

Proceedings of The Charles Wesley Society

Volume 10

2005

S T Kimbrough, Jr.
Editor

Charles A. Green
Assistant Editor

PAPERS PRESENTED
AT
THE 16TH ANNUAL MEETING
OF
THE CHARLES WESLEY SOCIETY

September 30–October 4, 2005

Hotel Teuchelwald

Freudenstadt, Germany

Introduction	3
<i>S T Kimbrough, Jr.</i>	
Charles Wesley's Life and Poetry in German	7
<i>Martin E. Brose</i>	
The Inculturation of Wesleyan Spirituality and Hymnody in the German-language Context	21
<i>Helen Shephard</i>	
Wesleyan Spirituality and German Methodist Hymnody	39
<i>Friedemann W. Burkhardt</i>	
Experiences of Inculturation of Methodism in Russia	45
<i>Rüdiger Minor</i>	
Aspects of Modern Translations of Wesley Hymns into German	51
<i>Walter and Annegrete Klaiber</i>	
The Hymns of Charles Wesley from a Lithuanian Perspective	63
<i>Kristin Chiles Markay</i>	
Index of Articles 1994–2004 by Author	67
Index of Articles 1994–2004 by Issue	70

Paul W. Chilcote, President

Timothy S. Alexander-Macquiban, Vice President

Charles A. Green, Treasurer

Peter S. Forsaith, Secretary-Treasurer for the United Kingdom

S T Kimbrough, Jr., Director of Publications

Elaine A. Robinson, Program Coordinator

Board of Directors

Friedemann W. Burkhardt
Kenneth G. C. Newport

Maxine Walker
Carlton R. Young

Proceedings of The Charles Wesley Society 2005
Published in the United States by
The Charles Wesley Society
Editor, S T Kimbrough, Jr.
Assistant Editor, Charles A. Green

Copyright © 2008 by The Charles Wesley Society. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of The Charles Wesley Society.

The Charles Wesley Society
Archives and History Center
Drew University
Madison, NJ 07940

Paul W. Chilcote, *President*
Timothy S. Alexander-Macquiban, *Vice President*
Charles A. Green, *Treasurer*
Peter S. Forsaith, *Secretary-Treasurer for the United Kingdom*
S T Kimbrough, Jr., *Director of Publications*
Elaine A. Robinson, *Program Coordinator*

Board of Directors

Friedemann W. Burkhardt
Kenneth G. C. Newport

Maxine Walker
Carlton R. Young

Charles Wesley's Life and Poetry in German

Martin E. Brose*

1. Charles Wesley, as seen through German-language biographies

Yes, Charles Wesley steps out of the shadow of his prominent brother John and the picture we have of him today in German-speaking countries is becoming increasingly clearer. This reality will be discussed here from two perspectives: (1) the German-language biographies of Charles Wesley, and (2) Charles Wesley and the German language.

The German-language biographies

During the course of ca. 150 years two biographies were published by German authors and one was translated from English.

1. Karl Gottlieb Eißele, *Karl Wesley: Sänger des Methodismus*¹

In 1930s Karl Gottlieb Eißele (1891–1978), a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Germany, wrote a paper on Charles Wesley's life. Afterwards "the assembly of ministers of the Stuttgart District" asked him to publish it, which he gladly did, as he states in his preface, in order "to fill, in a modest way, a gap in our German Methodist literature, for to my knowledge a biography of Charles Wesley in the German language has never been published before." So in 1932 the first biography in German was printed in the church owned Publishing House, "Anker-Verlag," in Bremen.² It was a small book with 119 pages under the title *Karl Wesley: Sänger des Methodismus* (Charles Wesley, Singer of Methodism).³

Eißele used three sources:

- Thomas Jackson, *The Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 2 vols. (London: John Mason, 1841).
- Abel Stevens, *The History of the Religious Movement of the Eighteenth Century, called Methodism* (London: Methodist Book Room, 1878), 3 vols.

*All translations from the German of works for which there are no existing English translations are by this author.

¹Bremen: Anker-Verlag, 1932.

²The first German CW biography was advertised like this: "An important book for each Methodist. No Methodist who loves his church may miss this book. All our young people must own this outstanding biography. If they have no job or don't have money to buy it right away, each youth group should buy a few copies and lend it to them." *Der Evangelist*, Bremen, 27. März 1932.

