literary texts include the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* translated by Alexander Pope (1688-1744),¹⁹ an edition of *Don Quixote*,²⁰ and historical works like Robert Patten's *The History of the Rebellion in the year 1715* (London, 1745). Other subject areas covered by the library include music, philosophy, legal history and medicine. Charles and Sarah educated their three talented children entirely at home and the dates and signatures on the flyleaves of many of the books, as well as some specific titles,²¹ indicate that the library was an important tool in the children's home schooling.

The Charles Wesley library is a much neglected resource that can be used for research into areas other than religion and the life and works of Charles Wesley. The importance of the collection is underlined by the fact that unlike the personal library of John Wesley, which was split during his lifetime and which suffered some depletion, Charles Wesley's library has been kept largely intact and its provenance is exceptionally well-documented.

Finding Aids: Online catalogue (provenance information has been recently added); card catalogue. See also: Randy L. Maddox, 'Collection of Books owned by the Charles Wesley family in The John Rylands University Library', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 88: 2 (2006).

e. John and Mary Fletcher Library

This collection consists of monographs and pamphlets formerly in the ownership of the well-known Anglican evangelical John Fletcher (1729-85), Vicar of Madeley, and his wife, the early female preacher Mary Bosanquet-Fletcher (1739-1815). Before its transfer to the MARC, the collection was housed at Richmond College, to which it was presented in the 1840s by Mrs William Legge, the sister and executrix of Mary Tooth (1774-1843) of Madeley. Tooth had been Mary Bosanquet-Fletcher's last live-in companion before Bosanquet-Fletcher's death in 1815.

¹⁹ Homer, *The Iliad of Homer*. Translated by Alexander Pope, 4 vols. (London: A. Horace, P. Virgil, et al., 1759); Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*. Translated by Alexander Pope, 4 vols. (London, P. Virgil, et al., 1760).

²⁰ Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de (1547-1616), *Histoire de le admirable Don Quixotte de la Manche*, volume 1 (Amsterdam, 1699).

²¹ For example, *An Introduction to the Latin Tongue, for the use of youth* (New edition, revised. Eton, 1769).

The library comprises 340 titles in 134 volumes (many of the smaller publications are bound together) and another 10 quarto-sized volumes. Many of the copies have manuscript annotations. Unlike the Charles Wesley family library, the Fletcher collection is almost entirely devotional or theological in nature, reflecting the rather other-worldly character of its original owners. John Wesley is the best represented author – there is, for example, a complete set (50 volumes) of Wesley's *Christian Library*, which consists of texts written by authors that influenced Wesley's own thought and faith. Seventeenth-century Puritanism, continental mysticism, and eighteenth-century piety form other significant themes of the collection reflecting the French Protestant origins and mystical tendencies of the Fletchers.

The Fletcher library is important for the insight it provides into the authors that were influential on John Fletcher, one of the most important early evangelical theologians, and his wife Mary; she was arguably the first Wesleyan female preacher and an extremely important figure in her own right.

Online catalogue (detailed provenance description has been recently added to catalogue entries); an annotated edition of the contents of the Fletcher library has also been compiled by David R. Wilson and it is hoped that an online version of this can be made available.

f. Richmond College Library and associated material

This is an outstanding collection of several thousand monographs, pamphlets and periodicals dating from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries. The most significant part of the collection is the approximately 2,150 items acquired by the well-known minister and historian Thomas Jackson (1783-1873). The Jackson material was purchased by James Heald in 1859 and presented to Richmond College, where it formed the key component around which the rest of the college library was constructed. In addition to the Jackson deposit, the collection includes books from many other sources, such as the Wesleyan Conference Office, acquired between the 1840s and the closure of the college in 1972.

The Richmond collection defies easy categorization. It evolved over the course of a hundred years as a working library accessible to ministerial students, undergraduates, Wesleyan ministers and professional academics. This wide range of use is reflected in the diversity of the collection. The library includes rare seventeenth-century theological works²² shelved alongside nineteenth-century tracts, standard works of Wesleyan scholarship²³ and twentieth-century college magazines. The subjects covered are equally varied; they include overseas

²² For example, Thomas Pierce (1622-91), *Pacificatorium orthodoxæ theologiæ corpusculum ...* (London, 1685).

²³ For example, *The letters of the Rev. John Wesley* edited by John Telford, 8 volumes (London, 1931).

missions with an emphasis on national and regional studies,²⁴ sermons and biblical criticism,²⁵ histories,²⁶ Methodist government and discipline,²⁷ biography, hymns, worship, slavery and its abolition, temperance and denominational finance. The collection includes an extensive sequence of eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century pamphlets, many of which are bound together in thematic volumes containing material on specific subjects like predestination, anti-popery, missions, 'Puseyism', and materialism, while other volumes contain a mixture of themes.

