

"Journal of a Voyage from Savannah to Philadelphia and from Philadelphia to England". London. 1740.

P. 46. Lat. 46-5. Long. 39-3.

Friday, ~~May~~ 30th. Wrote my Journal, and several Letters, particularly one to the Religious Society at Badsey in Worcestershire, my Native Place; which Society I have a more than ordinary Concern for, as being a kind of First Fruits of my Labours in the Lord's Vineyard.

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Saturday, Aug. 9th. ... Came to my native place at Badsey near Evesham in Worcestershire found my Honour'd Mother was yet alive I asked her Blessing pray'd and gave thanks for the great mercyes God had shewed me since I was here last found the Society was broke up and those few who had tasted the good word of life go now to the Society at Bengeworth which is held three times a week. - Sat up and pray'd with my Cousin Sally Smith O that she may become a wise virgin -

Sunday August 10th.

I was wak'd this morning with the Ringing of the Bells which call'd me to go to the church and thank them for their kindness but that I did not now delight myself in such worldly honours and Respects as I formerly and therefore after an Exhortation I desired that they join in Severall Hymns which they did Accordingly and I appointed them to meet at 6 in the evening at the Society Room when about 6 or 7 of the Ch'icest of the Society went with me and we Discour'd and pray'd together and I was fill'd with much love and joy; went to church morning and evening, at Dinner my poor Bro Seward accused me of many things but I answered nothing the Text being Impress'd upon me as a Sheep before her Sheerers is Dumb so opened he not his mouth. He said there shoud be no Society at night, and yet press'd me to stay a month. I told him if there was no Society and they rejected the word of God I must go away and Shake the Dust off my feet, so he said I might have one but he would not come: and he Accused Mr Wesleys and Mr Whitefield very much; alas how sore will his Punishment be if the Lord does not give him Repentance the Society was very full severall being there from Bengeworth and Evesham and after singing and prayer I was enabled to expound with power on the Beatitudes I was much afraid before I begun that I could always depend upon God. Appointed to meet those that could come at 5 the next morning. My Bro: Benjamin told me how the Lord had dealt with him and what violent Temptations he had in his last Illness - so that he has gone through the fiery Trial .... this Storm in his Breast has left a cloud behind w'ich is not yet moved - he being weak in Body and mind and is now only an Auditor at present at the Society but I trust the Sun will Shine bright upon him again shortly pray'd with my cousin Sally and went to rest about 2 after writing my Journal.

Monday, Aug. 11. Rose between 4 & 5 wrote a letter to Howel Harris to meet me in Welos, went to the Society where about 20 met me and I was enabled to expound the conversion of St Paul and we had a heavenly meeting - Blessed be Gods Holy name went to Evesham and visited my two Bro: and Sisters and talk'd of the things of Jesus Christ - Several came with me from Evesham to the Badsey Society and all the way we talk'd of the opposition the Societies had met with, and of the power of God which was manifested in their Preservation we sang a Hymn of Praise at the Society which was pretty full with persons from several Towns about I was enabled to expound the 2nd Lesson being the 1st of James and appointed to meet them again to morrow morning at 5 what am I that the Lord should call me Indeed I am now ready to say - Send Lord by whom thou wilt send but send not me: O that I may always depend on and Act my Faith in God... pray'd with my Dear Mother and went to Rest in peace praised be the Lord.

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Tuesday, Aug. 12. Bedsey Society. Expounded miracle of loaves and fishes. "Made several visits among my old Acquaintance and talk'd with them upon their Souls concern pray'd with one and satisfied her upon some Scruples she had about Baptism and Shew'd her that the Kingdom of God was not meat and Drink but Righteousness peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. - Mr M: the Baptist preacher din'd with us: and we agreed in most points excepting the offer of Free Grace to all which he seem'd to think Inconsistent with the Doctrine of Election. &c. for my part I think they are both consistant and both finally to be believed I do not see how a field preacher can refrain from offering Salvation to everyone if they will Accept of it but men Reject the Kingdom of God and shut their Eyes against the Counsell of the most high: came to Evesham ... Appointed Society meeting 6 a.m. Went to rest about 22.

Wed., AUG. 13. At Society, about 20. Expounded Acts 2. "I was drawn to Relate the manner of my calling to go abroad and to appeal to the Searcher of Hearts for my varies motives, and intentions therein and that in it the will of the Lord he knew I would choose to stay with them, I was yesterday drawn out in prayer for my Honoured Mother on the same account and that the Lord would remember her carefulness for our well being how she rose early and late took no rest on that account desiring the Lord to pardon her Ignorance and not Impute her Trespasses unto her professing before God that it was ~~his~~ his will I should choose to stay with, and comfort her in her old Age and I trust in the Lord Jesus as this prayer came from him he will answer it in my Dear Mothers conversion which seems near at hand by the Brokenness of her Heart I thought it my Duty to examine closely into the State of her soul and found it better than I could have expected I was drawn to pray that she might see the Lord Christ before she goes hence and is no more seen; and that she might be able to say Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace for mine eyes have seen thy Salvation: I was drawn to plead free Grace without works seeing the Lord requireth not Burnt offerings - nor is pleas'd with Thousands of Rams or ten thousands of Rivers of Oyl may the Lord hear my prayers and let my cry come unto him my poor Mother said Heartily Amens and I believe is not far from the Kingdom of God made several visits on our Dear Lords account and talk'd of his interest went to the Society and was enabled to expound the 4th of St John in much weakness which humbled and abased me least I should be lifted up when power is given me; came to Bedsey and was humbled again by the apparition of my Poor Bro: Seward who vehemently accus'd my Dear friends Mr Whitefield and Mr Wesleys and myself may the Lord forgive him for he knows not what he does - was going to Rest but found myself drawn to Prayer for my Bro. with strong Cryings and wrestlings on his Account that I might love him with a pure Heart fervently and be ready even to lay down my life for him as Christ laid down his life for us while we were yet as Rebels against him."

