

# Sixty Years on the Wesley Trail

by

Frank Baker



The Divinity School  
Duke University  
Durham  
1998

Duke



Libraries

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Prof. Frank Baker received the Distinguished Service Award at the fall 1993 meeting of the General Commission on Archives and History of The United Methodist Church (Dr. Charles Yrigoyen, Jr., General Secretary). The citation, read by Prof. Russell E. Richey, and Prof. Baker's response, "Sixty Years on the Wesley Trail," are printed here with permission.

This keepsake is printed in celebration of the generous gift of the Baker Collection to the Divinity School and to Duke University, and in grateful recognition of the lives of Frank and Nellie Baker, given in service to God and humanity.

March 27, 1998

"Sixty Years on the Wesley Trail"

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## SIXTY YEARS ON THE WESLEY TRAIL

I first put fingers to my keyboard for this paper with deep sadness because of the recent loss of my dear friend Elizabeth Hart. It was Elizabeth who stayed with Nellie and me in July 1987 when she was tracking down more information on her favourite woman, Susanna Wesley. It was Elizabeth who presided over a lecture on Charles Wesley's Letters which I delivered to the founding meeting of the Charles Wesley Society at Princeton in 1990, and justly but gently chastised me for having sat on those precious transcriptions for over thirty years. It was Elizabeth who, as senior librarian at the Vancouver School of Theology, prepared a bibliography of my published writings as a surprise for my eightieth birthday earlier that same year. Elizabeth, you have done so much for the Wesleys and their followers; thank you!

Your General Secretary suggested that I might speak to the General Commission on Archives and History on something like, "What I have always wanted to say about John Wesley, but haven't." That was indeed tempting, but Chuck kindly added that the topic should be of my own choosing. Nor indeed can I truly think of any Wesley secret which I haven't spilled. You see I never regarded him as a plaster saint whose statue must never be chipped: one of my chief desires has indeed been to discover the last personal thing about John Wesley, and then so to describe it that others might visualize him and his followers in terms intelligible in a different age and

place. Nor did I suffer from tunnel vision: I wished to see with equal clarity both John's family and his friends--even his enemies--so that the whole age could be envisaged as if it were yesterday. I was interested in what is now termed "trivial pursuits"; I wanted to discover and share the tiny personal details about the Wesleys, that their mother Susanna didn't have an "h" to their name, that "our" John didn't have a "Benjamin" after his, and that he seems to have used only the first line of his supposed rule, "Do all the good you can," the other five or six lines having been picked up in England later by Dwight L. Moody from a Shrewsbury tombstone, and taken as *his* motto. Even that loyal Methodist, Hillary Clinton, still uses the traditional seven clauses as Wesley's rule for *her*. In attempting faithfully to follow the Wesley trail I have only partially succeeded, of course, and there have been a few daunting dead ends, some straying from the path, but also many exciting discoveries. It is this mixture of failures and undeserved blessings in tracking the Wesleys that I wish to reveal in an autobiographical sketch.

About one thing you must be clear from the outset: my acquisitive instinct is very strong indeed. And from early youth it has focused on *old* things, old postage stamps, old documents, and especially old books. Strangely enough, I still remember buying my first secondhand book, a leather-bound copy of Joseph Addison's *Spectator*, bought at Frank Woore's bookstall in Derby market-hall when I was 14 and on a summer holiday with my grandmother Baker at Repton. I derive a perverse kind of pleasure

in using this, suitably indexed, to search out some of John Wesley's quotations.

That same winter of 1924 I was caught up in the Humberside Crusade, when I accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour. On Feb. 7 the following year, a bitterly cold Sunday evening, about 8:30, as Nellie and I were returning home after taking a deformed young lady back from chapel in her wheelchair, I put my near hand with Nellie's in her pocket; she chided me, saying, "People might think we were more than friends." Whereupon I told her that I wanted to hold her hand for the rest of my life. She was somewhat flustered, but said that I'd better talk to her parents about that--which I did, and secured their blessings on our eventual marriage. I began public speaking at 15, preaching at 16. At 20 I offered myself for the Primitive Methodist ministry, and was accepted.