The Richmond College collection represents an excellent example of a library of a nineteenth-century and twentieth-century ministerial training college. Because the collection was used to prepare men for the ministry at home and in the mission field, it evolved in a multi-disciplinary way focussing on theology and practical ministry, but also addressing Methodism's place in the wider Church and society. The fact that many Methodist ministerial candidates came from working-class backgrounds and had often received only rudimentary education before arriving at Richmond, accounts for the high number of standard texts from many different subject areas.

Collection-specific finding aids: Online catalogue; 'Methodist Archives Richmond College Library, Tracts and Pamphlets, 1801-1914' (JRL, 1994) and manuscript library catalogues in the Richmond College archival collection (RC 8/1-5). See also, I. Rivers, 'Wesleyan Theological Institution: Southern branch, Richmond (1843-1972)', Dissenting Academies Online: Database and Encyclopaedia, Dr Williams's Centre for Dissenting Studies (2012) at http://dissacad.english.qmul.ac.uk/new_dissacad/phpfiles/sample1.php?detail=achist&histid=76&acadid=207#tabs-2.

g. Thursfield Smith Wesley collection

This collection, comprising approximately 2,000 volumes, was purchased for the John Rylands Library in 1903 from Mr R. Thursfield Smith and is the longest-standing Methodist collection in the Library, pre-dating the arrival of the MARC deposit by over seventy years. Unlike the majority of the Methodist holdings, the Thursfield-Smith collection is owned by the Library and is arranged and referenced as part of the Library's general printed holdings. The collection has been augmented since its arrival and includes recently published material.

²⁴ For example, John Watsford, *My life and work in Fiji and Australia* (London, 1900).

²⁵ For example, Symon Patrick, *The devout Christian ... or a book of devotions for families ...* (London, 1759).

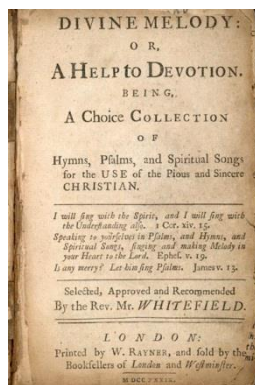
²⁶ For example, John Wesley, *A concise ecclesiastical history from the birth of Christ* (London, 1781).

²⁷ For example, George Turner, *Constitution and Discipline of Wesleyan Methodism* (London, 1841).

Approximately half of the titles were published during the eighteenth century, with an emphasis on the movement led by the Wesley brothers and evangelicalism within the Church of England. There are many titles by John and Charles Wesley, including hymn books, tune books and devotional works together with pro- and anti-Methodist literature, liturgies and biographies. Calvinistic Methodism is represented by works like James Hervey's *Eleven letters from the late Rev. Mr. Hervey, to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley* (London, 1765).

There are also nineteenth-century and twentieth-century publications, which again are primarily Wesleyan Methodist in nature. They include hymn books, reference works, biographies of the Wesley brothers and works on hymnology. There is also a set of printed Conference minutes for the British United Methodist Church for 1907 and 1910-32 and a run of the proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society from 1897 to 1998. Most of the titles were published in Britain, but there are some histories of American Methodism and a nearly complete set of Kenneth Rowe's *Methodist Union Catalogue: Pre-1976 Imprints* (Scarecrow Press: 1975-94).

h. Hobill collection



"Divine Melody: Or, A help to Devotion ..." (1739) by George Whitefield (1714-74): image ref. JRL061225dc.

This substantial collection was acquired by G. Alexander Kilham Hobill (1842/3- 1912) and was presented by him to the Methodist New Connexion in 1894. The collection was kept for a number of years at Ranmoor College in Sheffield, before being transferred to Hartley Victoria College in Manchester, where it was augmented with material acquired by the minister and historian James Everett (1784- 1872) and with volumes relating to Primitive Methodism.

In 1973, the Hobill collection was purchased by the John Rylands Library, but retains the original Hartley Victoria College pressmarks and arrangement.

The collection comprises the following distinct sequences:

- Approximately 170 bound volumes containing about 2,500 separate pamphlets and newspaper cuttings, published between 1739 and 1891. The volumes are labelled with the following subject headings: American Methodism (6 volumes); anti-Methodism (17 volumes); Bible Christians (1 volume); centenary of Methodism (1 volume); class meetings (6 volumes); defence of Methodism (19 volumes); Irish Methodism (2 volumes); James Caughey (1810-91) (1 volume); Adam Clarke (c.1760-1832) (2 volumes); Mark Robinson (fl.1825) (1 volume); George Whitefield (1714-70) (3 volumes); Leeds controversy (3 volumes); Warren controversy (4 volumes); Methodist biography (21 volumes); Methodist education (2 volumes); Methodist history (19 volumes); Methodism in London (3 volumes); overseas missions (8

volumes); Methodist New Connexion (9 volumes); Methodist reform agitation (10 volumes); reviews (6 volumes); Methodist rules and institutions (3 volumes); Methodist tales (2 volumes); Methodist union (1 volume); Primitive Methodism (1 volume); The Wesleys (9 volumes); Wesley hymns (2 volumes); Wesley pamphlets (10 volumes).