Thurs. Aug. 14. "Rose early visited some of the Society, and Pray'd with them met my Poor Bro: Seward who fell upon me as usual; often held my Tongue and kept Silence before him ago and now I was mov'd to tell him the Truth that he was of his father the devil - that he hated God, and that he hated the children of God, that he was in a state of Damnation and that I would love my Saviour tho I perish'd under his hands after much more such conversation my poor Bro: cool'd and we kiss'd each other and join'd in Prayer together but alas! what are prayers when the Heart is not chang'd - however we must follow on to know the Lord more and more and possess our souls in Patience and learn in whatsoever state we are therewith to be content we must wait for the time when sorrow and sighing shall be done away and all tears shall be wiped from our eyes when the wicked shall cease from Troubling and our woful souls shall be at Rest - my Bro: and Mother tell me I make myself a by word - that I bring odium and contempt upon myself and that people do not stick to say that I am mad - how little do they think they are fulfilling the Scripture when they thus speak - was not our Lord treated in the same manner among his Relations was not he despised and Rejected of men a man of Sorrows and Acquainted with Grief - in the Psalms for this day which we

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we read the Psalmist says I am become as it were a monster unto many- and if they have called the master of the House Beelzebub how much more will they call those of his Household so as my poor Bro: told me this morning I was mad and had a Devil, I told him was I mov'd by an Evil Spirit I shou'd swear the Peace against him for indeed he raged like Cain against Abel and my Grace was so weak that I was somewhat afraid of him last night and this morning, and fled from before his face tho our Saviour says fear not him that can only kill the body and is not able to kill the soul, but fear him ... (etc) I told my Bro: I had rather wander about in Dens and Caves of the Earth destitute Afflicted Tormented than quit my loving Saviour, my Bro: told me if I would quit my way of life he would do any thing for me, I told him I loved my Saviour and would not quit him; tha with Lazarus I begg'd my bread from door to door and died in adversity my poor Bro: reads the Scriptures and reads the Church form daily to my dear mother which shows that Satan will allow as much formality in Religion as we Please provided he keeps the love of the world in the Heart; but to quit all and follow Christ he cannot bear but will Persecute even to the Death and therefore such will Receive the greater Damnation - for how can these Serpents these Generation of vipers escape Damnation of Hell it will be more Tolerable for Publicans and Harlots, for the most notorious Reprobates of Tyre and Sidon for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of Judgment than for them - O that my poor Bro: and others my Relations who now Persecute the Gospel of Christ may be convinced of this and flee from the wrath to come - O that the Lords mercy may be magnified in their conversion and salvation and not in their Destruction, Remember me o Lord for this and shew some token on me for good.... Came to Redditch and left several journals and papers among my Relations, came to my Uncle Smiths at Boarsley Park and was gladly receiv'd my Bro: Edward and Sister were with me and we had sweet Conversation as we rode along Relating the account of my Conversion and calling to them from the beginning and after that was enabled to expound the Parables of the wise and foolish virgins with much clearness and Power Glory be to God alone a niece of my uncles was much Affected and I pray'd with her after midnight and then went to Rest in much peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Fri., Aug. 15th.

was enabled to pray in the family and to expound the 3rd of John on the new Birth with much Power and Blessed be God my uncle was much Affected and Alter'd his sentiments on many accounts, said he thought Mr Whitefield was a good man and that I was much improv'd since I was here 2 year ago: Glory be to God alone O that my progress may be known unto all men for I am much afraid of standing still and being careless and lukewarm in my Masters service .....

Sat. Aug. 16th.

Was much increas'd in prayer last night and this morning about my poor Bro: Seward and Blessed be God was helped to Discover the wiles of Satan, who would have made me entertain malicious thoughts against my Brother but o forbid it Lord and enable me to love my Bro: to the Death nay tho he slay me yet still let me love and pray for him; tho he curse yet let me overcome with good ....

.....

Tues. Aug. 19th.

..... Came to Bengeworth and met with the members of Parliament endeavouring to secure their election - o that Christians were as diligent to make their calling and election sure... came to the Bengeworth Society.. expounded John 7, etc... Came to my Bro: Benje who led me to his fine Bed, I thought of a crucified master who had not where to lay his Head and therefore pray'd and made supplication to my God till near 2 in the morning lest I should by my indulgence pamper my Rebellious flesh.

Wed. Aug. 20th

... Rose before 5, prayed, went to Society, expounded Matt. 7.... Came to my Honoured Mothers at Badsey and Blessed be God we had a quiet day with my poor Bro: Seward who desir'd I would expound to my mother and not at the Society but I desir'd to do both which he did not much oppose and so we parted in Love praised be the Lord; and I came to the Society at Bengeworth: ... expounded Eph. 2 ... came to

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my Bro: Benje. where Mr Mower the Baptist minister prayed in the family with great enlargement after which I was drawn to pray and interceded for self and friends and for the ..?.. of Christ and went to Rest in peace about 1 o'clock praised be the Lord for ever.

Thurs. Aug. 21st.

.... dined with the Friends and some of the strangers who were Bigots, were surprised to find that I was not in every particular one of them and wondered I could go to Church, alas this is all Bigottry and till the Partition wall is broken down Christianity cannot flourish came to the Badsey Society with my dear friend G. Graves who is about to go into Arden, was enabled to expound the 3rd of Genesis came home sang Hymns prayed with my dear Bro: Graves &ca. and went to rest in peace admiring at the great mercys and Providences of the day.

.....  
Sunday, Aug. 24th.

