

# John Wesley as Hymn and Tune Editor

## The Evidence of Charles Wesley's "Jesu, Lover of My Soul" and Martin Madan's HOTHAM

Steven Darsey

The common notion that John Wesley used "popular" tunes for the new Methodist movement is often used to justify a rather liberal, "anything goes" approach to tunes in modern worship.

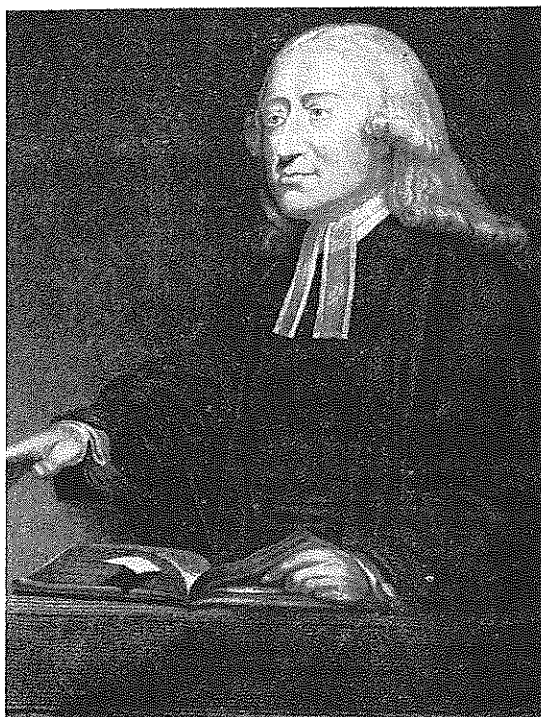
It is known that John Wesley was highly restrictive in his use of hymn texts. I propose that he also was very selective in the tunes he used and that his criteria for what made a good text are similar to those that he felt made a good tune. I will address this via Charles Wesley's "Jesu, lover of my soul" and the tune with which it originally appeared, HOTHAM, within the contexts of John Wesley's stated views on hymns and music.

"Jesu, lover of my soul," Charles Wesley's hymnic masterpiece, was not included by his brother John in the definitive Wesleyan hymnal of 1780, *A Collection of Hymns for the use of the People Called Methodists* (hereafter, *Collection*). It was first published in the second edition of Charles and John Wesley's *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, 1740 (first ed., 1739) and later editions, and subsequently in other hymn and tunebooks, notably, the Wesleys' *Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, which functioned as the Methodist hymnal until the appearance of the 1780 *Collection*.<sup>1</sup> How do we explain the absence of "Jesu, lover" from the *Collection*?

The prefaces to the Wesleyan hymnals and tunebooks clearly convey John Wesley's strong editorial hand. Eminent hymnologist Louis Benson had this to say about John Wesley's control over Wesleyan hymnody: "He planned it, prepared the ground, introduced and fostered it, moulded and administered it, and also restrained its excesses."<sup>2</sup>

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That Wesley was carefully attentive to the sense and craft of hymn texts is evident from his preface to the *Collection*:

- (1). In these hymns there is no doggerel, no botches, nothing put in to patch up the rhyme, no feeble expletives.
- (2). Here is nothing turgid or bombast on the one hand, nor low and creeping on the other.
- (3). Here are no cant expressions, no words without meaning. Those who impute this to us know not what they say. We talk common sense (whether they understand it or not) both in verse and prose, and use no word but in a fixed and determined sense.<sup>3</sup>

In the preface to his *Pocket Hymnbook*,<sup>4</sup> Wesley rails against the poor quality hymns in a version printed earlier by Robert Spense.<sup>5</sup> He is disgusted that these hymns have already come into common use and charges his followers to prevent their being sung.

<sup>1</sup>*The Works of John Wesley*, Volume 7, *A Collection of Hymns for the use of the People Called Methodists*, Franz Hildebrandt and Oliver A. Beckerlegge, eds. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 73, hereafter cited as "Works"; James T. Lightwood, *Hymn-Tunes And Their Story* (London: Charles H. Kelly, 1905), 183-185.

<sup>2</sup>Louis F. Benson, *The English Hymn: Its Development and Use in Worship* (1915; reprint, Richmond: John Knox Press, 1962), 220.

<sup>3</sup>Works, 74.

<sup>4</sup>John Wesley, *A Pocket Hymn Book, for the use of Christians of all denominations 1790* [first ed. 1787].

<sup>5</sup>Robert Spense, a Methodist book seller in York, had published without Wesleyan authorization *A Pocket Hymnbook—designed as a constant companion for the pious: collected from various authors* [c. 1782]; see Benson, 238.