From 1931-34 I completed a B.D. degree at Manchester University. Union of the three major British Methodist denominations took place in 1932, so I entered theological college a Primitive Methodist and emerged a simple Methodist. Ministers in training then had to serve four years of probation after college, during which they were not allowed to marry, under dire penalties. (With a degree I was forgiven a year.) On August 10, 1937, Nellie and I were married at our former 'Primitive' Church in Hull. For our first married circuit we were stationed in Warminster, Wiltshire, on the edge of Salisbury Plain. As a chaplain to an Army camp on the Plain I was very close to Stonehenge. Adjoining one of my tiny Methodist charges, at Bratton, was a prehistoric hillfort, maiden Castle, eventually overrun by the

Romans, nearby an ancient round barrow marking a burial, and one of several White Horses later carved into the chalk hillsides of England. I used to arrange that the youth clubs of my two main charges, Warminster and Westbury, would meet on summer evenings for a baseball match--or at least a primitive British version of this which we called 'rounders.' We also took the young people with us for hikes on the Wiltshire Downs, when pairs of young men and women vied for the pleasure of transporting baby Margaret in her Carrycot.

A tantalizing carrot had been dangled before my eyes during my first year of probation. A good Methodist historian, Dr. George Eayrs, had recently died, and bequeathed two prizes a year for essays on Methodist history by young Methodist ministers. History was not my line of country, nor had I heard of the subject for the first Prize Essay, "John Wesley's *Christian library*." 'Fifteen pounds,' however, had a pleasing sound, especially in England almost sixty years ago. I decided to have a go at it. In 1936 I did indeed win the precious fifteen pounds--and a new vocation. I actually began to enjoy historical research, and even managed to win two more first prizes in addition to two second prizes--and forthwith spent them on Methodist history. Dr. George Eayrs played a valuable role in encouraging Methodist historians, just as, on a far larger scale, has been done on the American scene by Dr. Ed. Robb with fifteen years (so far) of a Fund for Theological Education, now numbering over sixty John Wesley Fellows, of whom several (including the first, Steve

Harper) have been among my own graduates at Duke.

The Eayrs Essay Prizes inevitably led me into membership of the Wesley Historical Society, and this soon introduced me to researches into the two thousand publications of John Wesley. My first WHS article was on new discoveries in that vast field.<sup>1</sup> The publication of a later double article in the *Proceedings*, "The Reprinting of Wesley's Publications," and Part I of "Wesley's Printers and Book sellers,"<sup>2</sup> drew me to the close attention and very close friendship of Wesley Swift, some years older than I, who had written widely on Methodism in Scotland. We became good Wesley 'buddies,' and he was a valued critic in tightening up my English.

Our ministry in Keighley (1939-40) introduced us to the horrors of Hitler. Britain's declaration of war was announced on the first Sunday in our new circuit. This soon entailed twice-weekly overnight vigils in an air-raid control centre, and regular service in a Citizens' Advice Bureau. It also introduced me, however, to the manuscript records of the Harworth Round, housed in Temple Street Church there.

One amazing piece of treasure trove was quite fortuitous--except for my nose for old and musty things. Down the steep slopes of West Lane, Keighley, near the top of which we lived, I saw a house for sale, with all kinds of old debris thrown about outside. Venturing inside, I saw some damaged books and a torn old manuscript, swept into the centre of the downstairs floor. I asked what they were doing with the rubbish, and they replied, "Throwing it away!" I asked to buy it, but was told

that I was welcome to take it off their hands. This I happily did. After much research I was eventually able to identify the author of the faded fragments, now known at Duke University as 'the Illingworth Manuscript.' They describe the travels and troubles of a young Methodist teacher, Thomas Illingworth of Addingham, during the years 1755-59.

These included visits by preaching visitors such as George Whitefield, Charles Wesley, and William Grimshaw. I have transcribed them onto 150 pages, with numerous annotations, and one of these days hope to publish them.