.... in the Afternoon came to Badsey church in company with several others and we sung sund: Hymns as we walk'd over the field - Mr Rollins preach'd more of the Gospell than I used to hear in the church but at the conclusion warn'd the people against Enthusiasm and Zeal in Religion which is not according to Knowledge - alas! how much better would it have been to have them against Bigottry - at the Society in the evening I expounded Gen. 22.... I told them I was as sure of my call to leave my native place as Abraham was - desired their prayers for me when I should be on the great Ocean - I told them I did not desire them to leave the Church but Attend it closely and that I only wanted to bring them to Jesus Christ and then if they were fully persuaded in their own mind let each remain in the Communion in which he was call'd if he was call'd a Churchman let him Remain if call'd a Quaker, or Baptist, or Presbyterian, let them remain so; if they had no scruples about modes or forms of worship which were only the Shell and outside of Religion ... etc. there was 20 or 30 from Bengeworth and Evesham whom I accompanied part of the way, - sang Hymns with them and before we parted I was assisted to pray for with them and myself in a most Affectionate manner, what am I a vile wretch that thou shouldst thus honour me o that I may make Due improvement of these marvellous mercies - came home and pray'd in the family and then went to Rest after private prayer and intercession praising God for giving us so blessed a Sabaoth.

Mon. Aug. 25th.

At Society expounded John 3.... At return home expounded Gen 3 "and to pray with my Dear and Honour'd Mother who was much Affected thereby and appear'd to be convinced of sin o that she may lay hold upon the Righteousness of Jesus Christ Revealed unto her soul ... took leave of my Dear friend Mr Graves who walk'd to Mikleton he is a gracious youth and has had sweet experience in the spiritual life and knows his sins are forgiven...."

Tues. Aug. 26th.

At Society was directed to treat upon the 20 of the Acts being St Pauls affectionate parting with the Ephesian Church ... We were all so much affected ... that there were few dry eyes but many wept sore and we embraced each other - so I departed commending them to God etc. etc.... it being said that the poor people followed me not for sake of the Doctrine but because I did use to supply their Temporal necessities I told them that objection was now removed and so Satan proved a liar for that I did not remember I had given any one of them Silver or Gold but such as I had I had given them - not that I was unwilling I trusted to supply their Temporal as well as Spiritual, but Divine wisdom has so ordered both my Bros Fortune and mine that our Hands were partly tyed up, and this I thought was a Happy circumstance to cut off an occasion from them who desire an occasion to Blame our conduct, - Took our Affectionate leave of my dear Mother, came to Bengeworth and appointed a Society in the evening at which we attended near 4 hours and God was with us of a truth.... I never I think had such freedom in expounding Glory and praise be to God alone after Exposition and prayer was enabled to give an Affectionate Exhortation to them to continue in the Grace of God ... etc. ... - prayed at my Bro: Edwards for unity and peace which Blessed be God

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they enjoy came home wrote my Journal and a Letter and went to Rest after Intercession about 2 in the morning admiring at the mercies of the day.

Wed. Aug. 27th.

At Society expounded Parable of the Sower. "What am I a vile worm that it should be given to me to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God and that to others it should not be given tis all free mercy Rich Distinguishing Grace.... Took an Affectionate leave of the Society and of my friends felt a sweet savour of life on my spirits while singing and praying with my friends O that these may be earnest of our meeting at the Marriage feast of the Supper of the Lamb... Came to Cheltenham with Mr Oulton..."

## Section of MS. Journal in Chetham's Library, Manchester. MS B 450

Sunday Sept. 21st.

Preaching on Hampton (i.e. Leckhampton) Common till nearly midnight to 10 or 1500 people.

"Was moved to break on the Prodigal Son showing in my own Example how I soon spent the Common Stock of Grace given me in my youth - resisted the Holy Ghost & was quite Estranged from God as in a foreign Land

that a mighty famine indeed arose there vizt. a famine of the Word of God - then I join'd myself to the Devil the Citizen of this World who sent me to feed Swine & I would fain have filled my Self with the husks wch they did eat, which are Balls Assemblies May games Horse Races & all other the Huskish Diversions of the age - but no man gave unto me that is none of these would satisfie me - & when I came to my Self - shewing that in Gods Account I was before beside myself tho in the worlds Account a very Wise man - & but just now begun to be beside myself in their Account - that at my Return upon the Call of God by sickness without which & some others Call I should never have come to him - as the poor prodigal had many a weary step, etc.. So I had Labour'd 9 years in the works of the Law - & was got to the end of it before I found Jesus Christ tho I read of him 5 or 6 times a day .... was helpd to tell thm there was no Necessity of their being 9 years coming to Christ etc... shew'd them the Elder Br exactly answerd the Character of all Self Righteous people who are further from the Kingdom of God than the greatest prodigal ... etc. etc. ... was moved to give them ~~the~~ the Character of persons establishing themselves in their own Righteousness from the Example of /my Eldest Br. / ~~the~~ / one whom I am acquainted with / who in the Worlds Acct. is a very good Man, goes to Church & Sacts, says family & private prayer is Charitable to his Neighbours

yet would persecute & oppose our Dear Br Whitefield & Wesleys even to the Death - / exemplified the Character of a Hireling Priest & Pharisee in, that of my Br. Clergyman who left a living of 800 £ around for one of 4000 £ & doubtless would leave this for a Decorey or Br Riek - and yet is much admired in his parish is a fine Orator & preys twice a day in his family - but at the same time a Violent Opposer of the Kinre. & Gospel of Xt. / ~~the~~ / ... was moved to relate an Acct. of my Br. B's / ~~the~~ / Conversion - the Signs of whose Madness was his talking of giving all he had the £20000 to feed ye poor - his praying always & talking of Jesus Xt. continually".