First, out of those two hundred and thirty-two hymns, I have omitted seven and thirty. These I did not dare to palm upon the world; because fourteen of them appeared to me very flat and dull: fourteen more, mere prose, tagged with rhyme: and nine more to be grievous doggerel. But a friend tells me, 'some of these, especially those two that are doggerel double distilled, namely, "The despised Nazarene," and that which begins, "A Christ I have, O what a Christ have I," are hugely admired, and continually echoed from Berwick-upon-Tweed to London.' If they are, I am sorry for it: it will bring deep reproach on the judgment of the Methodists. But I dare not increase that reproach, by countenancing, in any degree, such an insult both on religion and common sense. And I earnestly intreat all our preachers, not only never to give them out, but to discountenance them by all prudent means, both in public and private.

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Thus, Wesley would not permit a hymn to be sung simply because it was popular. He would not permit hymns to be sung that did not measure up to his standards.

Among Wesley's editorial concerns was the human-divine relationship portrayed in the hymn. He balked when the language waxed amatory or personally intimate.<sup>6</sup> Wesley articulates these views in his sermon "On Knowing Christ After the Flesh." While this sermon was written in 1789, nine years after the publication of the *Collection*, it seems to represent views long held.

I have indeed particularly endeavored, in all the hymns which are addressed to our blessed Lord, to avoid every fondling expression, and to speak as to the most high God, to him that is "in glory equal with the Father, in majesty co-eternal." Some will probably think that I have been over scrupulous with regard to one particular word, which I never use myself either in verse or prose, in praying or preaching, though it is very frequently used by modern divines both of the Romish and Reformed churches. It is the word 'dear.' Many of these frequently say, both in preaching, in prayer, and in giving thanks, 'dear Lord,' or 'dear Saviour'; and my brother used the same in many of his

hymns, even as long as he lived. But may I not ask, Is not this using too much familiarity with the great Lord of heaven and earth?... Hence, I cannot but advise all lovers of the Bible, if they use the expression at all, to use it very sparingly, seeing the Scripture affords neither command nor precedent for it.<sup>7</sup>

He believed that such familiarity with Christ tended to encourage an acceptance of Christ as human as opposed to divine and human, thus tending toward Arianism (though Charles Wesley was never accused of this).<sup>8</sup>

And let it not be thought that 'the knowing of Christ after the flesh,' the considering him as a mere man, and in consequence using such language in public as well as private as is suitable to those conceptions of him, is a thing of a purely indifferent nature, or, however, of no great moment. On the contrary, the using this improper familiarity with God our Creator, our Redeemer, our Governor, is naturally productive of very evil fruits. And that not only in those that speak, but also to those that hear them. It has a direct tendency to abate that tender reverence due to the Lord their governor.<sup>9</sup>

John Wesley had expressed scruples about amatory imagery in hymns as early as 1749, when he published a number of Moravian hymns in order to show how inappropriate they were.<sup>10</sup> He was not consistent, however, in his editorial policy and included some of these expressions in his brother's hymns ("Jesu, lover," for example) and expressed the fear in his sermon "On Knowing Christ After the Flesh" that his own translations from the German were marked with these errors. "Yet I am not sure, that I have taken sufficient care to pare off every improper word or expression,—every one that may seem to border on a familiarity which does not so well suit the mouth of a worm of the earth, when addressing himself to the God of heaven."<sup>11</sup>

In his preface to the fourth edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1742), Wesley disavows support for the hymns contained therein that follow the theological themes of the mystics, themes to which the Wesleys had once adhered, but from which they later repented. Charles Wesley's "Jesu, lover" was nevertheless retained in the publication, despite its mystical language.

Some verses, it may be observed, in the following collection, were wrote upon the scheme of the mystic divines. And these 'tis own'd, we had once in great veneration, as the best explainers of the Gospel of Christ. But we are now convinced that we therein greatly erred; not knowing the scriptures, neither the power of God. And because this is an error which many serious minds

<sup>6</sup> Works, 56.

<sup>7</sup> Works, vol. 4, *Sermons IV:115-151*, Albert C. Outler, ed (Nashville: Abingdon, 1987), 101-102.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 100.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 104

<sup>10</sup> Benson, 267.

<sup>11</sup> Works, vol. 4, 101.

are sooner or later exposed to, and which indeed most easily besets those who seek the Lord Jesus in sincerity; we believe ourselves indispensably obliged, in the presence of God, and angels, and men, to declare wherein we apprehend those writers, not to teach the truth as it is in Jesus.

For several reasons, therefore, Wesley likely did not approve of his brother's casting Jesus as "lover of my soul," its scriptural basis in the Apocrypha notwithstanding: Wisdom 11:26, "But Thou sparest all; for they are Thine, O Lord, Thou lover of souls."