Our next wartime circuit, 1941-43, was in Bury and Ramsbottom, on the outskirts of Manchester, where our home overlooked a meadow in a place delightfully named Edenfield. One of my unhappy tasks there was to supervise the sale of the old Primitive Methodist Church in Ramsbottom, as part of the economy of Methodist Union. On Nov. 31, 1941, the first Sunday I was due to preach at Irwell Vale, I was ill. Nellie, now an accredited Methodist local preacher, deputized for me. The stewards later told her, "If your husband preaches as well as you, he'll do!"

In June 1943 I shared in the Special Jubilee Number of the *Proceedings* of the Wesley Historical Society, established in 1893.<sup>3</sup> The President, the Rev. F. F. Bretherton, described its origin and progress, its founding members and continuing officers. The Joint Editor, Dr. A. W. Harrison, analyzed "Fifty Years of Studies in Methodist History," its constant enrichment by the publication of standard editions of Wesley's *Journal* and *Letters*, together with Sugden's edition of Wesley's *Sermons* and Dr. John S.

Simon's five-volume *Life of Wesley*, and other major works. It fell to me, the new boy as Registrar, to set forth a wish-list for "The Next Fifty Years"--which actually conclude with this present year of 1993. What I did was to elaborate the plea of Father Maximin Piette, a Roman Catholic student of Methodism, for "a truly critical edition of all the works of their founder." With my suggestions for laying the foundations for such an enterprise, a generation later I was taken up by Professors Albert Outler, Robert E. Cushman, Joe Quillian, Franz Hildebrandt and others. I am personally gratified that this great work which now involves so many of us, the Oxford/Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley, does indeed follow basically the lines which I sketched out fifty years ago. It is indeed wonderful to share in at least the partial realization of what then seemed an impossible dream!

I had already dedicated myself in Keighley to searching out Wesley material. From Keighley I was able to visit libraries in Bradford and Leeds, and even Bath.<sup>4</sup> Now the Bury and Ramsbottom circuit provided easy access to some of the many important libraries in Manchester, including my own former college, Hartley-Victoria. Here I stumbled on the James Everett Library, which included some wonderfully revealing manuscripts of William Grimshaw, like Everett himself a Methodist maverick, whose biography Everett hoped to publish. I gratefully entered into Everett's heritage, and in March 1943 published in the *WHS Proceedings* the first of the three parts of Grimshaw's diary of 1755-1757, revealing his rapid and sometimes devastating changes of

mood, and (more importantly for Methodist history) documenting his wide travels and varied labours as the pioneer Circuit Steward of Methodism, and John Wesley's right hand man in the North of England. I closed these diary extracts with the announcement of my intention some day of attempting to fulfill Everett's dream, and completed a dissertation in 1952, published in 1962.

From 1944 to 1949, from war to hardwon peace, I served the Manfield Circuit, created at Methodist Union from an amalgamation of 23 Primitive and United Methodist Churches in a rural and coal mining area of Nottinghamshire. Many of my people were miners, and I occasionally made pastoral calls down Welbeck Colliery. Our family home was in Warsop, about five miles from the Major Oak, the centre of Sherwood Forest. We were welcomed with a big bang on our first night--an experimental "buzz-bomb" sent by Hitler. This landed in a field about a mile away, did little serious damage, but gave the Baker family something of a shock by pulverizing the window over Enid's cot, though no splinter fell on her.