- Approximately 50 periodicals and serial publications contained in 475 volumes. The publications include incomplete runs of minutes and associated documents of the Conferences and Annual Assemblies of the Wesleyan Methodist Association, Primitive Methodist Church, United Methodist Free Churches, United Methodist Church and the Wesleyan Methodist Church. There is also a number of nineteenth-century magazines and an exceptionally rare copy of the *Christian Monitor* of 1796.²⁸
- Hymn books and related material including liturgies comprising approximately 130 volumes, including some duplicate copies. The majority date from the nineteenth century, but a small number of titles were published after 1900. There are many official compilations, such as the *Primitive Methodist hymn book* (1832) and the *United Methodist Free Churches hymn book* (1865) together with more specialized works such as the *Holland Street [Rochdale] Sunday School hymn book* (1855) and *A collection of Ojebway and English Hymns* (Toronto, 1860). The most significant item in this sequence is *A collection of hymns for social worship ...* compiled by George Whitefield (London, 1774, 20th edition). ESTC records the existence of only two copies of this particular edition, both at the John Rylands Library.
- Pre-nineteenth-century publications: This category comprises approximately 200 volumes published between 1703 and 1796, with three additional titles dating from the early nineteenth century. Most of the works were written or edited by John and Charles Wesley and include hymns, liturgies, theological and doctrinal pieces and biographies. Other authors include Samuel Wesley senior (1662-1735), the preacher John Hampson (c.1732-95) and the Calvinist evangelical John Berridge (1716-93). Among the unique or almost unique titles in this collection is James Hitchens' *A short account of the death of Thomas Hitchens* (1780)²⁹ and John Wesley's *A short account of the life and death of Nicholas Mooney* (1789).³⁰

²⁸ ESTC lists only two other libraries in Britain and one in the USA that hold copies of this serial publication.

²⁹ ESTC lists no other copy in the UK and only one copy in the USA.

³⁰ ESTC lists three copies in the UK, all of which are at the John Rylands Library, and three copies in the USA.

- Nineteenth-century and twentieth-century publications: Approximately 750 items published in Britain and the USA including general reference works, biographies, local histories, works on hymnology, studies of Methodist discipline and sermons. The collection covers Methodism in the USA as well as Britain and there is also a considerable number of titles relating to overseas missions including some foreign language bibles. There are also some periodicals, such as volume 2 of the *Irish Christian Monitor* published in Belfast in 1844.
- The collection contains about 800 unbound pamphlets published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The subject range is immense and includes Irish Methodism, sermons, Methodism in North America, local histories, biographies, the Salvation Army, chapel centenaries, ministerial education, hymnology, Sunday Schools and overseas missions. There are also some periodicals including the *Juvenile Instructor* 1850-54 and incomplete runs of Conference minutes and associated material.

Finding Aids: card catalogue; D.W. Riley, 'Handlist of the Hobill Collection of Methodist Literature' (1976).

***i.* Hymns and related works (Percy Music Library and Holbrook collection)**

The Percy Music Library is one of the largest discrete collections of hymn books and related publications in the MARC. Named after its original owner Mr J.C.B. Percy, the library was transferred to the MARC during the 1970s from Methodist Central Hall in Manchester.

The collection comprises approximately 1,400 hymn books, tune-books, liturgies, anthologies of religious verse, metrical psalms and scholarly works on hymnology and church music. The library contains books published in Britain between 1631 and 1924, with the majority dating from the nineteenth century. There is a bias towards Methodism, although the Church of England, Roman Catholicism and nonconformist churches are also represented, together with collections designed for an ecumenical context. Many of the volumes contain general compilations by a multitude of authors, but there are also collections for more specific use, such as *Hymns for use in the chapel at Marlborough College* (London, 1886) as well as single-author anthologies like *Poems on several occasions* by Samuel Wesley senior (London, 1862). Exceptionally rare volumes include *A collection of psalms and hymns ... designed for the congregation of Northampton Chapel* by William Taylor and Herbert Jones (London, 1777)³¹ and *A collection of hymns for social worship ...*

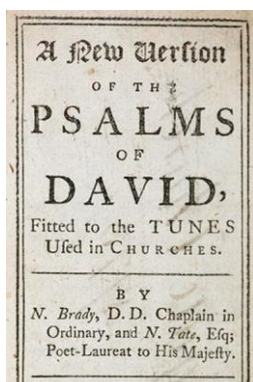
³¹ ESTC lists one other copy in the UK and one in the USA.

compiled by George Whitefield (London, 1791, 34th edition).³² The collection also contains at least one manuscript hymn book dated 1763³³ – the practice of copying out favourite hymns was commonplace in eighteenth-century evangelical circles.