Wesley was also restrictive concerning the musical characteristics of his tunes. An example is his mistrust of harmony, articulated in his 1779 *Thoughts on the Power of Music*, in which he criticizes modern composers for emphasizing counterpoint and harmony over melody. He believed melody to possess the true power to move humanity.<sup>12</sup>

By the Power of Music, I mean its power to affect the hearers, to raise various passions in the human mind. Of this we have very surprising accounts in ancient history... But why is it that modern music, in general, has no such effect on the hearers?... The ancient composers studied melody alone, the due arrangement of single notes; and it was by melody alone that they wrought such wonderful effects. And as this music was directly calculated to move the passions, so they designed it for this very end. But the modern composers study harmony, which in the present sense of the word is quite another thing, namely, a contrast of various notes, opposite to, and yet blended with, each other, wherein they, now high, now low, pursue the resonant fugue... Need we any other, and can we have any stronger proof than this, than those modern overtures, voluntaries or concertos, which consist altogether of artificial sounds, without any words at all? What have any of the passions to do with these? What has judgment, reason, common sense? Just nothing at all. All these are utterly excluded, by delicate, unmeaning sound!

In this respect modern music has no connection with common sense, any more than with the passions. In another it is glaringly, undeniably contrary to common sense, namely, in allowing—yea, appointing—different words to be sung by different persons at the same time! What can be more shocking to a man of understanding than this? Pray, which of those sentences am I to attend to? I can attend to only one sentence at once... this astonishing jargon has found a place even in the worship of

God! It runs through (O pity! O shame!) the greatest part even of our church music!... Let any impartial person say where there can be a more direct mockery of God?

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The following appears in John Wesley's journal entry for August 9, 1768:

When we came to Neath, I was little surprised to hear I was to preach in the church—of which the church wardens had the disposal, the minster being just dead. I began reading prayers at six, but was greatly disgusted at the manner of singing: (1) twelve or fourteen persons kept it to themselves and quite shut out the congregation; (2) these repeated the same words, contrary to all sense and reason, six, eight, or ten times over; (3) according to the shocking custom of modern music, different persons sung one and the same words at one and the same moment — an intolerable insult on common sense and utterly incompatible with any devotion.<sup>13</sup>

Wesley censured "complex tunes which it is impossible to sing with devotion" and "the repeating the same words so often (but especially while another repeats different words—the horrid abuse which runs through the modern church-music) as it shocks common sense, so it necessarily brings in dead formality and has no more of religion in it than a Lancashire hornpipe."<sup>14</sup> He believed that hymns should be simple and uncomplicated, briskly paced, and non-florid, include no long Hallelujahs, no excessive repetitions, and above all, no counterpoint.

Wesley's disavowal of aesthetic/prophetic communication and his ignorance of the rhetorical efficacy of counterpoint is puzzling. While it is certainly true that the words in a contrapuntal composition cannot be clearly understood, the lines of a fine piece of counterpoint, like the colors in a stained glass window, paint a picture in sound and thus enable the hearers to apprehend a "truer" meaning than would be possible through a direct recitation of the words. This was nonsense to Wesley, however, who considered this kind of counterpoint to be "an insult on common sense." Wesley believed that church music ex-

<sup>12</sup> Works, vol. 7, 766–769.

<sup>13</sup> Works, vol. 22, *Journal and Diaries*, W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 151–152.

<sup>14</sup> Nicholas Temperley, *The Music of the English Parish Church*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 1:209.

isted solely for the direct and clear dissemination of the sacred text. One wonders about his experience of music while a student at Oxford, where several college choral foundations were well established, and while in London, where he likely heard complex music regularly in worship. Considering that his famous "heart-warming" experience was inspired in part by an extended anthem, "Out of the depths," likely by Croft,<sup>15</sup> that he had heard at St. Paul's, and that his journal contains

herently secular, and thus some were appropriate for worship and others were not. We know that Wesley did use some secular tunes for hymns. An example is Purcell's "Fairest isle, all isles excelling," from his opera, *King Arthur*, for which Charles Wesley wrote "Love divine, all loves excelling." This tune, while cheerful and uplifting, has a nobility of character that John Wesley no doubt recognized would well support appropriate religious sentiments. J.S. Bach sometimes parodied his own secular music to create new sacred works. The works he chose to parody, however, always had a character appropriate to the new purpose, so much so that one might wonder if the final, higher purpose for the music had not been in the back of Bach's mind all along. Clearly Wesley was critically selective about the tunes he used for worship and he would not, contrary to today's popular notion, have considered raiding the bars indiscriminately for hymn tunes.