³Henry Bett mentions in his article *German Books on Wesley's Hymns* Eißele's biography of CW: "The work is an admirable biography of Charles Wesley, and an enthusiastic appreciation of his devotional verse. But the most remarkable feature of Herr Eißele's book is his translation into German of several of the best of Charles Wesley's hymns." *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* 21 (1938): 181. The editor points out "that the tribute paid by Dr. Bett to the translator belongs to his namesake, Rev. K. Eisele, of Fürth, Bavaria."

- Joseph B. Wakeley, *Anecdotes of the Wesleys* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1870).

In nine chapters (without headings) Eißele unfolds in chronological order Charles Wesley's life, emphasizing the following three items:

1. The first is revealed in the subtitle: "the singer of Methodism." Hence the main emphasis lies on the poetical work of Charles Wesley. This is apparent in a very condensed form on pages 79–84, but also finds expression in the sixteen pages of the appendix,⁴ which was written by the co-author preacher Karl Eisele (1878–1971). Here 12 hymns⁵ of Charles Wesley are presented,⁶ each of them has a short introduction, including "O for a thousand tongues to sing," "Where shall my wond'ring soul begin," "Wrestling Jacob." In addition, Eißele quotes from 11 other Charles Wesley hymns. If one adds the six Charles Wesley hymns in the *Gesangbuch der Bischöflichen Methodistenkirche*⁷ of that time (which are mentioned in the appendix), then in the thirties of the last century through Eißele's book it was possible to have access to 29 Charles Wesley hymns.

2. The second topic emphasized by Eißele is "Charles Wesley the preacher."

3. The third emphasize is the successful attempt to describe multiple facets of the life of Charles Wesley. The reader gets to know him as student of Westminster School in London and of Oxford University, secretary of the governor in Georgia, doing pastoral work in prisons, parish priest, itinerant and field preacher, who proclaims the "glad tidings of salvation" at huge open-air assemblies and suffering abuse and persecution, husband and father of three very talented children, highly cultivated poet, Christian with a profound knowledge of the Bible, close co-worker of his brother John, but also one afflicted from various diseases and depression.⁸

What is Eißele's opinion of Charles Wesley? Eißele makes every effort to arrive at a well-balanced representation of Charles Wesley's strong and weak points. He has little to criticize and much to praise. Some quotations will prove that, but we begin with the three points of which he is critical:

⁴ In the appendix there are two mistakes in Karl Eißele's "Annotations to translations of Charles Wesley hymns": It is "emphasized that he [Charles Wesley] is not rich in poetical forms" and that "lyric poetry was not his line."

⁵ The number of selected stanzas varies from 1 to 9. Only in three cases is the English original mentioned.

⁶ At the end of the appendix there is this explanation: "in the frame of this book only a few samples of his poetry could be presented, but it should be sufficient for showing the beauty of it."

⁷ *Gesangbuch der Bischöflichen Methodistenkirche* (Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church) (Bremen: Methodist Publishing House, 1926).

⁸ "However occasionally he was in two minds and fell into temptation. . . . Before and after meetings he was quite often heavily depressed, sometimes 'exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death' [Matt. 26,38]." (p. 44) "His diathesis to strong emotional depressions caused him many heavy hours" (p. 90).

1. "Charles Wesley had all sorts of peculiarities and was quite eccentric. . . . In complete contrast to his brother John, we often miss calmness, prudence, and cleverness in his demeanor" (p. 89).

2. "On the one hand, he was highly delighted to watch modern developments, on the other hand, his heart stuck to opinions which were incompatible with these innovations, which he daily violated" (p. 97).

3. "In interpreting Bible texts he does not always stick to the text . . . , for example, he puts words of the prophet into the mouth of Jesus" (p. 78).

What is Eißele's opinion of Charles Wesley as a *preacher*? "Charles Wesley was a talented and abundantly blessed preacher (p. 75) . . . an impressive speaker, who could proclaim eternal salvation in simple, but powerful words (p. 76). . . . He was a restless evangelist (p. 50) . . . with relentless toughness against himself (p. 18) . . . a great zealot for God (p. 20) . . . a burning love for his Savior filled his heart" (p. 32). The subjects of Charles Wesley's preaching are mentioned in only a few places,⁹ but the description is to the point.