\* Wm. Seward

† Thomas Seward, then Vicar of Ebury and later Vicar of Westfield.

© Benjamin Seward

The amendments were made at the suggestion of Howard Harris shortly before Wm. Seward's sudden death in Oct. These included some bitter things about the Wesley's after Seward's violent quarrel with Charles Wesley at Bristol at the end of Sept. The journal was intended for Jack's call but S's death prevented this.

"Life of Charles Wesley" by Thomas Jackson". London 1841

Vol. 1 pp. 187-90. Letter from C. Wesley to J. Wesley,  
Aug. 20th, 1739 from Bengeworth.

(Note: Charles had gone to visit Benjamin Seward, who lived at the Mansion House, Bengeworth, now called the Evesham Hotel).

"... On Saturday afternoon God brought us hither. Mr Seward being from home, there was no admittance of us, his wife being an opposer, and having refused to see George Whitefield before me. At seven Mr Seward found us at our inn, and carried us home. I expounded at eight in the school room, which contains two hundred. On Sunday morning I preached from George Whitefield's pulpit, the wall: 'Repent ye, and believe the Gospel'. The notice being short, we had only a few hundreds, but .... they received the word with all readiness of mind. In the evening I showed to near two thousand the Saviour in the Good Samaritan... Once more God enabled me to open the new covenant at the school-house, which was crowded with deeply attentive hearers." *X Benjamin's 2nd wife, Elizabeth, a "Puritan Baptist" + Deborah Seward.*

Charles Wesley's Journal:

August 20th. "I spoke from Acts II.37, to two or three hundred market-people and soldiers, all as orderly as could be desired. I now heard that the Mayor had come down on Sunday to take a view of us; and soon after an officer struck a countryman in the face, without any provocation. A serious woman besought the poor man not to resist evil; 'as the other only wanted to make a riot'. He took patiently several repeated blows, telling the man he might beat him as long as he pleased.

I took a walk with Mr Seward, whose eyes it has pleased God to open, to see He would have all men to be saved. His wife, who refuses to see me, is miserably bigoted to the particular sch<sup>m</sup>e. We had the satisfaction of meeting with Mr Seward's cousin Molly, whom I had endeavoured to convince of sin at Islington. The Spirit had now convinced her of righteousness also. ...

August 21st. ... "I was prevailed to stay over this day. God soon showed me his design in it. Our singing in the garden drew two sincere women to us, who sought Christ sorrowing.... How shall I be thankful enough for his bringing me hither! While we were singing, a poor drunken servant of Mr Seward was struck. His master had last night given him warning; but now he seems effectually called...."

August 22nd. ".... I cannot but observe the narrow spirit of those that hold particular redemption. I have had no disputes with them; yet they have me in abomination. Mrs Seward is irreconcilably angry with me; 'for he offers Christ to all!' Her maids are of the same spirit; and their Baptist teacher insists that I ought to have my gown stripped over my ears. When Mr Seward, in my hearing, exhorted one of the maids to a concern for her salvation, she answered, it was to no purpose: she could do nothing. The same answer he received from his daughter, of seven years old. See the genuine fruits of this blessed doctrine!"

Journal: March 15th, 1740.

"Between two and three we came to Bengeworth. I sent for Mr Seward: answer was returned, that he had taken physic, but would send his brother Henry to me. Henry followed me to Mr Canning's, and fell upon me without preface or ceremony. I was the downfall of his brother; had picked his pocket; ruined his family; come now to get more money; was a scoundrel, rascal, and so forth; and deserved to have my gown stripped over my ears. He concluded with threatening how he would beat me, if he could but catch me on Bengeworth-common. I spoke little, and with temper.

All letters, I find, have been intercepted since Mr Seward's illness; his fever is called madness; his servants set over him as spies, &c. Be sure, he is to know nothing of my being here; but I mean to give him a hint of it to-morrow, by shouting from the top of the wall.

Sunday, March 16th. "I preached the Law and the Gospel with much freedom."

so come at your peril'. I walked toward the place. An officer from the Mayor met me, and desired me to come to him. I said, I would first wait upon my Lord, and then upon him, whom I reviled for his office sake. I went on. Mr Henry met me with threats and revilings. I began singing;

'Shall I fear a feeble man,

The Spirit's cause in me restrain?'

He ran about, raving like a madman, and quickly got some men for his purpose, who laid hold upon me. I asked by what authority. Where was their warrant? Let them show that. I would save them the trouble of using violence. They said, they had none; but I should not preach there; and hurried me away amid the cries of the people. Truly their tongues were set on fire of hell. Henry cried, 'Take him away, and duck him'. I broke out into singing, with Thomas Maxfield, and let them carry me whither they would. At the bridge-end of the lane they left me. There I stood, out of the liberty of their corporation, and gave out -

Angel of God, whate'er betide,

Thy summons I obey!.

Some hundreds they could not frighten from hearing me on. 'If God be for us, who can be against us?' Never did I feel so much what I spoke. The word did not return empty; as the tears on all sides testified.

Then I waited on Mr Mayor. The poor sincere ones followed me trembling. He was a little warm at my not coming before. I gave him the reason; and added, that I knew no law of God or man, which I had transgressed. If there was any such, I desired no favour. He said, he should not have denied me leave to preach, even in his own yard, but Mr Henry Seward and the 'Pothecary' had assured him it would quite cast his brother down again. I said I would rather restore him; for our Gospel was life from the dead.