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occasional praise for organ voluntaries and his great appreciation for *Messiah*,<sup>16</sup> it must be granted that Wesley was inconsistent in his appraisal of the efficacy of counterpoint for worship.

In his writings Wesley is critical of harmony, stressing the appropriateness of melody alone. This is presumably why he published *Sacred Melody* in 1761, which includes solely the melodies (though keyboardists, when present, likely provided harmony). By 1780, however, Wesley embraced harmony with his final publication of tunes, *Sacred Harmony*, set for two or three parts, with harpsichord or organ accompaniment. This concession, likely a bow to performance convention, is not so inconsistent with his philosophy as it may appear, for *Sacred Harmony*, while carrying tunes that are amply harmonized, evidences scarce counterpoint and only modest textual repetitions, and no contrapuntal treatment of texts. His tunes for the most part are in traditional psalm-tune style or the new "solo-style."

A tune in "solo-style" would have a more or less elaborate melody with accompanying parts providing understated support so as not to obscure the melody. This encouraged a reduction in the number of parts in tune books from the traditional chordal four parts, to three or two parts, so as to lighten the texture and promote the melody.<sup>17</sup> These characteristics distinguished these tunes from the one-note, one-syllable style more typical of seventeenth and eighteenth century psalm tunes. These new tunes drew criticism from conservatives and brought converts by the score to the Methodist movement.<sup>18</sup>

His point about the Lancashire hornpipe gives insight into Wesley's views on the inherently religious character of music. The hornpipe would have been well known to Wesley as a popular dance form. By stating that some tunes have no more religion than these hornpipes, Wesley implies that some tunes were inherently sacred and others in-

The musical roots of "Jesu, lover" are found in Thomas Butts's *Harmonia Sacra*, third edition (c. 1763), Wesley's second edition of *Sacred Melody* (1765), and Martin Madan's *A Collection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes, Never Published Before... To be had at the Lock Hospital* [1769].

Both Butts and Madan were familiar to the Wesley circle. Butts had been bookkeeper and steward at the Foundery from 1742 to 1753 before becoming a publisher; Madan was an attorney who, after being converted by Wesley's preaching, became an Anglican priest and then Chaplain of the Lock Hospital, 1760 to c.1780.<sup>19</sup> There is some speculation that Madan advised Wesley on the Wesleyan tunebook, *Sacred Melody*.<sup>20</sup> We know that Wesley leaned heavily on Butts's *Harmonia Sacra*;<sup>21</sup> and Erik Routley maintained that *Sacred Melody*'s successor, *Sacred Harmony*, was a reprint of *Harmonia Sacra*.<sup>22</sup> Thus it appears that, though Wesley gives no credit to a music editor either for *Sacred Melody* or its successor, *Sacred Harmony*, Butts and Madan bore a strong influence on Wesley's musical output. In his Preface to *Sacred Melody*, Wesley praises Butts's fine musical work, though he criticized his *Harmonia Sacra* as being too florid.<sup>23</sup>

Madan included "Jesu, lover" in his 1769 collection, set to a tune of his own composition, called HOTHAM, after Sir Charles Hotham, a friend of the Wesleys.<sup>24</sup> Though Madan's tunebook title claims that all the tunes are new, this is questionable. This same combination of text and tune appeared in Butts's *Harmonia Sacra*, third edition, c. 1763.<sup>25</sup> In both these publications, the first stanza of Charles Wesley's hymn is set to Madan's tune. In 1761, John Wesley produced his second tune book, *Sacred Melody*, based heavily on *Harmonia Sacra* (the first, *A Collection of Tunes, set to Music, as they are commonly Sung at the Foundery*, 1742, was so poorly done as to have little influence).<sup>26</sup> The second edition, 1765, included the tune HOTHAM, set to "Jesu, lover," which also predates Madan's tunebook.

A clear genealogy of HOTHAM cannot be determined because the early editions of *Harmonia*

<sup>15</sup> Erik Routley, *The Musical Wesleys* (New York: Oxford, 1968), 26–27.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>17</sup> Richard A. Crawford, *Andrew Law, American Psalmist* (Da Capo Press: New York, 1981), 263.

<sup>18</sup> Temperley, vol. 1, 212–213; Percy A. Scholes, "Methodism and Music," in *The Oxford Companion to Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 630–631.

<sup>19</sup> Nicholas Temperley, vol. 1:211.

<sup>20</sup> Works, vol. 7, 778; Lightwood, 183.

<sup>21</sup> Benson, 240.

<sup>22</sup> Erik Routley, *The Music of Christian Hymns* (Chicago: G.I.A., 1981), 74b.

<sup>23</sup> Benson, 240.