Eißele describes Charles Wesley's significance as a *poet* for early Methodism like this:

"It is difficult to overestimate his merits as a poet of the revivalist movement (p. 79). . . . The spirit and the essence of Methodism has never been expressed with clearer and more eloquent words, not even in John Wesley's sermons, than in the hymns of his singer (p. 83). . . . There is no experience of Christian life which Charles Wesley has not expressed in his hymns. For all the feasts of the church year, occasions and opportunities of the Christian congregation and family, he had a hymn in his heart, and there is hardly a section in the hymnal to which he has not contributed. As a poet of sacred songs he belongs to the most productive ones of all times and languages" (p. 80).

Unfortunately Eißele's biography of Charles Wesley has some deficits. The following topics are not mentioned at all:

- Charles Wesley as editor;
- Charles Wesley's importance for hymnody;
- Charles Wesley's difficulties with the Methodists because of his musically talented sons, Charles and Samuel;
- Charles Wesley and the lay-preachers;
- the breadth and importance of Charles Wesley's journal,¹⁰ letters, poems.

Furthermore there are no indexes or pictures in his book. Eißele's biography however had an important function, because during a time when the English language was not so widely understood as today, his book conveyed a much more

⁹Charles Wesley preached "Justification of the sinner by faith alone" (p. 32). He proclaimed "Jesus Christ and his complete sacrifice on the cross, his great love for sinners, the power of his cleansing blood, and that there is access for everyone to God's throne of mercy" (p. 79).

¹⁰On page 9 two sentences refer to Charles Wesley's *Journal*. It is not mentioned that the journal includes the years 1736–1756 only, and that all of those years are not complete.

comprehensive impression of Charles Wesley than earlier writings had done. Many quotations inform the reader at least fragmentarily about Charles Wesley's *Journal*.

2. Frederick C. Gill, *Charles Wesley, der erste Methodist (Charles Wesley, The first Methodist)*

In 1968, thirty-six years after Eißele's biography—a translation¹¹ of Frederick C. Gill's *Charles Wesley, The first Methodist*¹² was published (Gottthelf-Verlag, Zürich and Stuttgart). In comparison to Eißele's small volume, Gill's biography of 293 pages was a big step forward. A much more detailed picture of Charles Wesley and his work resulted. By quoting frequently from the original sources Gill produced a biography of high authenticity. He points out in his introduction: "Unlike John Wesley, he has had few biographers, and their work is mostly out of date" (p. 11). After enumerating a series of previously published biographies¹³ of Charles Wesley by Whitehead, Jackson, Telford, Wiseman, Jones, Brailford, and Edwards, Gill emphasizes that "Baker's *Charles Wesley as Revealed by his Letters* (1948)¹⁴ offers a concise and reliable summary and is the best extent guide."

In fourteen chapters Gill arranges Charles Wesley's biography in chronological order. In addition, he provides a list of plates, table of contents, chronology of Charles Wesley, and an index. In his introduction he writes: "My aim has been to meet the demand for a new and clearer image of the co-founder of Methodism, who deserves to be seen in his own dimension, distinct from that of John, and in the light of his own considerable achievement. . . . He is presented here in his threefold character of Evangelist, churchman, and poet. I have kept as far as possible to his own and contemporary records and allowed him to speak for himself" (p. 11).

Concerning the question of why Charles Wesley, apart from his hymns, has been ignored so long, Gill has three answers:

1. Charles Wesley was a modest man, who did not enjoy being the center of attention.

2. He was overshadowed by his brother, John, who exercised a strong influence over him.

3. Charles Wesley adhered zealously to the Church of England, even when Methodism increasingly diverged from it. "Charles' attempts to preserve its original aim had failed. As a result, his memory has suffered . . . no clear cut image has survived" (p. 292).

The subtitle "The first Methodist" and the quotation from his introduction point to Gill's emphasis that in some important instances Charles was ahead of

¹¹ *Charles Wesley, der erste Methodist*, trans. by Hugo Mayr and Eugen Thiele (Bremen: Anker-Verlag, 1932).

¹² Frederick C. Gill, *Charles Wesley, The First Methodist* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1964).

¹³ After Charles Wesley's death John Wesley had planned to write the biography of his brother and asked his niece Sally to help him in that matter. But his plan was never realized. Gill, *Charles Wesley, der erste Methodist*, p. 283.