A Lawyer began declaiming against my making the poor gentleman mad. I granted, you fools must count his life madness. . . ~~Here~~ a Clergyman spake much and nothing. As near as I could pick his meaning, he grumbled at Mr Whitefield's speaking against the Clergy in his Journal. I told him, if he himself was a carnal, worldly-minded Clergyman, etc..... He charged me with making a division in Mr Seward's family. I asked, 'Are you a Preacher of the Gospel, and do not know what effect it has among men 'There shall be 5 in a house, 2 against 3, etc...?' He laughed, and turned to his companion, 'Did I not tell you he would bring that?' .... I turned from him, and asked the Mayor whether he approved the treatment I had met with. He said, 'By no means;' and if I complained, he would bind the men over, to answer it at the sessions. I told him, I did not complain; neither would I prosecute them, as they well know.....' .....

March 17th. "My yesterday's treatment has provoked many to love. They receive me the more gladly into their houses, because Mr Seward's is shut against me. I breakfasted at a loving Quaker's, and preached at three by the river-side. God put strong words into my mouth, and inclined the people's hearts to hearken..

Mr Henry Seward, mad with passion at my stay, spreads the news of it everywhere, and much increases my audience....

March 18th. "Last night's disturbance, we now hear, was contrived at the alehouse by the 'Squire and Rector'.... While I was concluding, my friend, the schoolmaster, set up his throat. We had recourse to singing, which quite spoiled his oration. Henry had kept him in town, warm with drink for this purpose. I could hardly restrain the people from falling upon him. I went up to my other rough friend, the Serjeant, and shook him by the hand with hearty good-will. He could not well tell how to take it; said he had only done what he was ordered; and seemed glad to get out of my hands. Some had come merely to make a riot; but my God was stronger than theirs.

I had a message before preaching from the Minister, that if I did not immediately quit the town, Mr Henry Seward could easily raise a mob; and then let me look to myself. Mr Canning and others dissuaded me from going to the Society, for my enemies were resolved to do me a mischief, which I ought to avoid by going out of the way for a while. (This Charles Wesley refused to do, and preached again. He left Evesham for Oxford on March 20th, but returned on the 25th).

with my brother?' 'Can you imagine, if I have any business with him as a Christian, I shall communicate it to you?' 'Why not to me?' 'Because you are a natural man'. 'Why, are not you a natural man as well as I?' 'You are a mere natural man, in your sins, and in your blood'. 'What do you mean by that? I say, have you any particular business?' 'I have business at present somewhat different from talking with you'."

March 26th. "News was brought us that Mr Benjamin Seward was carrying out to Badsey, there to be secured, no doubt, till I turn my back on Evesham. I walked out that way, and met Henry. He excused his past behaviour: said anger was rooted in his nature. 'But indeed, Sir, you are the downfall of my brother Benjamin. He has certainly been out of his senses.' 'Yes, and so have I been before now in a fever'. 'O, but we all really think him mad, through the means of you gentlemen'. 'Very likely you may; and if it should ever please God to make you a Christian, you will be thought mad too'. 'God make me a Christian! I am a better Christian than you are. I have good Ministers and the Scriptures to teach me'. 'Yes, and those same Scriptures say, a man who loves money is no more a Christian than an adulterer'. 'What, Sir, must not a man love money? How shall he go to market without it? Not that I value it, not I. But what do you mean by making divisions in our family? You come now to get money'. 'Indeed, Sir, you know what I come for. You cannot tell what to make of me. You have no standard to measure me by, but yourself. I do not wonder at your outcries. Micah cried after them that ran away with his gods, etc... Money is your god; and you think I come to rob you of it'. He rode to a good convenient distance; then turning back, cried out, 'You are a rascal, and a villain, and a pick-pocket', and setting spurs to his horse, made off as fast as he could. Brother Maxfield and I walked on, calmly praising God.

Mr Canning's little daughter told us, she had watched in the lane and put a note in Mr Benjamin Seward's hand. Soon after, his chariot stopped at our door, and I went out, and found my friend. He invited me to his house. Henry was upon the coach-box, a place he full well became; and which nothing could make uneasy for him, but my presence. Yesterday he told me, I should never see his brother; and today he himself brings him to me.

March 27th. "I dined at Mr. Keech's, who is somewhat awakened, his daughter more so, his wife, etc.... I walked out with brother Maxfield to the river-side, and spent a comfortable hour in prayer and singing. Then we went to Mr Benjamin Seward's. We found Henry and his wife with him; both surprisingly civil, and full of apology. Henry begged my pardon and waited upon me to the gate.

(At the Society later. Riot at the last hymn.)

*\* Benjamin's wife. Henry was not married at that time.*

March 28th. "I met Mr Henry at his brother's, and with all plainness and love endeavoured to convince him of sin. Never have I found a man of so little sense with so many evasions. I simply told him, that if he died in his present condition, he must die eternally; that he raged in vain; my hook was within him; I had warned the sinner, and delivered my own soul. 'Your hook!' cried he; 'what do you mean by your hook?' Benjamin answered, smiling, 'You know, brother, Mr Wesley is a fisher of men'. As a Minister, I added, I now showed him his lost estate; and that, whether he would hear, or whether he would forbear....

March 29th. "I took my leave of Mr Seward. Henry fell upon me for advising his brother to keep up the society. 'Rogue, rascal, pick-pocket; were the best titles he could afford me. Mr Benjamin interposed. I begged him not then to answer a fool according to his folly. Henry started up, and courageously took me by the nose. The cries of Mrs Seward stopped any farther violence. I was filled with comfort, felt the hand of God upon me, and sat still. I said to Mrs Seward, 'Be not disquieted, Madam: I have learned to turn the other cheek'. Henry was as the troubled sea. Benjamin, perfectly composed, said to me, 'You have now received one mark of Christ'. To his brother, 'Was I what you are, I should turn you out of my house this moment'. I would not let him proceed, begged Mrs Seward's pardon for the disturbance. I had been the innocent occasion of; and departed rejoicing that I was considered worthy to...