<sup>24</sup> Lightwood, 184.

<sup>25</sup> Routley in *The Music of Christian Hymns*, 74b, asserts that HOTHAM is the first tune to appear with "Jesu, Lover" and that this occurs in *Harmonia Sacra*. He attributes the tune to Butts, c. 1755, ex. 261—this appears to be in error.

<sup>26</sup> Lightwood, 124–125.

(2)  
Other Refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless Soul on Thee;  
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,  
Still support and comfort me:  
All my Trust on Thee is stay'd,  
All my Help from Thee I bring,  
Cover my defenceless Head  
With the Shadow of thy Wing.

(3)  
Thou, O CHRIST, art all I want,  
More than all in Thee I find;  
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,  
Heal the Sick, and lead the Blind,  
Just and Holy is thy Name,  
I am all Unrighteousness,  
Vile and full of Sin I am,  
Thou art full of Truth and Grace.

(4)  
Plenteous Grace with Thee is found,  
Grace to Pardon all our Sin;  
Let the healing Streams abound,  
Make, and keep me pure within.  
Thou of Life the Fountain art,  
Freely let me take of Thee,  
Spring Thou up within my Heart,  
Rise to all Eternity.

**Example 1**  
Thomas Butts,  
*Harmonia Sacra*, 3rd.  
ed., c. 1763.

*Sacra* have no dates. Hymnologist Maurice Frost proposed that the approximate years of the first three editions were 1756, 1759, and 1763.<sup>27</sup> He proposed that Wesley based his 1761 edition of *Sacred Melody* on Butts's 1759 *Harmonia Sacra*, and that the 1765 version of *Sacred Melody*, the first that carries HOTHAM, was based on Butts's 1763 edition, which also carries HOTHAM (though misspelled, OATHAM). Regarding Madan's claim that his tunes had never been published before, Frost contends that Madan had published certain of his tunes shortly after he published his hymnbook, *Psalms and Hymns*, 1760. According to Frost, both Butts and Wesley were thereby privy to Madan's tunes, including HOTHAM, in time for their respective 1763 and 1765 publications.

In 1780, when John Wesley brought out his *Collection*, he also published a set of harmonized tunes, titled *Sacred Harmony*. This tunebook also includes HOTHAM set to "Jesu, lover," though the hymnal itself excludes it—a compelling inconsistency.

Madan's tune, HOTHAM, accompanying "Jesu, lover," partakes of the new musical style evolving with the Methodist movement. It embodies a then prevalent secular style, with frequent appoggiaturas, trills, roulades, and sequences requiring the repetition of texts.<sup>28</sup> HOTHAM, like many other "Methodist" tunes, was in "solo-style."

HOTHAM, in *Sacred Harmony*, is printed in two parts (see example 1). Wesley's move to two parts from the usual four is part of a trend encouraged by the tunebook compiler John Playford, who published, in 1677, *The Whole Book of Psalms in Three Parts*.<sup>29</sup> This convention became popular and many other compilers imitated him, including Madan, whose version is in three parts. The evolution to two parts came as a by-product of hospital singing. The Methodists supported hospitals (charitable foundations), primarily for children and women. These institutions formed and developed trained girl choirs and maintained organs; this naturally led to the predominance of the treble part and the

standard use of the organ, hence Wesley's 1780 two and three part *Sacred Harmony* with organ and the greater fashion of two part tunes.<sup>30</sup> Settings in two parts were clearly useful for keyboard instruments, for children's/women's singing at hospitals, two part men's choirs, and for parish congregations without strong musical resources. Playford paved the way for this by printing the tunes in his collection on two staves, the top part in the G clef, and the bass in the F clef. The medius was printed separately, on the G clef. The tune in vocal music had traditionally appeared in the tenor part. Placing the "air" in the top voice in English psalmody was an innovation by John Playford in his 1677 *Whole Book of Psalms in Three Parts*.<sup>31</sup> This practice became customary and was soon transported to America via Andrew Law.<sup>32</sup>

A closer look at HOTHAM set to "Jesu, lover," by Butts, Madan, and Wesley, may reveal something of the editorial proclivities of the compilers and acquaint us with this time-honored tune that carried this venerable text for some 100 years before drifting into obscurity.<sup>33</sup>

The tune is attractive, beginning with an interesting, albeit vocally ungrateful motivic structure, extending through m. 8. From there the tune rambles on, unbothered with structural factors, to its undistinguished conclusion. With its large leaps, frequent appoggiaturas, and pervasive disjunct motion, it sounds more like a pleasant, gallant, fiddle tune than a dignified hymn melody. Of course, it was Wesley's object to invigorate the singing of the church with bright, forthright tunes through which one could invest heartfelt devotion: HOTHAM fit the bill.<sup>34</sup> Its sunny, spinning, "solo-style" melody would have been fun to sing, and no doubt won many friends for Charles Wesley's hymn.<sup>35</sup>

Wesley's version of the tune in *Sacred Melody* is nearly identical to that in *Harmonia Sacra* (see example 2). The notes, rhythms, and appoggiaturas are exactly the same. Wesley did not include the trill in m. 5, the fermata in m. 16, nor the repetition of the

<sup>27</sup> Maurice Frost, "Harmonia Sacra, by Thomas Butts-I & II," *The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland Bulletin* (1952-53): 66-75.