A second discrete hymn book collection was given to the MARC in 1983 by Arthur Sanders Holbrook (b.1900). The Holbrook collection comprises 365 works published between 1749 and 1969, including some titles that are unique to the Methodist Archives.

Collection-specific finding aids: A.H. Walker, *Catalogue of Hymn & Tune Books and other Volumes relating to Hymnology Collected and Deposited in the Central Hall, Oldham Street, Manchester* (Percy Brothers, 1922); A.H. Walker, *Supplementary Catalogue* (1924). One or two items from the collection have been digitised by the Library – see below under 7 b): 'Digital collections'.

j. Hymns and related works (general sequence)



"A new version of the Psalms of David..." (1772) by Nicholas Brady (1659-1726): [image ref.](#) [JRL0803370dc](#).

In addition to the Percy and Holbrook collections of hymnals and related works, there is a general collection of similar material acquired from many different sources over the years and placed into a single sequence. This collection contains approximately 1,500 items comprising hymnals, liturgies, orders of service, bibles, prayer books, catechisms, psalm books and works on hymnology published between the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries.

Many of the titles that appear in the Percy and Holbrook collections also feature in the general collection, but often in different editions, and there are significant variations in the coverage of the general sequence compared with the other collections. There is for example a fine run of eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century Moravian hymnals – the German Protestant sect that introduced the Wesley brothers to the value of congregational hymn singing. The Moravian items include an original copy of *A collection of hymns for the children of God in all ages ...* (London, 1754). Other rare eighteenth-century works include a first edition of George Whitefield's *Hymns for Social worship ...* (London, [1753]) and *Psalms, hymns and anthems; sung in the chapel of the hospital for the maintenance and education of exposed and deserted young children* (London, 1788).³⁴ There is also a rare copy of *Psalms and hymns for public and private worship*

³² ESTC lists one other copy in the UK and none in the USA.

³³ Pressmark MAW H1171.

³⁴ ESTC lists two copies of this work at the John Rylands Library, one other copy in the UK and one in the USA.

... collected ... by the late Augustus Toplady (London, 1787),³⁵ while of the seven copies of William Darney's *Collection of hymns* (Leeds, 1751) listed by ESTC, two are in this collection.³⁶ Worthy of special mention is Michael Beesly's *A collection of 20 new Psalm tunes ...* (London, [c. 1746]) – this important work is not listed at all on ESTC, although another copy is recorded elsewhere as being at the British Library.

The general collection has a better denominational representation than the Percy and Holbrook material, although works connected with Wesleyan Methodism still form a significant part of the late eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century publications. Other denominations that feature in the collection include Anglican, Congregational, Bible Christian, Primitive Methodist, Calvinistic Methodist, Moravian, United Methodist and Swedenborgian. Most of the books were published in English, but there are some Welsh-language hymnals and a fine run of twentieth-century works published in native African languages for use in the mission field.

It is also valuable to make specific reference at this point to the MARC copy of John Wesley's *A collections of psalms and hymns* printed in Charleston, South Carolina in 1737.³⁷ This slim volume appears in a non-hymnbook collection, but is of tremendous significance on a number of levels; it was the first hymn book compiled by the Wesleys, the first hymnal produced for an Anglican congregation and the first hymn book published in what became the United States. There are only two copies of this edition in the world and the copy in the MARC is the only complete copy.

k. Hocking collection

This collection was donated to the MARC in 1978 and comprises 196 early editions and reprints – almost a complete set – of the popular novels, short stories and other writings of the Methodist ministers Silas Kitto Hocking (1850-1935) and his brother Joseph (1860-1937).

Silas Hocking was one of the best-selling authors of his day and was particularly popular with working-class readers to the extent that his work has been described as 'pulp Methodism'. Many of his novels were written as uplifting stories for children and to this end he made good use of his own experience as a Methodist pastor in slum districts of Liverpool and Manchester. His most famous work, *Her Benny: A Tale of Victorian Liverpool*, is still in print and was the first book to sell a million copies in its author's lifetime.

³⁵ ESTC lists two copies of this work at the John Rylands Library, one other copy in the UK and two in the USA.

³⁶ ESTC lists one other copy in the UK, three in the USA and one in Canada.

