

MS Death of Elizabeth Blackwell¹

Elizabeth Blackwell (née Mowland, d. 1772) was the first wife of Ebenezer Blackwell. She joined her husband in providing support and hospitality to John Wesley and to Charles and Sarah Wesley. The affection in which Charles held her is evident in the extended hymn that he wrote at her death. See also the related hymn for her husband.

An incomplete looseleaf draft of this multi-part hymn is part of the collection in the Methodist Archive and Research Centre, accession number MA 1977/583/30 (Charles Wesley Notebooks Box 4). The transcription below is provided with permission of the Librarian and Director, The John Rylands Library, The University of Manchester.

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

**Hymns
on the Translation of
Mrs. E[lizabeth] Blackwell,
March 27, 1772.²**

[Hymn I.]

- [1.] God of all power, and truth, and love,
Whose faithful mercies never end,
Thy longing Servant to remove,
Who dost the flaming Convoy send;
Help us thine attributes to praise,
Help us thy Follower to pursue,
Till all obtain the crowning grace,
Till all, like³ her, thy Glory view.

2. E'er yet she into being came,
Thou didst thy favrite Handmaid chuse,
Thy love inscrib'd her with thy Name,
And mark'd the Vessel for thine use:
With tender, gracious awe inspir'd,
With innocence and purity,
God above all the Child desir'd,
And gave her simple heart to Thee.

3. Her *pious* course with life began:
Call'd by the Consecrating Rite,

²The complete version of this tribute, organized as parts of a single hymn, appears in MS Funeral Hymns, 48–57. Published posthumously in *Poetical Works*, 6:323–31.

³“Like” has “with” written above it as an alternative.

In Wisdom's pleasant paths she ran,
And serv'd her Maker day and night:
Watchful to keep her garments clean,
Glad to frequent the hallow'd place,
She never *left* her God for sin,
Or *wholly* lost that earliest grace.

4. While zealous for thy righteous law,
She her integrity maintain'd,
Thou didst her trembling spirit awe
And bless with lowliness unfeign'd:
No Pharisaic pride or scorn
Could harbour in her bosom find,
Her virtue into poison turn,
Or taint so pure and good a mind.
5. Touching the legal righteousness
While blameless in thy sight she liv'd,
Thee she confess'd in all her ways,
And all her good from Thee receiv'd:
Faithful ev'n then, she flew to tend,
Where'er distrest, the sick and poor,
Rejoic'd for them her life to spend,
And all thy gifts to them restore.⁴
6. Did not her alms and prayers arise,
Memorial sweet before thy throne?

⁴Ori., "And ~~freely~~ all thy gifts restore" changed to "And all thy gifts to them restore."

Grateful, accepted sacrifice,
They brought the gospel-blessing down:
To One who Thee sincerely fear'd
Thou didst the Comforter impart:
The herald spake, the Grace *appear'd*,
And stamp'd Salvation on her heart!

7. Her unopposing heart receiv'd
With meekness the ingrafted word,
With reverential joy⁵ believ'd,
And sunk before her smiling Lord:
Reciprocal affection mov'd,
And wonder ask'd—"How can it be!
"Hath God so poor a creature lov'd,
"Or bought so mean a worm as me!"⁶

Hymn II.

- [1.] Commences now the *Christian* race,
The conflict good, the Life conceal'd:
Th' eternal God, replete with grace,
Jesus is to her soul reveal'd!
Translated into wondrous light,
Humbly *assur'd* of sin forgiven,
She goes in peace, she walks in white
And close pursues her Guide to heaven.
2. Exulting with her Head to rise,
She seeks the hidden things above,

⁵Ori., "awe."

For joy sells all, the jewel buys,
The heavenly treasure of his love:
Jesus alone resolv'd to gain,
And crucified with Jesus here,
The finish'd sanctity t' attain
In lowliness of filial fear.⁶

3. Fear to offend or God, or man,
In all her conversation shines,
While following the Redeemer's plan,
She carries on his great designs;
Watchful immortal souls to win,
The God supreme she dares commend,
Constrains the outcasts to come in,
And shows them their Expiring Friend.
4. By wisdom pure and peaceable
By the meek Spirit of her Lord⁷
She knows the stoutest to compel,
And sinners wins, without the word:
They see the tempers of The Lamb,
They feel the wisdom from above,
And bow subdued to Jesus Name,
The captives of resistless love.
5. Witness ye once to evil sold;
Witness her kind, successful zeal,

[the rest of the manuscript is missing]

⁶Ori., "In meekest lowliness of fear" changed to "In lowliness of filial fear."

⁷Ori., "She knows the stubborn to compel."