I well remember one hectic wartime night spent in Sheffield, after I had been doing research in Sheffield Public Library. I worked all night during an air raid, sorting hundreds of antique volumes housed in the Challengers' closing cellar bookshop. They had furnished me with a camp bed should I need it, but actually the time was much more precious than the sleep. My main prize by the morning was the manuscript letter-book of Sarah Crosby (1729-1804), Wesley's first major woman preacher.<sup>5</sup>

Nor was that haul very expensive at that time, though my favourite place to pick up inexpensive antiquarian books was Edinburgh, with many occasional bargains also in Manchester, Leeds, York, Oxford, and especially London. Epworth Secondhand Books sometimes set aside for my examination likely Methodist purchases and even occasional duplicates from the huge official Methodist collection: my greatest treasure there was a complete run of Wesley's rare annual *Minutes*, 1765-91, bound by one of his preachers, Robert Costerdine. For several years before his death in 1958 I also served as buying agent for Bishop F. D. Leete, and in that capacity became familiar with Sotheby's Auction Rooms, on one notable occasion picking up for myself (accompanied by Gordon Rupp) an 'odd lot' knocked down to me, a tea-chest of unbound and uncounted Wesley pamphlets.

Whenever I was called to attend a connexional committee (which for the remainder of my Methodist life in Britain was my frequent duty), or to deliver a special address or sermon, I generally used the occasion to do some bibliographical research, and if at all possible to stay over for an hour or two to visit what Nellie called "old book shops." I searched especially for collected volumes of bound pamphlets, usually inexpensive, but often containing unrecognized treasures. Because of my passion for pamphlets, indeed, when dear old F. F. Bretherton died at 87 in 1956 he bequeathed his library to the Wesley Historical Society, but his pamphlets to me.

I had already built up a considerable collection of *Methodistica* and *Wesleyana*, some of them

exceedingly rare, a few apparently unique. My study was crammed higgledy-piggledy with books, sometimes stuffed into sawn-up railway ties engineered into odd corners and over the tops of doorways. Wesley Swift visited me at my insufficiently ample front room study at Warsop just after I had it imaginatively fixed up. He crawled beneath the superstructure, straightened up, looked around, and exclaimed, "Frank, in your short ministry, how did you manage to accumulate all these books?" To this I replied, "These, Wesley, are my cigarettes." On the rebound from this he wrote informing me that he had given up smoking--though, alas, this reformation was not permanent!

Very soon our area around Warsop became well known as the centre for Norton Prisoners of War Camp, to which the British Allies sent Germans who were academically trained, clergy and teachers of all varieties. Many German notables came to speak to them, such as Martin Niemöller. I first met Franz Hildebrandt there. I soon became friendly with the Camp Commandant, a genuine Christian, who released trusted prisoners to my custody even before fraternizing with Germans was officially allowed, including one young Lutheran, Hermann, who assisted me in Holy Communion at Warsop Methodist Church. A year or more later, on one Communion Sunday when I was ill, Nellie arranged for Dr. Daman, a German missionary to Africa (an expert in Arabic), to preach and serve communion on my behalf, and a very large number of communicants stayed after the normal preaching service. For several years we had a steady stream of Germans

attending our church and being given hospitality both by Nellie and me, and my mother, who often sought shelter with us from the bombing of Hull, where my father was a locomotive engine driver. It was also good to know that warm hospitality was offered by our congregation, even by one family who had suffered loss of life during the war. One young man, from Moravian Herrnhut of all places, even volunteered his services to bind my *WHS Proceedings*. When in 1950 I took a British Methodist youth group by train to the Passion Play at Oberammergau I was able to arrange visits with some of our prisoner friends in Cologne, Frankfurt-am-Main, and Munich, where Walter Schmähling's mother brought coffee and cookies to us the railway station. One of those who used to come to Warsop Methodist Church was the theologian of hope, Jürgen Moltmann. We kept in touch with dozens of them for many ears, and are still in regular correspondence with six.

Meantime I was still kept busy with requests for articles about various aspects of Methodist history, not only in the *WHS Proceedings*, the *London Quarterly Review*, but from 1945 in the *Methodist Recorder*, for whom I wrote a series of weekly historical articles.