³⁷ MARC reference MAB BOHI G6.

Collection-specific finding aids: Roger Thorne, *Hocking; or, The Tales of Two Brothers: A Catalogue of the Works of the Hockings (Joseph, Silas and Salome) in the Collection of Michael E. Thorne* (Topsham: Providence Press, 1978).

I. Local History

This extensive collection consists largely of chapel and circuit histories together with booklets, news cuttings and brochures written to commemorate local anniversaries and other accounts of Methodism in a specific locality. The coverage is mainly British, but there is some overseas material.

The collection, which is still added to on a regular basis, is arranged in two separate sequences as follows:

- Local history book collection comprising over 500 monographs. These tend to be substantial works as opposed to booklets and pamphlets. The majority were published in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
- A boxed collection arranged alphabetically under place-name and containing about 4,000 pamphlets and other printed ephemera. Many of these were produced to celebrate chapel, circuit or Sunday school anniversaries.

Collection-specific finding aids: The local history book collection is accessible via Library Search online catalogue and a card catalogue. The pamphlets and ephemera sequence is currently only accessible via an incomplete card catalogue and box lists.

m. Miscellaneous monographs and pamphlets

In addition to the discrete printed collections described above, there are several additional sequences of books and pamphlets totalling nearly 7,000 items that can best be described as miscellaneous. The subjects covered include, but are not restricted to Church history, biography, sermons, biblical commentary, theology and spirituality, apologetics and liturgy. The following list, which is not exclusive, identifies significant sub-collections within this category distinguished by their MARC collection pressmark:

- MAB AM: Approximately 300 works published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries about the history of Methodism in the United States. The sequence also includes biographies and manuals of denominational discipline.
- MAB B: This sequence consists of 1,327 biographies consisting mainly of monographs, but with some pamphlets, published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The coverage is mainly British Wesleyan

Methodist in focus, but United States Methodism is also well-represented. In addition to the biographical works, there are some Methodist church histories and studies of the constitution and regulations of Methodism in Britain and the United States.

- MAB CH: 30 volumes of general church histories published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- MAB M: Nearly 2,000 monographs and pamphlets comprising works of theology, biblical commentary, biographies, poetry and collected works. The authors represented include Samuel Wesley senior (1662-1735), John Berridge (1716-93), George Whitefield (1714-70), William Law (1686-1761) and William Romaine (1714-95) in addition to the Wesley brothers. The dates of publication extend from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries and rare or unique copies include *Index biblicus or an exact concordance to the Holy Bible ...* by John Jackson (Cambridge, 1668)³⁸ and *An extract of the life of Ignatius Loyola* by [James Morgan] (London, 1764).³⁹ Periodical titles include volumes 1-4 of *The Athenian Oracle* (2nd edition, London, 1704) and volumes 1, 2 and 4 of *The Rambler* (11th edition, London, 1789).
- MAB MI: Over 400 monographs and pamphlets published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries on the subject of overseas missions, including biographies and country studies.
- MAB S: 100 volumes of sermons, mainly by John Wesley, published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- MAW M and MAW WM: Two sequences containing similar material and comprising over 1,700 titles published from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries with a particular emphasis on collected works of the Wesley brothers or biographies and studies of the Wesley family.

³⁸ ESTC lists one other copy-holding institution in the UK and one in the USA.

³⁹ ESTC lists one other copy-holding institution in the UK and none in the USA.

n. Periodical collections



"The Arminian Magazine...", volume 1 (1778): image ref. JRL0700519cb.

The MARC is home to one of the world's finest collections of British Methodist and Methodist-related periodical publications. The bibliographer Mr E.A. Rose listed 142 separate titles in his checklist of Methodist periodicals published in Britain, excluding titles relating to overseas missions and publications produced by individual circuits and chapels. The majority of these, together with the missionary titles not included in the Rose checklist, are represented in the MARC, although the collection does not include chapel and

circuit material.

The MARC collection can usefully be considered as falling into the following two categories:

(i). *Official periodicals and other national magazines and newspapers*

All the major British Methodist Churches before the union of 1932 published a denominational magazine as the primary means of circulating news and views to the membership. The contents included news of national interest, reports from foreign missions, obituaries, portrait engravings/photographs of ministers, local information such as chapel openings/anniversaries and articles on theology, history and religious affairs. In the late nineteenth century the content of the magazines changed to include, for example, fictional short stories, and comment on secular politics tended to appear to a greater degree than had previously been the case.

In addition to the official denominational magazines, there were other Methodist newspapers and magazines that were not necessarily official publications of the Church, but which were directed at a national readership and covered matters of general interest. Some of these publications like the Wesleyan *Methodist Times* were opposed to the leadership of their particular denomination and represent an aspect of the internal strife that was a feature of the nineteenth-century movement.