... Continued at Oneletemann ... till  
after dinner, and got safe to Evesham (where Mr Seward's relative  
live) about seven at night. I found there had been much talk abo  
my coming, God wisely ordering it to engage and excite people's  
tention. Several persons came to see me, amongst whom was Mr Ben  
jamin Seward, whom God has been pleased to call by His free grac  
very lately. His circumstances both before and in his conversion,  
much resemble those of St Paul. For he was bred up at the feet of  
Gamaliel, being at Cambridge for some years. As touching the law,  
so far as outward morality went, he was blameless; concerning zea  
opposing the Church. My proceedings he could by no means approve,  
he had once a mind, he said, to write against Mr Law's enthusiast  
notions in his 'Christian Perfection'. But lately, it has pleased  
God to reveal His dear Son in him, and to cast him down to the ear  
as He did Saul, by eight days' sickness, in which time he scarce  
ever ate, or drank, or slept, and underwent great inward agonies &  
tortures. After this, the scales fell more and more from the eyes  
his mind. God sent a poor travelling woman, that came to sell stra  
toys, to instruct him in the nature of the second birth, and now  
he is resolved to prepare for Holy Orders, and to preach Christ an  
those truths straightway in every synagogue, which once he endeavor  
to destroy. He is a gentleman of a very large fortune, which he has  
now devoted to God. I write this to shew how far a man may go, and  
know nothing of Jesus Christ. Behold, here was one who constantly  
attended on the means of grace, was exact in his morals, humane and  
courteous in his conversation, who gave much in alms, was frequent  
private duties; and yet, till about six weeks ago, as destitute of  
any saving experimental knowledge of Jesus Christ as those on whom  
His Name was never called, and who still sit in darkness and the  
shadow of death.... How often has my companion and honoured friend,  
Mr William Seward, been deemed a madman even by his very brother, fo  
going to Georgia; but now God has made him an instrumēt of convertin  
his brother....

Thursday, April 19. "Went to Badsey, about two miles from Evesham,  
where Mr Seward's eldest brother lives. We were most kindly received  
and I hope, a true Christian church will be in their house. About  
four in the evening, the churches at Evesham, Bengeworth, and Badsey  
being denied, I preached from the cross, in the middle of Evesham  
street, to a great congregation; and then went to Badsey, and preach  
in Mr Seward's brother's yard to a great number of people, many of  
which came from Evesham to hear me again. God grant it may strike  
home to their hearts.

Friday, April 20. "Preached about nine in the morning at the cross,  
went to public worship, and received the Sacrament. Preached at Badse  
at five in the evening, and returned and expounded in the Town Hall,  
which, though very large, was quite thronged. The Recorder himself  
procured the keys for us, and great numbers of people were truly  
affected.....

Saturday, April 21. "Preached in the morning at Badsey to a weeping  
audience, joined in prayer, and set out for Oxford, which I reached  
about ten at night....

Tuesday, August 14. Quotes letter (verbatim) dated Aug. 11, from  
Thomas Webb, aged 62, parish clerk of Bretforton for the last 30  
years, a tailor: "... The circumstances of my conversion were as  
follows: I heard you were to preach on Thursday, the 19th April last,  
at Mr Seward's of Badsey; and living at Bretforton, a village about  
a mile from thence ... my curiosity, as I then should have termed it,  
but as it is since evident by the consequence, the wonderful goodness  
and providence of Almighty God, let me hear you, which I did with  
great attention, and was much affected. The next day, being Good Friday  
I attended your ministry again, when you spoke with such demonstratio  
of the Spirit and power, from these words, 'What I say unto you, I  
say unto all, Watch', that I was soon convinced I was in the state of  
the foolish virgins, etc...'

Some days after this he was sent for to work at a little alehouse  
called Contercup, where he found the man of the house had some  
books from a glazier and plumber of Tewkesbury who had been sent  
to send them to the paper works to be burned ...  
who had also heard Whitefield's

Cardiff Central Library - Bute MSS, XIX.66.

(Note: The letters were all sent to John Seward of Badsey, steward to Lord Windsor for his estates in Wales. John was frequently away in Wales or London. The two eldest sons, Henry and Edward, were at home, Henry managing the Seward's Badsey estate, Edward being apparently Lord Windsor's steward for his Worcestershire estates. The next two sons, William and Benjamin, lived in London: William, a broker, in Cloak Lane, Benjamin, at that time a widower, in King's Bench Walks. He had 2 little girls, Frances and Eleanor, who lived mostly at Badsey in the care of their grandmother and uncles. William had an invalid wife, Grace, and they had a daughter Grace. The youngest son Thomas had a living in S. Wales, but was chaplain in the household of the Duke of Grafton at Euston.)

4 Oct. 1735. Fragment of a letter in the handwriting of Edward Seward.

Badsey Octr. 4th 1735

Dear Sr/

I hope you have my Br. Benjms by the last Post since which I have but little to add but that we are all well. ... My Bro Benjn designs comming up to Town with my Br Wm & then He will give you A particular acct. of the Pigeon House that (rest of sheet torn off); (top portion of another sheet) this Post of pretty Cousin Gracys you shall hear of one of pretty Cousin Fannys. She was with me by the little Parlour Fire yesterday I was going to give her A Rosted Apple She desir'd me to clean it I desir'd Her to take it in the Kitchen & give it one of the Servants to clean No says She I will fetch you a Knife to Clean It for If I take it there Miss Nelly will Cry for... and then Susan will give it Her. My dear Mother who is now in the little Parlour with Me desires Her kind love to you She had not a very good Night but (rest of sheet torn off).