<sup>28</sup> Temperley, I:211-212.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 131-132.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 132, 133, 185, 211.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 184-190.

<sup>32</sup> Crawford, 263-264.

<sup>33</sup> Lightwood, 184.

<sup>34</sup> Temperley, Vol. 1, 209; Benson, 241.

<sup>35</sup> See Routley, *The Music of Christian Hymns*, 74b for another analysis.

HYMN 144.

107.

Hotham.

Jesu Lover of my Soul, Let me to thy  
Bosom fly, While the nearer Waters roll  
While the Tempest still is high: Hide me  
O my Saviour, hide, 'Till the  
Storm of Life is past; Safe In to thy  
Haven guide, O receive, O re-  
ceive, O receive my Soul at last.

Example 2

John Wesley, *Sacred Melody*, 2nd ed., 1765.

Madan. Musicologist Nicholas Temperley, whose edited version of this tune appears in his *The Music of the English Parish Church*, suggests that this appoggiatura was performed as a quarter note.<sup>36</sup> If, however, it were performed as an eighth note, the effect would be of greater animation and less dignity. This effect is reinforced by a trill in Madan's (and Butts's) m. 5, beat 3, which strongly implies instrumental usage. This trill invites the possibility of other trills and embellishments *ad libitum*.

In m. 13, Butts, Wesley, and Madan print the appoggiatura as an eighth (though Temperley again suggests quarter note performance in the Madan). In m. 14, Butts and Wesley return to a quarter note appoggiatura while Madan retains the eighth. The fact that Wesley uses both suggests that he, or his editor, generally preferred the longer articulation, the use of which provides a more dignified and harmonically integrated performance. Madan also provides fermatas on beats four of mm. 15 and 16, one more than Butts—Wesley has none. The bass line in the Madan is identical to that in the Butts, but the continuo figures contain differences that signify minor harmonic variances.

A significant difference is the repetition of the final four measures, notated in the Butts and the Madan, but not in the Wesley. This repetition would surely have been considered unnecessary by Wesley, who, as stated above, censured tunes that "repeated the same word, contrary to all sense and reason, six or eight or ten times over."<sup>37</sup>

Finally we come to the Wesleys' 1780 tunebook

final four bars. A prominent element missing from the Wesley version is the bass line with continuo figures, the absence of which suggests that there was no instrumental accompaniment. The deletions of these elaborations are consistent with Wesley's musical philosophy.

We have the opportunity to observe how Madan conceived the tune in his 1769 collection (see example 3). It is scored for two part women's voices, with the melody in the top voice, and organ, with continuo figures.

The Butts, Wesley, and Madan versions are virtually the same, with some perhaps telling differences in performance detail. In measure four, Butts's and Wesley's quarter note appoggiatura is given as an eighth note in

*Sacred Harmony*, that Wesley had cast in two or three parts for keyboard accompaniment (see example 4). This analysis is based on the second edition, of 1788, a copy of which is held by Emory's Pitts Theology Library.<sup>38</sup> The melody is the same as the 1765 Wesley version, though there are new, striking appoggiaturas on beats one and two of m. 3. Thus, except for the rather more elaborate appoggiaturas, which seem a bit flamboyant for Wesley, the melody is unaltered from the 1765 version.

The second vocal line (medius) of the Madan is omitted. Also, the bass line is rewritten with concomitant harmonic changes. This more subtle, carefully crafted, bass line provides a polished effect and enhances the character of the tune considerably. There are no continuo figures; though, from the title, keyboard accompaniment was accepted, if not expected.

The evolution of HOTHAM through these publications reveals no earth-shattering truths, but does open a small window into John Wesley's views on music. Since Wesley approved this tune, its characteristics, enumerated above, comprise part of Wesley's musical style. Also, we can see Wesley's firm editorial hand in the curbing of the tune's more effusive permutations as in the Butts and Madan, suggesting that Wesley was stylistically more conservative than these other Methodist compilers.