I had a brief but interesting flurry in 1945-46. A new Wesley letter had been discovered, written from the *Simmonds* off Georgia to 'V,' i.e. 'Varanese,' Sarah Kirkham, whose Platonic affair with John Wesley greatly disturbed Susanna Wesley, and about whom Mrs. Elsie Harrison had written in her popular *Son to Susanna* (1937). Mrs. Harrison was asked to



describe the psychological background of the letter, which begins: "God has brought an unhappy unthankful wretch hither, through a thousand dangers, to renew his complaints, and loathe the life which has been preserved by a series of miracles...Go where I will, I carry my Hell about me." The letter itself had generously been given to the Methodist Missionary Society. When I saw a photostat copy I realized immediately that a serious mistake had been made. I prepared an article pointing out that the letter was in fact by Charles, not John, and gave proofs.<sup>6</sup> More urgently, I sought to soothe some emotions ruffled by this news. I need have had no fear with Mrs. Elsie Harrison, however. Her reply was almost ecstatic: "What good news about that letter! It was very puzzling coming from John, and it took a real effort of mind to make it fit him; but to think that it was my old enemy Charles all the time is in one way a great relief and in another makes me feel that I owe John an apology...So many grateful thanks." (A footnote is necessary to explain one reference in this letter. Elsie Harrison's learned father was Dr. John Simon, who wrote the five-volume life of John Wesley, and their breakfast-table was a debating battleground between the Johnites and the Charlesites; needless to say, Elsie was on John's side! Perhaps I may be permitted another footnote here: Maldwyn Edwards once told me that after reading *Son to Susanna* he found it very difficult to sing Charles Wesley's hymns.)

After recounting the historical errors of others, it is only fair that I confess with shame to a historical error of my own, which has haunted me

for many years. In 1947 I delivered the WHS Lecture, on *Charles Wesley as revealed by his letters*. I wished to use a letter inserted in Telford's revised edition of his life of Charles Wesley<sup>7</sup> --if it were genuine. It was claimed as written by Charles to General Oglethorpe's wife in Georgia in 1736. I attempted to test its authenticity by writing to the Georgia Historical Society, but my correspondence went astray, and I printed it without verification. Eventually it turned out to be an innocent hoax perpetrated in a Chicago literary club in 1892; before printing I really should have checked whether Oglethorpe had actually been married in 1736!

My discovery of The Court Bookshop in Hold-born during this period gave me a magnet attraction during any visits to the nearby British Library, and here I managed to purchase many manuscripts (and to transcribe others) of Charles Wesley's daughter Sally, upon whom I delivered a brief lecture during the 1948 Methodist Conference in Bristol, "A Methodist Bluestocking." She had long before captured my attention, and I had planned an eventual biography of her, which I now fear I shall never write. Much of her correspondence is in my files, including some with Mercy Doddridge, Philip Doddridge's unmarried daughter; there are also some letters relating to her frustrated platonic affair with Rev. John Clowes (1743-1831), a learned devotee of Emanuel Swedenborg, whom in 1797 she rejected as her possible husband. I also secured a large collection of Sally's manuscript verse, and much material on her younger brother Samuel, the musician. Perhaps the most unjustly neglected person in all the Wesley family,

however, is Samuel Wesley, Junior, the eldest son (1691-39), about whom a solid biography is long overdue.

From 1950 to 1954 the Methodist Church moved me to Cleethorpes, a beautiful seaside resort sitting on the most northerly marking of the Greenwich Meridian, the imaginary line drawn between the north and south poles. On the sands at Cleethorpes I was able to arrange a "rounders/baseball" match between my young people and an American youth group visiting the 1951 World Methodist Conference meeting in Oxford.

Now living in John Wesley's own county, it was very important for me to become more familiar with Lincolnshire, and to visualize the country lanes and city streets which Wesley trod or rode. The keys to this were Epworth and Lincoln, both of which I visited frequently. At Epworth I was a member of the local management committee organizing the restoration, rebuilding, and the reopening in 1957 of the Epworth Old Rectory, now under the ownership of the World Methodist Council. Actually more important for research into both the Wesley family and Lincolnshire Methodism was the Lincoln Diocesan Registry, now incorporated in the Lincoln Archives Committee, where in fact I had first begun to work in 1948, when I was still living in Warsaw. From these resources in 1987 I prepared a pioneer article on "The Beginnings of Methodism in Lincolnshire,"<sup>8</sup> complemented in 1988 by one on "Investigating Wesley Family Traditions."<sup>9</sup>