¹⁴ Frank Baker, *Charles Wesley As Revealed by His Letters* (London: The Epworth Press, 1948).

his brother John. He maintains that Charles founded the "Holy Club" in Oxford, which was very important for early Methodism; and he was the first of the two brothers to experience conversion, and then aided John and George Whitefield to have the same experience. Gill relates the popular version of founding the "Holy Club" in Oxford, which goes like this: Charles Wesley, "The first Methodist," founded (in May 1729) the "Holy Club"¹⁵ and turned over the leadership of the "Methodists" to his brother John in November 1729.¹⁶ "In fact, however," writes Heitzenrater in his introduction to *Diary of an Oxford Methodist, Benjamin Ingham, 1733–1734*,¹⁷ "there was no group in May 1729 . . . the term "Holy Club" was not coined until November 1730 . . . and the name "Methodist" does not appear until the summer of 1732." In this author's view it is appropriate to portray Charles Wesley as an independent person with considerable achievements of his own and beyond the bounds of his brother's shadow. Nevertheless this does not justify calling him "The first Methodist." Gill inappropriately has taken perhaps Charles's own memory late as an exact account, which results in a distorted picture of the origin of Methodism and its primary poet.

3. Martin Brose, *Charles Wesley: der methodistische Liederdichter*

The biography, *Charles Wesley: der methodistische Liederdichter* (Charles Wesley: the Methodist Hymnwriter),¹⁸ by the author of this article and published in 1999 in Stuttgart, originated, in contrast to Gill's biography, from a different context. In 1997 I presented a paper on "Today's significance of Charles Wesley" at the conference "On the way to a new hymnal"¹⁹ and was asked by the director of the Methodist Publishing House in Stuttgart if I would be interested in writing a Charles Wesley biography, which would be published in the near future. I accepted the invitation and after approval, the following parameters were set for the volume:

1. The biography will be published in a paperback edition of ca. 160 pages.
2. It will be written in a style that is interesting for both laypersons and clergy.
3. It will reflect the latest state of Charles Wesley research.

The first half of the book tells the story of Charles Wesley's life in chronological order up to his evangelical conversion in May 1738. The second half introduces in eight chapters important aspects of his life: Charles Wesley the preacher, Charles Wesley learns to sing, Charles Wesley the poet, travel and per-

¹⁵ Gill, *Charles Wesley, der erste Methodist*, p. 36.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁷ Richard P. Heitzenrater, *John Wesley and the Oxford Methodists, 1725–1735*, Ph.D. diss., Duke University (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1972), pp. 46–125; Heitzenrater, ed., *Diary of an Oxford Methodist, Benjamin Ingham* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985), p. 7.

¹⁸ (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlagshaus, 1999). Vilém D. Schneeberger translated this biography into the Czech language and published it in 2002 in Prague under the title *Charles Wesley, zpěvák metodismu*.

¹⁹ Conference in "Haus Höhenblick," Jan. 10–12, 1997.

secution, wedding and family, concerts in London, Charles and John, old age and death. In making this selection the author knew that because of the defined parameters it was not possible to present other interesting aspects in enough detail, for example, such subjects as “Charles Wesley and the Church of England,” “Charles Wesley the editor,” and “Charles Wesley’s ‘sung theology.’” Annotations, selected bibliography, index, family tree of the Wesley family, historical chronology of Charles Wesley, two maps, and thirty-three pictures complete the biography.

In order to present a Charles Wesley biography as authentically as possible, a large number of quotations from his journal, letters, and other contemporary sources were used.²⁰ In addition, a number of mistakes in previous biographies were corrected.

In all three biographies, though differently emphasized, Charles Wesley’s unique lyrical theology is clearly given expression, which is summed up in the following four points:

1. Charles Wesley proclaimed the free grace of God and constantly preached about God’s inclusive love revealed in Jesus Christ. The sinner is justified “by faith alone.”

2. By accepting the grace of God the believer becomes part of the Christian fellowship. Bands, classes, and societies are important places of spiritual experiences.

3. Through word and sacrament the believer is spoken to in a holistic way (“heart and head”).

4. Out of the love to God grows the love of neighbor (*diakonia*), which is visible in “good works.”

A second fact is to be found in all three biographies, which I noted in the introduction (pp. 9–10) to *Charles Wesley: der methodistische Liederdichter* in the following way:

Even today, after over 200 years, Charles Wesley is a fascinating person whose exceptional life as a conscious Christian has a lot to tell us. Surely not everything can be transferred to our time, but these are things, which should inspire us across the centuries:

- honest and intensive search for God,
- devoted teamwork with his brother,
- untiring proclamation of God’s love,
- glowing love for people,
- intensive communication with God through prayer, and
- profound knowledge of the Bible.

