

WESLEY, CHARLES, 1707-1788.

Charles Wesley psalms, circa 1750

Emory University
Pitts Theology Library
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Descriptive Summary

Creator: Wesley, Charles, 1707-1788.
Title: Charles Wesley psalms, circa 1750
Call Number: Manuscript Collection No. 159
Extent: 0.1 cubic ft. (1 volume)
Abstract: Consists of a manuscript copy of Charles Wesley's poetic version of the Psalms.
Language: Materials entirely in English.

Administrative Information

Restrictions on Access

Unrestricted access.

Terms Governing Use and Reproduction

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Citation

[after identification of item(s)], Charles Wesley Psalms, Archives and Manuscript Dept., Pitts Theology Library, Emory University.

Processing

Processed by Nancy H. Watkins, 1997.

Collection Description

Biographical Note

Charles Wesley, an English clergyman, poet, and hymn writer, was born at Epworth, Lincolnshire, England, on December 18, 1707. He was the youngest son of Samuel and Susanna Wesley and the brother of John Wesley.

In 1726 he entered Christ Church College, Oxford. During his time there he formed the Holy Club, a group dedicated to a methodical approach to Bible study and charitable works.

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The group, later taken over by John Wesley, was ridiculed and derisively referred to as the "Methodists." In 1735 Charles was ordained an Anglican priest and, at John's insistence, sailed with him to the colony of Georgia. Once there he became private secretary to General James Oglethorpe. Charles returned to England in 1736 because of health problems and his inability to carry out his assigned duties.

Wesley experienced a religious conversion in 1738 and began preaching in London churches. His evangelical style angered church officials, and by 1739 he was barred from the pulpit. For the next ten years Charles was an itinerate preacher and traveled constantly with his brother John. Following his marriage to Sarah Gwynn in 1749 he stopped traveling and spent his time overseeing Methodist places of worship in London. Charles remained faithful to the Church of England and was angered when John began ordaining preachers for service in Scotland and America.

Charles Wesley's most significant contribution was in his hymns. He published more than 4,500 hymns and left some 3,000 in manuscript. Among his best known hymns are "Love divine, all loves excelling"; "Hark the herald angels sing" and "Rejoice the Lord is king." He died in London on March 29, 1788.

Scope and Content Note

This collection consists of a manuscript copy of Charles Wesley's poetic version of the Psalms. At the beginning of the book is a note written by Thomas Jackson, a noted Methodist historian, indicating that the greater part of the volume is in the hand of Edward Perronet, an associate of Wesley. The last twelve pages are in Wesley's hand.