In 1955 Nellie and I moved to our home city of Kingston-upon-Hull for what was to prove our

last British Circuit, Hull North, where I was the Superintendent Minister with pastoral charge of its largest church, Newland. In 1956 Nellie was able to join me as a visitor to the World Methodist Council in Lake Junaluska, N.C., on her first transatlantic voyage. She walked with me around the lake for the opening of the World Methodist Headquarters there, and was able to meet some of my growing circle of international Methodist friends. Many of these she also rejoiced to meet on similar occasions, in 1961 in Oslo, in 1971 in Denver, in 1981 in Honolulu, when we invited friends to our rooms for home-made cookies. Thus when we came to Duke in 1960 and 1961, although she was lonely for family in England, she knew that she was coming to the warm and generous reception of many old American friends as well as many quite new ones. And we rejoice again tonight with both old and new members of our greatly extended family in echoing John Wesley's repeated proclamation from his deathbed: "The best of all is, God is with us!"

\* \* \*

I add as a postscript a brief survey of my previous 33 years spent in the USA, almost wholly involved with the Directors and Editors of the Works of John Wesley. The first 15 years were spent in preparing working papers on the Wesley project, in committees and board meetings, planning an integrated and documented series of 35 volumes of Wesley's Works. The basic order, content, and style of the whole was completed during the first twenty years, and the actual text of all but a handful of volumes was made

available to the unit editors for their preparation of a dozen unit introductions and whatever additional footnotes they deemed necessary. The pioneer volume of *Appeals* was issued in 1976, two volumes of *Letters* in 1980 and 1982, and in 1983 the *Collection of Hymns* (originally planned for its bicentenary in 1980). A highly important series, the four volumes of *Sermons* (with which we had hoped to begin) was completed in 1984-87. From that time we have continued (and hope with a fair amount of realism to continue) at about a volume a year, with Richard Heitzenrater taking over as General Editor since 1988.

In 1966 I published a *Union Catalogue* of the Wesleys' publications for the guidance of our workers, though the final Bibliography is being prepared on radically different principles. The specific contents of the future Descriptive and Analytical Bibliography planned for volumes 34 and 35 are contained in an 81-page Summary prefixed to the new edition of the *Union Catalogue* published in 1991 by George Zimmermann of Stone Mountain, Georgia (21 dollars). This supplementary document, originally prepared in 1981, contains all the new numbers allocated to Wesley's publications, which are being incorporated into all volumes of the Oxford/Bicentennial Edition. The 1991 Summary of the Bibliography also shows in parentheses (where they exist), the superseded numbers from Richard Green's *The Works of John and Charles Wesley* (1896, 1906), and also the printed volumes in which the texts appear both in the Jackson edition and the new Oxford/Bicentennial edition.

Most of the basic apparatus of the new edition is already present in the 14 volumes already published, especially in the appendices to Vol. 4 of the *Sermons*, notably the genealogical stemmata where-by we trace the textual history of the roughly two thousand of Wesley's contemporary editions, and the variant readings in all those editions, as well as furnishing full scriptural and general indexes. Those who are interested in bibliographical niceties will already have realized that we plan to identify every edition even of John and Charles Wesley's 4-page ephemera by full collations, and by many minutiae (where needed), supported by complete illustrations of all the ornaments and flowers used by Wesley's printers. Rather than delay this latter provision to the final stages of the Bibliography it seems desirable to publish in the near future a 50-page monograph on one important finding, "Printers' Flowers as Bibliographical Evidence in Eighteenth-Century Britain," and possibly "A Preliminary Discourse on the Wesley Bibliography," acquainting our public with the peculiar problems of this field and our proposed resolutions of them.

Frank Baker

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Vol. 21: 132-33 (March 1938).

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. 22: 57-65.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. 24: 17-40.