²⁰ “The selected bibliography” (pp. 183–87) shows the sources used.

A view toward the future:

There are two requisites for a critically correct and comprehensive biography of Charles Wesley.

1. The biographer must become thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, church history, and especially with the early fathers, English language and classical education in the eighteenth century, music of the same period with regard to the newly developing congregational singing and also to the transition of Baroque to Rococo,²¹ and eighteenth-century English-language literature.

Acquiring the necessary knowledge in all these fields is a difficult task. Therefore, the biographer must rely on experts in theology, history, musicology, philosophy, literature, and other fields. A comprehensive Charles Wesley biography will have to present all facets of his life: On the one hand, Charles Wesley is a husband, father, poet, theologian, preacher, spiritual adviser, minister of the Church of England, who cares for his family, the lay-preachers, etc. On the other hand, he is of outstanding importance to the early Methodist movement and the development of congregational singing.

2. The second requisite is that a critically exact publication of Charles Wesley's works (journal, sermons, letters, and poems) must be available for research. For example, the journal must include a transcription of *all* shorthand passages and previously omitted portions of the MS Journal. Besides this, the sources of all quotations from literature, poems, and hymns should be cited.²²

In the German-speaking countries we are far from this goal. Only the 1738 section of the Journal has been published²³ to date and of Charles's sermons only "Awake, thou that sleepest" based on Eph. 5:14 has been printed.²⁴ From the beginning of German Methodism there have been attempts to translate a large number of his hymns and to find a corresponding poetical form, but only in a few instances are the results convincing.

On the other hand, some progress has been made.

- In 2007 the "Studiengemeinschaft für Geschichte der EmK" will publish *Charles Wesleys Tagebuch 1736–1738*.
- Martin E. Brose has translated and edited a selection of Charles Wesley sermons in German, which has been published by Edition Ruprecht in 2007: *Charles Wesley: Die Predigten*.

²¹ The 18th century was a time of many radical changes. They were not only recognized in the field of music, but also in politics, technology, science, industry, philosophy, and literature. "The transitions in English culture that these changes wrought cannot be overlooked in a careful analysis of Wesley's life." Heitzenrater, *The Elusive Mr. Wesley*, vol. 2, p. 210.

²² A new edition of the MS Journal which accomplishes these tasks will be published by Kingswood/Abingdon Press in 2007.

²³ Martin E. Brose, ed., *Charles Wesley (1707–1788): Tagebuch 1738* (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlagshaus, 1992).

²⁴ John Wesley, *Die 53 Lehrpredigten* (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlagshaus, 1986), 1:49–63.

- The new hymnal of the *Evangelisch-methodistische Kirche* (2002) contains twenty-two Charles Wesley hymns, for which Martin E. Brose has written interpretation and commentary. Eleven of them have been published in *Werkbuch zum Gesangbuch der EmK*, edited by Hartmut Handt as an unbound sheets edition. The remaining hymn commentaries will be published subsequently.

2. Charles Wesley and the German language

Charles Wesley knew English, Latin, Greek,²⁵ Hebrew, and French, But what about the German language? Did he know any German at all or did he have only a smattering of German? Or did he know German as well as his brother John and perhaps translated German hymns into English? These are simple questions, but difficult to answer!

The information handed down concerning this topic is contradictory: While his son Samuel (1766–1837) reported that his father was able to read and understand German texts, his daughter Sally (1759–1828) had her doubts.²⁶ Although she cared for the Wesley manuscripts after the death of her father and uncle John in a circumspect and accurate manner,²⁷ she only could speculate about the proper answer to this question. There is no evidence—neither a quotation of her father nor any witness.

Baker discussed this question in *Representative Verse of Charles Wesley*: “From the evidence furnished by Charles Wesley’s manuscript hymn-books,” he argues, “it is clear that he either did have at least a sufficient smattering of German to enable him to do some translating for himself, or that he transcribed into volumes of what seem otherwise to be his own verses some of his brother’s, and was even bold enough to correct them!”²⁸

This is not the place to enter into a full discussion of the problem, but the basic facts may be stated. It would appear true that during the voyage to Georgia Charles did not see as much of the Moravians as John, and that while John was learning German he (as a newly-ordained minister) was preparing sermons. In Georgia he apparently also did not come into contact with the Moravians very much. When he wrote to Count Zinzendorf in 1737, it was in Latin, the common language of scholarship, and they conversed in Latin (as did John and the Count).