27 Nov. 1735. From Edward Seward.

Badsey Novr. 27th 1735  
Six a Cloack Evening

Dear Sr

I have but just Recd: my Brs: Letter which brings us the good news of your Comring, Wee had noe thoughts this morning of Receiving so agreeable a letter, or else wee should have sent for it, notwithstanding the great Flood which Sam will give you an acct. of, as Also if it Stops Joseph Home from sending it over. However I hope as the Horse will be fed to night, tht on your Road that they will bring you to Woodstock at least, & that wee shall have the Pleasure of your good Company, in good Time on Saturday. My dear Mother is in the little Room with me & I have just asked Her if I should tell you if wee would Stay dinner for you till Three or four a Cloack, but She tells me you had not best fatigue your Self but take your own Time, but I hope you'll get out in the Morning for if you come only from Woodstock it is a good way these Short days. I hope you'll get Somthing on the Road proper to stay your Stomach & then my dear Mother will have A young fowl & Bacon Ready for the Pot which She sais will be boyled for Half an hour She joins with me in Our hearty wishes for your good Journey, with her true love to you. My Br. Harry Lyes with Mr Hazlewood to night at His Tennts. at Offenham in order to Hunt in the Morning. They dine here to morrow & I belive Mr Hazlewood will goe Home in the Evening if the waters are down - He lay there the two last Nights the Particulars of which & of other affairs I shall defer till I have you with for good Company I heartily wish you a good Night & once more I conclude with my wishes for your good journey being with the greatest Sincerity

Yr dutyfull Son

The little dear ones send @ most Obedt. Servt.  
you a kiss & are very well. Ed. Seward  
I belive Miss Fanny will have  
a great deal to say to you when  
you see her. I suppose one of the  
first questions will be what have

13 Dec. 1735. From William Seward.

Cloak Lane Decr. 13th 1735.

Hond. Sir/

.....

.....I had a Lre yesterday from my dear Br. Harry ..... my dear Br. says there being a Snow there on Sunday - Miss Fanny Observ'd that it was God Almighty that sent it - which observation pleas'd all the family much especially my Dear Mother who I dont hear but is pure well....

28 Dec. 1735. From Benjamin Seward.

Kings Bench Walks December 27 1735

Hond Sr/

I have just been writing to Badsey where Br. Thomas is also writing to my Dear Mother - he went on Wednesday last to visit Mr Brome, & is invited to dine there & to make one at a Country Dancing on Friday next. - My Cozn. Robinson's din'd with My Br. William on Xmas day & we are all invited there tomorrow to Eat part of a Sparib & Fowls from Badsey, my Br having a fine Turkey & Chine from thence. Sr Wills: family is to dine at Cloak Lane on Monday. - We wish you Many happy New Years and hope it wont be long before you leave Wales to make us or our Friends at Badsey much so in your agreeable Company. .... Our friends at Badsey were well when my Br wrote and the little ones very brisk, as was pretty Miss Grace to Night who gave me several kisses for You & the Rest of her Admirers. - We join in humble Duty to you wishing You a good Night, to Morrow the Young Gentleman's Health will I suppose be one of the First that Graces our Feast, which is always most sincerely wish'd him by his

Most Dutiful and obedient Son

Benjamin Seward

30 Dec. 1735. From Benjamin Seward.

Hon:d Sr/

My Br. William ... Sr. Williams family din'd here yesterday we had a Turkey & Chine from Badsey drank all your healths and were very merry. - Pretty Miss Gracey being dress'd, Curl'd, & a Look'd very charmingly, & I think is grown quite a little Beauty. I have been just giving my Dear Mother an Account of her Gayety.

Mr Br Tom din'd with Lord Charles yesterday his L<sup>o</sup>p having sent his Servant to desire it, he hath gott a little Cold but I hope it will soon goe off - I thank God the Rest of our friends are pretty well. - We join in humble Duty to you - we had a letter yesterday from Badsey with the good Newes of their healths that you may enjoy that valuable Blessing are the sicere wishes & prayers of

Hond. Sr.

Your most Dutiful and obedient Son

Benj Seward

Cloak Lane Decr. 30 1735

10 Jan. 1735/6 From Edward Seward.

Badsey Jany. 10th 1735.

Dear Sr.

My Br. Harry thanks you for your kind letter I hope you Recd. mine wherein I think I told you tht. the Malt was all sold at 2s-10 p Bushell at Bristol by the Man tht. made it My Cousin Willson advised to have that Man Sell it Wee Recd. the Mony for Two weigh & My Cousin Willson tells us tht. the rest of the Mony is in good hands. Wee have thoughts of making about 8 or 10 weigh of Malt this year thinking tht. ther is a pretty good prospect of its being dear next year tho wee have not much encouragmt. from tht. wee made before & wish there will be noe Loss, but Some Small gain if all the Mony is Recd. Safe, as I hope it will be. The wheat being dear & not likely to be cheaper & the Season having been so weatt if it is thought the Barly land will make but indifferent worke & if there's not a prospect for a good Crop. These are the Reasons why wee belive Barly may be dearer another year if you think as wee doe then I belive wee shall make Some Malt to Sell I being to goe halves with my Br In It So you'll please to let us know your thoughts by the 1st Post. My Mother gives her kind love to you & my Br. I am in Duty from

Cardiff Central Library - Bute MSS. 66.

Postscript to Letter from Edward Seward on previous page.

We have sold almost all my Br Benjms. Beans at £- 2s. 7d. p. Bl. which will pay all Charges & about 5 or 6 p c for His Mony there have been Two good & ? years together or else they would have pd very well

New wheat about 5s p Bl.