The following are the major official and national newspapers and magazines held by the MARC. The dates represent the coverage of issues held at the MARC and are not necessarily dates of first and final publication. There may also be gaps within the date coverage:

Aldersgate/Primitive Methodist Magazine: 1819-1932

Arminian/Methodist Magazine: 1778-1969

Bible Christian Magazine: 1823-1907

Christian Messenger: 1865-1932

Free Methodist: 1888-1907

Joyful News: 1915, 1955-62
Methodist New Connexion Magazine: 1798-1907
Methodist Recorder: 1881- date
Methodist Times: 1885-1937
Primitive Methodist: 1884-1900
Primitive Methodist Leader: 1895-1932
Primitive Methodist World: 1899-1900
United Free Methodist /United Methodist Magazine: 1858-1932
United Methodist: 1908-31
The Watchman: 1835-84
Wesleyan Methodist Association Magazine: 1838-57

Some of these magazines have been digitised and are now available via the British Online archives (BOA) website and are part of the Library's electronic resources. In addition, some of the Primitive Methodist and United Methodist newspapers have been digitised by the Library and will be available by links to the MARC web pages and via E-Scholar. For details, see section 6 below.

(ii). *Methodist special interest periodicals*

From the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries the several Methodist denominations and related societies, institutions, and pressure groups published specialist periodicals on an exceptionally wide range of subject including overseas missions, academic research in history and theology, temperance, colleges, Sunday schools, youth and education, worship and liturgy, music and theology. Many of these periodicals are represented in the MARC, although there are often gaps in the holdings. The majority of the titles were published in Britain, but there is also some North American representation.

The following selection of ten periodicals with a brief description of their specific subject area and date coverage is intended to act as a sample of the much wider range of serial publication in the MARC. Readers should be aware that the titles and content of publications often changed over the years; also, the dates given in the list apply to material in the MARC and do not necessarily reflect the first and final publication of the title concerned:

Collection-specific finding aids: E.A. Rose, *A Checklist of British Methodist Periodicals* (WMHS Publications, 1981); online catalogue, card catalogues and bench book indices to individual titles compiled principally by William Leary.

1. *The Local Preachers Magazine and Mutual Aid Association Reporter*: 1851-date (started as a monthly publication, but is now issued every quarter)

The official periodical of the Local Preachers Mutual Aid Association containing articles, obituaries, poetry, statistics, reviews, notice of events, branch news and readers' letters.

2. *Wesleyan Sunday School Magazine and Teachers' Assistant*: 1857-1901 (monthly)

Articles about Christian education, uplifting stories for young people, scripture lessons for specific age groups, book reviews and news about local Sunday schools including statistics.

3. *The King's Highway: A Journal of Scriptural Holiness*: 1882, 1884-96 (monthly)

Articles on theology, biblical interpretation, doctrine, biographies, spiritual testimonies, reader correspondence, poetry, reports of public meetings and book reviews.

4. *The Brooklet: The Organ of the Free Methodist Temperance League*: 1885-94 (monthly)

Contents include portrait engravings and other illustrations, articles on temperance and related matters, uplifting stories for adults and children, obituaries, reports of temperance meetings and lists of subscribers.

5. *The Journal of the Wesley Bible Union*: 1914-25 (monthly)

Articles on a number of general religious subjects, readers' letters and reviews.

6. *The Choir*: 1910-21, 1923-64 (monthly)

Articles on church music and hymns, book reviews, news from local churches, reports and notices of music events and readers' letters.

7. *Work and Workers in the Mission Field*: 1892-1932 (monthly)

Articles and reports on Wesleyan Methodist overseas missions and home support for overseas missions, portrait engravings and other illustrations, obituaries, reports of meetings, book reviews, missionaries' letters and details of financial contributions.

8. *Over to You*: 1950-95 (quarterly)

Magazine of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force Board containing articles of a general and often secular interest, together with news reports relating to chaplaincy work.

9. *Epworth Review*: 1974-2011 (four monthly)

Journal containing articles and reviews on subjects of theological, pastoral and social concern.

10. *Methodist History*: 1979-date (quarterly)

Periodical of the United Methodist Church (USA) containing articles and reviews in the field of Methodist history. The focus is on Methodism in the USA and its overseas missions, but there are also many articles of a British interest, particularly relating to the eighteenth-century movement.

11. *Wesley Historical Society Proceedings*: 1897-date (four monthly)

Periodical of the Wesley Historical Society containing articles and reviews relating to Methodist history. The Proceedings are published 3 times a year in February, May and October. Recent issues from 1997 are available as a pdf file from the society website (<http://www.wesleyhistoricalsociety.org.uk/proceedings.html>). In addition, the local branches of the Society often publish their own proceedings dealing with Methodism in a particular region.