²⁵ John Wesley knew that his brother Charles had an excellent knowledge of Latin and Greek. On December 7, 1764, he wrote to him: “Translate for me into good English the Latin verses that occur in the Earnest Appeal; and why not those three Greek ones?” *The Works of John Wesley* (Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872), 12:127.

²⁶ Thomas Jackson, *The Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley, M.A.* (London: John Mason, 1841), 2:456.

²⁷ Wilma J. Quantrille, “Sarah Wesley,” *Proceedings of The Charles Wesley Society* 4 (1997):51.

²⁸ Frank Baker, *Representative Verse of Charles Wesley* (London: Epworth Press, 1962), pp. 167–68.

One subject, however, of Charles's conversation with Zinzendorf was a proposed visit to Germany,²⁹ which he could hardly attempt without at least a smattering of German. Indeed a basic knowledge seems to have been picked up via his elder brother's enthusiasm (for the German language³⁰) on board the *Simmonds*. The very sentences which Dr. Bett quoted from John Wesley's sermon 117, however, to prove that John was the translator, can also be used to prove that Charles could speak German, and was therefore a potential translator: "My brother and I, in our voyage to America, became acquainted with the (so-called) Moravian Brethren. . . . Every day we conversed with them, and consulted them on all occasions. I translated many of their hymns. . . ."³¹

While the use of the singular in the last sentence excludes Charles Wesley without any doubt, the last sentence quoted indicates that he might have had at least a basic knowledge of German. Beckerlegge joins this point of view and says: "It would indeed be strange if Charles had no knowledge of German, but we have no indisputable concrete evidence of the fact."³² Rattenbury points out that Charles must have known some German, since it was he who taught English to Peter Böhler.³³

There are the following lines (42–45) in Charles Wesley's *Epistle to Howel Harris*:³⁴

Or GOD the Father our "Pappa" shall be
And GOD the H[oly] Ghost – a Monstrous She,
"Mother of Jeshua, our dear heart's flamelein,"
Our Everlasting GOD – "our Brother Lamblein!"

It is striking that Charles Wesley is using the German in three cases when he is vehemently criticizing Harris's "blood and wound Theology" (line 37). Apparently he does this in order to elucidate his critic:

1. Line 42: Here he is using the German word "Pappa" ("Daddy"), which is a term of endearment for "Abba, Father" (Mark 13:36; Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6).

²⁹"He much pressed me to go with him to Germany; which I am very willing to do, if I can get clear of the Trustees." *CWJ*, 1:67 (Feb. 2, 1737).

³⁰"I was more than ever convinced that the French is the poorest, meanest language in Europe, that it is no more comparable to the German or Spain than a bagpipe is to an organ." *JWW*, 21:79.

³¹Frank Baker, *Representative Verse of Charles Wesley* (London: Epworth Press 1962), pp. 167–68) quotes Dr. Henry Bett, *The Hymns of Methodism* (London: Epworth Press, 1945), p. 18, regarding John Wesley's sermon "On Knowing Christ after the Flesh" (*JWW*, 4).

³²Oliver A. Beckerlegge, Introduction/The Sources of the "Collection" in *JWW*, 7:34.

³³J. Ernest Rattenbury, *The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns* (London: The Epworth Press, 1941), p. 21.

³⁴S T Kimbrough, Jr., and Oliver A. Beckerlegge, eds., *The Unpublished Poetry of Charles Wesley*, 3 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon/Kingswood, 1988, 1990, 1992), 1:190–96. Charles Wesley calls Howel Harris in his journal (April 25, 1739) "a man after my own heart." On May 6, 1740, Charles Wesley wrote: "I heard Howel Harris expound at Crouch's. He is indeed a son of thunder and of consolation." Charles Wesley is sad (and angry?) that this close co-worker turned to a false theology.

2. Line 44: Charles Wesley adds the German diminutive “lein” to the English word “flame.”

3. Line 45: Here the same happens: “Lamb” become “Lamblein” (little lamb).

Charles Wesley is using both altered words as rhyme-words. This passage of the *Epistle* strengthens the assumption, that Charles Wesley had a good knowledge of the German language.