Old wheat " 5.8

Barley the best at 2.1 Some at 22d p Bl. ours was well Ended & is very good and will bring about 2.1

(With the above letter, one on William Seward's writing)

feb: 14th: 1735

Hond. Sr./

In answer to the above I send my dear Brs. my humble Opinion that I think they'll make Malt this year at a much greater disadvantage than last because I believe Barley is near 6d p Bushel dearer than twas this time 12 Month is so the Malt when tis sold must fetch a price in proportion to make it worth while which is very hazardous especially considering that as this Snow has fall so Seasonably it will probably do the Land good & bring it in order for Barly. Then you know the hazard of damage in keeping & of bad debts when sold p Commission, the Expences of going to Teuxberry to sell &ca. - & as the Peace is like to be soon quite settled - I think it best to sell Wheat also as fast as you well can as it bears so good a price & you have ~~so~~ so good a Stock. - .... my poor Wife is going to have a Blister behind her Ear for a pain in it which is very troublesom - That This may find you in good health is the Sincere wish of

Hond. Sr.

Your most Dutiful Son

Will Seward

(There is a postscript to this letter about a newspaper cutting he encloses with mention of his work in connection with the Charity Schools

An addition to the above letter in Benjamin Seward's writing.

Hon:d Sr./

My Brs being so particular have but little to add more than that I waited lately on Mr. Windsor, who was very complaisant, and that I saw Br. Thos. last Night, who tells me my Lord Charles is to travel the latter end of next Summer & he believes he shall attend him; he is now with him almost every day, and says he begins to take some pleasure in his Studys. - I din'd yesterday at Doctors Commons where I was as I always am, Receiv'd with much Friendship & kindness. - Corn continues very cheap at Boarsley, so that at the present prices at Evesham, I cannot but think it advisable to sell that all my Brs. proceedings may have a happy Issue are the sincere wishes of Hon. Sr.

Your most dutiful & obedient Son

Ben Seward

1 April 1736. From William Seward.

Hon.d Sr

Cloak Lane April 1st 1736

We thank you for your kind lre. of the 29th ulto. .... your coming to Town is much look'd for by my Id. &ca. & all of us. Mr Dixy Windsor waited for the Post bringing your Lre on purpose to know when you set out wch I hope will be as you say next week - We hear our friends are pretty well at Badsey - that Mr Hazlewood & his Mother are parted that she is married to Mr. Arret a Clergyman, tht she has £280 ? for her life and have a mind to take my Brs. House at Bengeworth - We are sorry for a difference between such near Relans. tho pleased to think of my Br. having such good Tenants for his house. .... my wife has had a great pain in her Hip supposed by going down Stairs these 2 days.

Our humble Duty attends you from

Hond Sr

Your most Dutiful Son

William Seward.

# Memorial to the first Methodist martyr

WHEN 18th-century evangelist William Seward arrived to preach at Hay-on-Wye in 1740 he was jeered by a hostile mob. Last week an eccumenical crowd gathered at nearby St Mary's Church, Cusop, to dedicate a plaque in his memory.

The service, conducted by the Rural Dean, the Rev J. Davies, was held in the church outside which the man who became the first Methodist martyr is buried.

Seward came from Badsey, near Evesham, the memorial plaque was being dedicated in Hay, but by a twist of fate the man who made the service possible was from Warrington in Cheshire.

It was in 1976 that Mr John Isherwood of Stockton Heath, near Warrington, visited Cusop Church for the

first time. Having read a book on the life of another evangelist, George Whitfield, he was aware that Seward was buried in the tiny village churchyard.

Fascinated by the great 18th-century religious revival, Mr Isherwood searched for and found the grave, and on his return wrote to Cusop's vicar sug-

gesting a memorial plaque. To his delight the idea was received enthusiastically and so research into Seward's background was begun.

Born in 1702 at Badsey in Worcestershire, William Seward worked at the Treasury in London and probably succeeded his father, John Seward, who died in 1737, as steward to Lord Windsor.

## BY ALAN PRICE

Among the first converts

of the evangelical revival, Seward came under the influence of Charles Wesley in 1738 and the following spring he became the travelling companion of the magnetic George Whitfield as well as Howell Harris. In the words of Mr Isherwood, Seward "packed a lifetime of gospel endeavour" into two years, 1738-40.

travelling throughout South Wales and the border country.

He joined Whitfield on a trip to the American colonies during 1740 and generously provided money to finance ventures such as a negro school in Pennsylvania. That same year Seward found himself alongside Howell Harris on a preaching tour of South Wales. Having been mobbed by a hostile crowd at New-

port the preachers were attacked at Caerleon and Seward received severe injuries. He received similar treatment when he reached Hay on October 15 of the same year. An angry crowd, supported by local clergy and magistrates, quickly gathered.

Seward died a week after the incident. Some say he was stoned to death in the town and fell praying for his murderers. It would have been typical of the man. The packed church at Cusop 238 years on speaks for itself. The plaque dedication was carried out by the Rt Rev Mark Wood, assistant Bishop of Hereford. Prayers were led by the Rev A. M. Roberts, warden of Coleg Trecca, home in the 18th century of Howell Harris.

But possibly the proudest man there was Mr Isherwood, who read the lesson.



In Memory of

WILLIAM SEWARD

BORN BADSEY WORCESTERSHIRE 1702

DEPARTED THIS QUARTER OF CHRIST IN THE GREAT EVANGELICAL REVIVAL IN ENGLAND WALES AND AMERICA.

HE WAS A TRUST AND SUPPORTER OF JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY, GEORGE WHITEFIELD AND HOWELL HARRIS.

HE WAS STONED TO DEATH IN THE TOWN OF HAY ON OCTOBER 15 1740 AND BURIED IN THIS CHURCHYARD.

FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST AND TO DIE IS GAIN  
CANYS BYW I MI YW CRIST A MARY SYDD ELW

The memorial plaque at St Mary's Church, Cusop.

HEREFORD TIMES 1/9/78