4. Biographical reference works and indices of specific value to genealogists

There is a large number of published lists of ministers and lay people that provide invaluable biographical information about individuals from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries and are therefore of particular interest to genealogists and local historians.

These include:

(i). *Early chronological lists of Wesleyan itinerant preachers/ministers*: The earliest such list was compiled by the Wesleyan itinerant John Pawson (1737-1806) and published in 1795. This was followed by similar listings in 1801, 1813 and 1815 compiled by Charles Atmore (1759-1826), William Myles (1756-1828) and Jonathan Crowther (1759-1824) respectively.

(ii). *Hill's Arrangement*: In 1819 the Wesleyan minister William Hill (c.1771-1827) published an *Alphabetical Arrangement* listing all serving Wesleyan ministers and the circuits in which they preached. This invaluable reference publication was updated and re-issued at irregular intervals between 1824 and 1926. Also, from 1824 the volumes include a list of 'ministers who have died in the work' with their date of entry to the ministry and date of death. After Methodist Union in 1932 six more volumes were published until 1968 listing all serving and deceased ministers regardless of pre-1932 affiliation, together with lists of the Presidents of Conference, Primitive Methodist Vice-Presidents, Presidents of the Methodist Church in Ireland and of the Welsh Assembly.

(iii). *Hall's Arrangement*: This series of volumes, not to be confused with the similarly titled *Hill's Arrangement*, commenced in 1873 with the publication of an alphabetical listing by the Wesleyan minister Joseph Hall (1835-1902) of every British circuit alongside the names of itinerant preachers stationed there between 1765 and 1873. Updated editions and supplements appeared in 1885, 1897, 1912 and 1925. In 1983, William Leary (1917-2001) compiled a major update covering the period from 1924 to 1980. In addition to names and dates, *Hall's Arrangement* also includes the name of the principal chapel in the circuit and, for newly created circuits, the name of the parent circuit and the date of division.

(iv). *Other lists of ministers*: In addition to the listings originally compiled by Hall and Hill, several other lists of Methodist ministers have been published. William Leary compiled a number of such works including: *Ministers and their Circuits in the Primitive Methodist*

Church, 1819-1932; Circuits and Ministers, 1924-80 (with a supplement 1981-88); Index of ministers who have died and resigned 1968-93; Ministers and their circuits, 1969-83 and Circuits and their Ministers 1981-93. Oliver Beckerlegge (1913-93) compiled *United Methodist Ministers and their Circuits (including all predecessor denominations), 1797-1932*. Mention should also be made of *Garlick's Methodist Registry 1983*, which includes a list of serving ministers with biographical details.

(v.). *Lay People*: In 1906 the Wesley Historical Society published an index to all obituaries, notices of recent death and memorials published in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* from first publication in 1778 until 1839. In 1984 William Leary compiled a second volume extending the index from 1840 until 1932 and Leary also published an index of obituaries from the *Primitive Methodist Magazine* 1819-1932. An index of obituaries from the magazines of the Wesleyan Methodist Association (1838-57) and the United Methodist Free Churches (1857-1907) is also available, compiled by Gareth Lloyd. There is also a published index to obituaries and memorials recorded in the magazines of the Independent Methodists. Finally, there is a separate index of obituaries published in the *Wesleyan Methodist Local Preachers Magazine* from 1851 to 1930.

(vi). *The Methodist Who's Who*: This was first published in 1910 and contains biographical and family details for ministers and prominent lay men; other editions were published annually until 1915. The volumes appeared under the auspices of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, but from 1912 they included entries covering all branches of Methodism, together with some prominent overseas Methodists. The introductory section also contains valuable statistical information for Methodism around the world, including some membership figures. A closely related volume, but with the slightly different title of *Who's Who in Methodism* appeared in 1933, which included, for the first time, entries for prominent Methodist women. In 1934, a separate *Methodist Local Preachers Who's Who* was published, which contains entries for every male and female local preacher active in the work in that year from every pre-union British Methodist denomination.

In addition to the published lists above, researchers will find valuable, the following general overview of such sources: C.D. Field, 'Methodist Prosopography: Sources and Exemplars of Collective Biography in British Methodism', in David J. Hart and David J. Jeremy, eds., *Brands plucked from the Burning: Essays on Methodist Memorialisation and Remembering* (Wolverhampton: Wesley Historical Society, 2013).