In our discussion one important statement of the German theologian Johann Gottlieb Burckhardt (1756–1800) must be noted. Who was he?³⁵ Burckhardt was born in February 1756 in Eisleben, Saxony-Anhalt. After attending primary school, he joined the Gymnasium in Halle. He then studied at Leipzig University. In 1777 he became *Magister atrium*, and in May 1780 defended his dissertation *De memoria*. Burckhardt had planned an academic career and was a candidate for headmaster of the Gymnasium in Halle, but things developed in a totally different direction. On May 12, 1781, the twenty-five-year-old theologian set out on a journey to London, where he took up the post of minister of the German-Lutheran Marienkirche in Savoy³⁶ and chair of the German School, founded in 1708. He preached his first sermon at the Marienkirche on Trinity Sunday 1781. He served the church and school up to his death on August 10, 1800.

Michel Weyer writes in his introduction to Burckhardt’s *Vollständige Geschichte der Methodisten in England* (Complete History of the Methodists in England): “It wasn’t long till he got to know Methodism in the English capital. To him Methodism seemed to be a variation of his pietism at home. Therefore the Lutheran theologian from Saxony at once had a high opinion of Methodism. The intensive study of John Wesley’s writings, whom he got to know personally, had increased his enthusiasm for Methodism.”³⁷ Burckhardt’s *Vollständige Geschichte der Methodisten in England*, published in 1795 in Nürnberg, takes a special place among his thirty-five publications, because this is the first self-dependent German monograph of Methodism.

In chapter two “Progress and Growth of Methodism” he describes the journey to Georgia, “which John Wesley, his brother Charles, and the two congenial friends Ingham and Delamotte” undertook in 1735. Then follows the decisive sentence: “The Wesleys at once started learning French and German in order to be able to preach the word of God to the various emigrants both on board and in the colonies in their mother tongue” (pp. 25–26).

³⁵ The following biographical information is based on Michel Weyer’s Introduction to a facsimile reprint of Burckhardt’s *Vollständige Geschichte der Methodisten in England* (Nürnberg: Verlag der Raw’schen Buchhandlung, 1795) published by the Christliches Verlagshaus in Stuttgart, 1995, and edited by Weyer.

³⁶ There were five congregations for the 6,000 German-speaking Protestants in London. The Savoy-congregation was founded in 1692, it was the largest of the five congregations.

³⁷ Michel Weyer, Introduction, pp. 6–7.

As far as I know, this quotation has never been mentioned before in the discussion of Charles Wesley's knowledge of German.³⁸ Baker confirmed this in a letter to the author dated July 12, 1995: "To the best of my knowledge this quotation has not been utilized in any discussion of Charles Wesley's knowledge of German, for which I have contended in print."

The title of Burckhardt's book mentions "reliable sources." In the introduction he states about himself: "I was lucky to get to know the honourable John Wesley personally, who is still alive; I have repeatedly joined his company." In his letter of November 28, 1782, he asked John Wesley for "authentic material" for his book about the Methodists in England. In his introduction to the facsimile reprint of Burckhardt's volume Michel Weyer characterizes Burckhardt (p. 26) as follows: ". . . his way of argumentation is differentiated." So Burckhardt may count as a trustworthy informant. Therefore, in my opinion his testimony is the keystone of this discussion.

Has the probability increased that Charles Wesley translated the six sacred poems entitled "From the German"?³⁹ Baker and Beckerlegge have suggested⁴⁰ that they think it likely that Charles Wesley translated "Wie wohl ist mir, O Freund der Seelen" by Wolfgang Christoph Dessler (1660–1722) and "Zeuch hin mein Geist, in Jesu blut und wunden" by Christian Friedrich Richter (1676–1711), both hymns are from *Das Gesang-Buch der Gemeine in Herrnhuth 1737* (No. 762,753).⁴¹ In Charles Wesley's "translations" the first lines run like this: (1) "O how happy am I here, / How beyond Expression blest" and (2) "Melt happy Soul in Jesu's Blood, / Sink down into the Wounds of God."

In 1992 S T Kimbrough, Jr., and Oliver A. Beckerlegge in volume 3 of *The Unpublished Poetry of Charles Wesley* published four poems with the heading "From the German" in the section "Hymns of doubtful authorship." The first lines of these four poems are:

1. Behold the Saviour of Mankind / Patient & good, and meek of Mind
2. My Saviour, thou didst shed / Thy precious Blood for me
3. The Cross, the cross, O that's my Gain!
4. Beloved Saviour, Prince of Life, / to us thy Spirit give

The four poems, however, appear in the English-language hymnbook, *A Collection of Hymns, With several Translations from the Hymn-book of the*

³⁸ The author of this study pointed to this sentence in his book *Zum Lob befreit: Charles Wesley und das Kirchenlied* (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlagshaus, 1997), p. 286.