<sup>4</sup>See WHS. 23: 64-8, 85-9, 104-8.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. 27: 76-82.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid. 25: 17-23, 97-102.

<sup>7</sup>*The Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley*. 1900, pp. 245-46.

<sup>8</sup>Lincolnshire Methodist History Society, *Lincoln, Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 4-19.

<sup>9</sup>*Methodist History*, Madison, N.J., 26: 154-62, (April 1988).

Citation  
Distinguished Service Award  
Frank Baker

For many of us Frank Baker figures as John Wesley today. That image has been stamped by his association with the *Oxford Edition of the Works of John Wesley*, continued as the *Abingdon Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley*. Frank was its longtime general editor, bibliographer and textual editor; he determined what John Wesley says today. That series is and will be a monument to Frank Baker, signaling a lasting contribution to scholarship.

The Wesley Works project is but one entry in Baker's extensive bibliography. Elizabeth Hart cataloged 247 writings.<sup>1</sup> Thirty are books of which Frank is editor or author (number 30 is the *Works*). These include several dealing with Charles Wesley verse; interpretations of key figures associated with Methodism, *William Grimshaw, 1708-1763* (1963), *Captain Thomas Webb, Pioneer of American Methodism* (1965), *The Heart of True Spirituality: Selections from William Law* (1985); important inventories of literature, for instance, *A Union Catalogue of the Publications of John and Charles Wesley* (1966); major assessments of the Methodist movement, notably *John Wesley and the Church of England* (1970) and *From Wesley to Asbury: Studies in Early American Methodism* (1976); individual volumes in the *Works of John Wesley*, specifically the *Letters*; assessments of dimensions, aspects or relations of Methodism, illustrated by his *Methodism and the Love-Feast* (1957); and other editing projects, the

most monumental of which was the *Encyclopedia of World Methodism* (1974).

Frank served on the editorial committee for the latter work and contributed 80 entries, not numbered separately by Hart. His 217 cataloged chapters, articles and contributions show incredible range over Methodist and modern history. They include now classic items, like his "Polity" section in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain* and "The Doctrines in the Discipline," a 1966 essay we are now reprinting. They include topics to which nobody else would or could give scholarly treatment, such as "Charles Wesley's Scripture Playing Cards" or "John Wesley's First Marriage." And the essays come through the twenty year period covering the *Wesley Works* and up to the very present, showing Frank's willingness to respond to various overtures and invitations, despite his heavy obligations.

Given the extensive and intensive commitment to writing, one easily forgets the range of contributions Baker has made to the life of the church and the university. Educated at the universities of London and Manchester, ordained in 1937, Frank served circuits in British Methodism from 1934 to 1959. Recipient of the Ph.D. from Nottingham, Frank joined the Duke faculty in 1960 and continued teaching there until retirement in 1980. Through his teaching he inspired many to interest in Wesley and Methodist history and trained the leadership of the next generation of Methodist scholars. Even those of us who made the mistake to go elsewhere to seminary have looked to Frank as mentor and supporter. That active interest and support Frank continues,

along with his engagement with Dick Heitzenrater on the *Wesley Works*, now as Professor Emeritus of English Church History.

Baker leaves us a number of legacies. One that must not be forgotten is his library, amassed over many years and assiduously collected to support the interpretation of the Wesleys. Now given to The Divinity School, the Baker Collection is essential to future Wesley interpretation and puts Wesley studies on a high platform.

Married in 1937 to Ellen E. Levitt, Frank and Nellie have one son, two daughters. As a couple they have been active in the church and civic life of Durham. A special ministry, rendered over many years, has been to international students, whom the Bakers have adopted and tutored in the fine art of badminton.

It is a pleasure to present for the 1994 distinguished service award, a friend and colleague, Frank Baker.

Russell E. Richey

#### NOTE

<sup>1</sup> "Bibliography of the Published Writings of Frank Baker," and "Bibliography of the Published Writings of Frank Baker: A Supplement," *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, XLVII and XLVIII (May, 1990 and Oct. 1991), 232-40 and 87-90.