Within the limits of his musical discernment, John Wesley implemented his theological vision through music, evidenced in his editing of HOTHAM, with the same methodical zeal that pervaded his other output—worthy of the name "Methodist." Thus, the hymnals and tunebooks issued under his aegis embody a potent authenticity, an authenticity ironically intensified by his 1780 omission of one of the greatest hymns in Christendom, "Jesu, lover of my soul."

Wesley was inconsistent in the application of his musical philosophy. He did not believe in harmony on the one hand, yet he published his 1780 *Sacred Harmony* in two and three parts. He condemned counterpoint, yet granted its devotional efficacy in notable instances.<sup>39</sup> As a hymn text editor, Wesley was stricter, culling hymns for theological, poetic, stylistic considerations, and was even concerned that hymns possess the "genuine spirit of poetry."<sup>40</sup>

Were Wesley a musician, he would probably have judged HOTHAM by these same high standards. As an amateur, not having the refined critical apparatus in music that he possessed in theology and poetry, he likely included some tunes that were not of the same high quality as his texts: witness HOTHAM. This is, doubtless, the reason he had such trouble finding a music editor who would leave his tunes alone.

<sup>36</sup> Temperley, vol. 2, 118.

<sup>37</sup> Works, vol. 22, 152.

<sup>38</sup> For date, see Nelson F. Adams, "The Musical Sources for John Wesley's Tunebooks; The genealogy of 148 Tunes" (S.M.D. diss., Union Theological Seminary, 1973), 53-54.

<sup>39</sup> For more on this see Routley, *Wesleys*, 22-24.

<sup>40</sup> Works, vol. 7, 74.



## Hotham

*Set by M.M.*

Jesus, Lover of my Soul, let me to thy Bosom fly, While the nearer Waters roll, while the Tempest fill is high; Hide me, O my Sa-viour, hide, Till the Storm of Life is past; Safe in to the Ha-ven guide, O Re-ceive O Re-ceive O Re-ceive my Soul at last.

Other Refuge have I none,  
Hangs my helpless Soul on Thee,  
Leave, ah! leave me not alone,  
Still support and comfort me:  
All my Trust on Thee is stay'd,  
All mine Help from Thee I bring,  
Cover my defenceless Head  
With the Shadow of thy Wing.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want,  
More than All in Thee I find;  
Raise the Fallen, cheer the Faint,  
Heal the Sick, and lead the Blind.  
Just and Holy is thy Name,  
I am all Unrighteousness!  
Vile and full of Sin I am,  
Thou art full of Truth and Grace.

Plenteous Grace with Thee is found,  
Grace to pardon all our Sin:  
Let the healing Streams abound,  
Make, and keep me pure within.  
Thou of Life the Fountain art,  
Freely let me take of Thee,  
Spring Thou up within my Heart,  
Rise to all Eternity!

**Example 3**  
*Martin Madan. A*  
Collection of Psalm and  
Hymn Tunes..., 1769.

I have been endeavoring for more than 20 years to procure such a book as this. But in vain: masters of music were above following any direction but their own. And as I was determined, whoever compiled this should follow my direction, not mending our tunes, but setting them down neither better nor worse than they were.<sup>41</sup>

What this analysis does reveal is that there are similarities in Wesley's approach to editing both texts and tunes. Important common themes are that text and tunes exhibit common sense, address human passions, and be of a quality and dignity appropriate to God.

The following comments by John Wesley, stated both positively and negatively, relate to the indicated categories. Some of these statements have been quoted above.

### Common sense

Texts: *We talk common sense (whether they understand it or not) both in verse and prose, and use no word but in a fixed and determined sense.*<sup>42</sup>

Music: *...according to the shocking custom of modern music, different persons sung one and the same words at one and the same moment—an intolerable insult on common sense and utterly incompatible with any devotion.*<sup>43</sup>

### Passions

Texts: Referring to the *Collection*. *...a means of raising or quickening the spirit of devotion, of confirming his faith, of enlivening his hope, and of kindling or increasing his love to God and Man.*<sup>44</sup>

Music: *By the Power of Music, I mean its power to affect the hearers, to raise various passions in the human mind...*<sup>45</sup>

### Quality

Texts: Referring to the *Collection*. *Here are (allow me to say) both the purity, the strength, and the elegance of the English language—and at the same time the utmost simplicity and plainness, suited to every capacity. Lastly, I desire men of taste to judge—these are the only competent judges—whether there is not in some of the following verses the true spirit of poetry, such as cannot be acquired by art and labour, but must be the gift of nature.*<sup>46</sup>

Tunes: Referring to *Harmonia Sacra*. *But this, though it is excellent in its kind, is not the thing that I want. I want the people called Methodists to sing true the tunes which are in common use among them. Later, concerning his Sacred Melody. The following collection contains all the tunes which are in common use among us. They are pricked true, exactly as I desire all our congregations may sing them.*<sup>47</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 738.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 74

<sup>43</sup> Works, vol. 22, 151-152.