³⁹ George Whitefield writes in his letter from December 30, 1736, to Charles Wesley: "All friends like the German Hymn admirably." Is this an indication of one of the six hymns "From the German"? *George Whitefield's Letters, Facsimile of The Works of George Whitefield 1771* (Edinburgh, 1976), p. 488.

⁴⁰ Frank Baker, *Representative Verse of Charles Wesley*, 167–72; Beckerlegge, *JWW*, vol. 7, p. 37.

⁴¹ Although both poems have the same title "The Life of Faith I, II" they are independent poems with different metre. See Beckerlegge's chapter about the translations from the German in *JWW*, vol. 7, pp. 33–38.

Moravian Brethren, the second edition (London, 1743). While other hymns in this hymnbook are designated as being “From the German,” these four poems do not bear that designation. One of them, “The Cross, the cross, O that’s my Gain!” is attributed to Clare Taylor, an English Moravian. Randy Maddox, who discovered the poems’ presence in the hymnbook just cited, has suggested to S T Kimbrough, Jr.,⁴² that “they were all originally in English, and Charles copied them because he liked them!” To date no German source of the three other hymns has come to light and it is possible that they were originally in English.

That Charles Wesley had a significant knowledge of German is likely but that he translated poems 1, 2, and 4 above is highly unlikely, unless future research proves to the contrary. A German source for these poems is not known. Of course, the most likely sources might be the *Gesang Buch der Gemeinde in Herrnhuth* (1735) and in *Neues geistreiches Gesang-Buch* published by Freylinghausen in Halle (1714), which together contain 2,572 hymns. Hence, until thorough research of those hymnbooks is made the question must remain open.

Selected Bibliography: Charles Wesley

(in chronological order)

Books

- Eißele, Karl Gottlob, *Karl Wesley, der Sänger des Methodismus* (Bremen: Anker-Verlag, 1932).
- Gill, Frederick C., *Charles Wesley, der erste Methodist*, trans. by Hugo Mayr and Eugen Thiele Zürich/Stuttgart: Gotthelf-Verlag, 1968; original title: *Charles Wesley / The first Methodist* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1964).
- Brose, Martin E., *Charles Wesley: der methodistische Liederdichter* (Stuttgart: Christliches Verlagshaus, 1999).

Articles

- Nast, Wilhelm, “Charles Wesley” in Nast’s *Das Leben und Wirken des Johannes Wesley und seiner Hauptmitarbeiter* (Cincinnati: Cranston and Curts, 1892), pp. 259–62.
- Jacoby, Ludwig Sigismund, “Charles Wesley” in *Geschichte des Methodismus* (Bremen: Verlagshaus der Methodistenkirche, 1870).
- Mann, Theophil, “Karl Wesley” in *Wächterstimmen* (1895), pp. 97–101.
- Nuelsen, John Louis, “Charles Wesley” in *Kurzgefaßte Geschichte des Methodismus* (Bremen, Verlagshaus der Methodisten Kirche, 1920).
- Thimme, Ludwig, “Charles Wesley” in *Zum sicheren Hafen* (n.p., 1925).
- Kuder, Wilhelm, “Karl Wesley” in *Kuder’s Früchte vom Lebensbaum geistlicher Dichtung* (n.p., ca. 1925), pp. 293–96.

⁴² S T Kimbrough, Jr.’s email dated October 17, 2006.

- Eisele, Karl, "Ein weltweiter Gedenktag" (Zum 250. Geburtstag von Charles Wesley) in *Der Evangelist* (Dec. 15, 1957), pp. 393–96.
- Wolcott, Carolyn und Leonard, "Ein Liederdichter für Gott" in: *Sie gaben nicht auf* (Nordhausen: Verlag Traugott Bautz, 1986), pp. 17–22.
- Spahr, Silvio, ed., "Charles Wesley" in: Friedrich Hauss, *Väter der Christenheit* (Wuppertal/Zürich: R. Brockhaus Verlag, 1991).
- Schneeberger, Vilém, "Charles Wesley—der Sänger des Evangeliums (1707–1788)" in *Kirche und Welt* (Zürich) Oct. 20 (1991): 8–9.
- Voigt, Karl Heinz, "Charles Wesley" in: *Biographisch-Bibliographisches Kirchenlexikon* (Nordhausen: Verlag Traugott Bautz, 1998), 13:895–914.