5. Illustrations, Ceramics and Artefacts

(i). Illustrations



Bible Christian preacher
Mary Thorne (née O'Bryan),
and her daughter? (1860):
image ref. JRL0802253dc

The MARC contains a huge number of pictorial representations of people, chapels and idealized scenes from Methodist history. They are frequently to be found dispersed within the wider printed and manuscript holdings and are therefore difficult to describe or categorise except by general reference to the collection in which they are located – for example, class photographs within the Richmond College archive.

Magazines and other periodicals are probably the best source of illustrative material as these often contain images, especially for the period after 1850. Worthy of particular mention is the *Arminian/Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* as this monthly periodical contains portrait engravings and photographs of Wesleyan ministers from its first publication in 1778 until well into the twentieth century. These portraits are indexed between 1778 and 1893.

In addition to the general holdings, there is a small number of discrete visual collections, including the John Wesley portrait collection, which also contains illustrations of other Methodist worthies as well as chapels and places of interest. There is also a large uncatalogued composite collection of portrait engravings and photographs of itinerant preachers and ministers, with some representations of chapels and other sites of Methodist significance.

Collection-specific finding aids: Methodist Archives collection catalogue (online); Catalogue of the John Wesley portraits collection; manuscript index of preachers' portraits in the *Methodist Magazine* (MA 1977/074); general catalogues and indexes.

(ii). Ceramics



Ceramic clock-face and figure of John Wesley (1860): image ref. JRL030512tr.

The MARC is home to the Sydney Lawson collection of Wesleyana. This consists of 168 busts, plaques, bowls, portrait medals, cups, plates and other miscellaneous ceramics together with supporting printed and manuscript material collected by the Methodist minister Sydney Lawson (1884-1943).

The collection is particularly noteworthy for its many depictions of John Wesley produced to mark commemorative events.

There are a few eighteenth-century pieces, but the majority are from the nineteenth century, with the work of Staffordshire potteries, including Wedgwood, particularly well-represented.

Other Methodist and Anglican worthies whose portraits appear in the collection include Charles and Sarah Wesley, John Fletcher and Mary Bosanquet-Fletcher, George Whitefield and Adam Clarke.

Collection-specific finding aids: Donald H. Ryan, *Illustrated catalogue of the Sydney Lawson collection* (2003).

(iii). Artefacts

There are very few artefacts in the MARC and these relate almost exclusively to the Wesleys and other early evangelical leaders. They consist largely of keepsakes acquired by individual Methodists and include a preaching collar of John Wesley, a small fragment of Charles Wesley's chair, an eighteenth-century bible box allegedly owned by the Wesley family and a piece of Mary Bosanquet-Fletcher's wedding dress.

Collection-specific finding aids: Consult the archivist.

6. Digital collections

(i). Individual images

Since 2007, the Library has digitised between 4,000 and 5,000 individual Methodist manuscripts/documents and printed material, which collection is searchable online by keyword. Copies of images can be freely downloaded for personal research; higher resolution images are also available upon application and payment of a reproduction fee.

Collection-specific finding aids: University of Manchester Digital Image collections – Rylands non-conformist collection
<http://enriqueta.man.ac.uk/luna/servlet/nonconform~91~1>

(ii). Complete publications

Digital copies of the *Arminian Magazine* (1778-1797), *Methodist Magazine* (1797-1932), *Primitive Methodist Magazine/Aldersgate Magazine* (1819-1932), and *Methodist Minutes of Conference* (1744-1877?) are now accessible on a chargeable/subscription basis via British Online Archives (BOA) at [http://www.britishonlinearchives.co.uk/collection.php?cid=9781851172092&pid=&did=&cat=&sid=&quicksearch=Methodist Magazine&keywords_all=Methodist Magazine &date_option=equal](http://www.britishonlinearchives.co.uk/collection.php?cid=9781851172092&pid=&did=&cat=&sid=&quicksearch=Methodist%20Magazine&keywords_all=Methodist%20Magazine&date_option=equal)

They are also available as part of the electronic resources which can be accessed free online by registered staff and students of the University of Manchester.

The Primitive and United Methodist newspapers i.e. *Primitive Methodist Weekly* (1868-72), the *Primitive Methodist* (1884-1900), *Primitive Methodist World* (1883-5, 1899-1900), *Primitive Methodist Leader* (1905-32), the *Free Methodist* (1888-1907), the *United Methodist* (1908-31), and the *Wesleyan Methodist* (1923-4) have been digitised and will be available and accessible to the public online via the (Special Collections) Methodist web pages and E-Scholar.

Select items from the Percy Hymn book collection, notably Percy 878, have been digitised and are accessible and freely available to the public on Luna at: <http://enriqueta.man.ac.uk/luna/servlet/s/9pqki8>

Digital Finding Aids: Eighteenth-Century Collections Online (ECCO) and Early English Books Online (EEBO) are available through the University of Manchester Library's electronic resources.

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