<sup>44</sup> Works, vol. 7, 75.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 766.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 74

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 738

Jesu lover of my soul, Let me to thy bosom fly,  
While the nearer waters roll, While the tempest still is  
high: Hide me, O my Saviour, hide, Till the storm of  
life is past: Safe into the haven guide, O re - ceive  
O receive, O receive my soul at last.

**Example 4**  
John Wesley, *Sacred Melody*, 2nd ed., 1788.

incomprehensible, for struggling with the uncertainty of life and faith reduces our search for meaning to the banality of sound bites and “fast food” liturgy and music. As there are “fondling” words, there is “fondling” music—music, that through its informality or sensuality portrays a presumptuous intimacy with Christ. Our use of cute, excessively sentimental hymns tends to reduce God and Jesus to no more than friends. To avoid this our music for worship ought to be of a dignity appropriate to the divinity of Christ, should evidence a respect for God, and should inspire us to reach for God. Our music should participate in the transcendence of Christ.

Benson describes Wesley's criteria thusly: “His cardinal principle was that the tunes should invite the participation of all the people; and, next, should keep within the limits of sobriety and reverence. The tunes were to express the words, avoiding ‘vain repetitions’ to fill out the music.”<sup>50</sup> Benson continues this theme later: “Refined, scholarly, of Anglican training and with churchly sympathies, neither of the Wesleys conceived or abetted congregational song that was vulgar in its literary contents or flip-pant in music or indecorous in expression. They cultivated a hymnody that should be reverently and decently ordered without any sacrifice of its heartiness.”<sup>51</sup>

In a letter of 1757, Wesley expresses his pride in Methodist hymn singing:

When it is seasonable to sing praise to

## Dignity of God

Texts: *I have indeed particularly endeavored, in all the hymns addressed to our blessed Lord, to avoid every fondling expression, and to speak as to the most high God, to him that is ‘in glory equal with the Father, in majesty co-eternal.’*<sup>48</sup>

Tunes: *...this astonishing jargon has found a place even in the worship of God! It runs through (O pity! O shame!) the greatest part even of our church music!... Let any impartial person say whether there can be a more direct mockery of God?*<sup>49</sup>

While in these quotations Wesley addresses the words and music of hymns, his ideas apply to all aspects of worship. Our distaste for challenge, for addressing the

God, they do it with the spirit and with the understanding also; not in the miserable, scandalous doggerel of Hopkins and Sternhold, but in psalms and hymns which are both sense and poetry, such as would sooner provoke a critic to turn Christian than a Christian to turn critic. What they sing is therefore a proper continuation of the spiritual and reasonable service; being selected for that end, not by a humdrum wretch who can scarce read what he drones out with such an air of importance, but by one who knows what he is about and how to connect the preceding with the following part of the service. Nor does he take just “two staves,” but more or less, as may best raise the soul to God; especially when sung in well-composed and well-adapted tunes, not by an handful of wild, unawakened striplings, but by an whole serious congregation; and these not lolling at ease, or in the indecent posture of sitting, drawling out one word after another, but all standing before God, and praising Him lustily and with a good courage.<sup>52</sup>

Like the reformers Calvin and Luther, Wesley understood that singing communicated directly to the hearts of his followers, so he found and caused to have written hymns and tunes that were compelling, appealing, singable, and theologically and musically sound. His methodical execution of his ideals made Wesleyan hymn singing an integral part of the popular and theological success of the Methodist movement. Wesley's approach to hymns and tunes was deliberate and effective. No reasonable interpretation of the facts can justify in the name of John Wesley the freewheeling use of nearly any song that strikes the fancy of modern worship planners. We certainly may choose to use modern texts and tunes indiscriminately, but we may not do so and claim thereby to be uniquely “Wesleyan.” John Wesley would never countenance such a practice.

If we hope to emulate Wesley's extraordinary success with hymnody, we must recognize that he, like Luther and Calvin, was concerned with popularity, but not at the expense of character. Today, instead of concentrating primarily on what makes hymnody and worship popular, if we are to be truly Wesleyan, we also will strive to embody the highest possible standards for the worship of God. ■

<sup>48</sup> Works, vol. 4, 101-102.

<sup>49</sup> Works, vol. 7, 768.

<sup>50</sup> Benson, 239.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 242.

<sup>52</sup> John Telford, ed., *The Letters of John Wesley, A.M.* (London: Epworth Press, 1931; reprint, 1960), vol. 3, 227.