

Samuel Wesley and the  
Crisis of Tory Piety,  
1685–1720

WILLIAM GIBSON

OXFORD  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

**OXFORD**

UNIVERSITY PRESS

Great Clarendon Street, Oxford, OX2 6DP,  
United Kingdom

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.  
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,  
and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of  
Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other countries

© William Gibson 2021

The moral rights of the author have been asserted

First Edition published in 2021

Impression: 1

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in  
a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the  
prior permission in writing of Oxford University Press, or as expressly permitted  
by law, by licence or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics  
rights organization. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope of the  
above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the  
address above

You must not circulate this work in any other form  
and you must impose this same condition on any acquirer

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press  
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Data available

Library of Congress Control Number: 2020948813

ISBN 978-0-19-887024-1

DOI: 10.1093/oso/9780198870241.001.0001

Printed and bound in Great Britain by  
Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.

Links to third party websites are provided by Oxford in good faith and  
for information only. Oxford disclaims any responsibility for the materials  
contained in any third party website referenced in this work.

## 8

# The Wesleys' Tory Ghost

### The Political Supernatural

The episode of the Epworth Rectory ghost, 'Old Jeffrey', which haunted the Wesleys for three months in 1716–17, may seem unconnected with the Tory politics of the Wesley family. But this chapter suggests that the disturbances in the rectory were deeply political in character. Recent scholarship has considered eighteenth-century ghosts and apparitions from a number of viewpoints. Some scholars have suggested that there was a geographical aspect to such apparitions, and it seems that many such events happened in remote and rural locations.<sup>1</sup> The clergy were often witnesses or connected with the experiences in some way; and family pets often featured large. Supernatural phenomena seem to have been bound up with 'human misfortune'. They were also often located in the context of a 'perceived rise of irreligion and atheism'.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it has been argued that women were also central to such events, sometimes drawing on the perceived authority of supernatural forces when exposing domestic misdeeds.<sup>3</sup> Scholars have argued that 'these domestic disturbances also had their roots in the politics of the household, local conflicts, and personal relationships, and women and servants played prominent roles as the narratives progressed'.<sup>4</sup> Mark Knights has suggested that episodes of the supernatural, and controversial responses to them, were associated with divided communities and occurred in places where factions had eroded community cohesion. For Peter Elmer, the breakdown of community cohesion was connected with instances of witchcraft and superstition. There was an association of such events with the subversion of usual religious authority. In some cases, the phenomena seem to have had a cathartic effect in the expression and experience of superstition.<sup>5</sup> All of these features were present in the episode in Epworth in 1716–17.

<sup>1</sup> O. Davies, *Witchcraft, Magic and Culture, 1736–1951*, Manchester University Press, 1999. The Cock Lane Ghost of 1762, in which John Wesley was later to play a role, was an exception to this view.

<sup>2</sup> L. Sangha, 'The Social, Personal and Spiritual Dynamics of Ghost Stories in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 63, no. 2, 2019, pp. 1–5.

<sup>3</sup> S. Handley, *Visions of an Unseen World: Ghost Beliefs and Ghost Stories in Eighteenth-century England*, London, Routledge, 2007; L. Gowing, 'The Haunting of Susan Lay: Servants and Mistresses in Seventeenth-century England', *Gender and History*, vol. 41, 2002, pp.183–201.

<sup>4</sup> Sangha, 'The Social, Personal and Spiritual Dynamics of Ghost Stories', p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> M. Knights, *The Devil in Disguise, Deception, Delusion and Fanaticism in the Early English Enlightenment*, Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 240; P. Elmer 'Towards a Politics of Witchcraft in

Michael Hunter has argued that scepticism about ghosts and witchcraft, especially among the educated classes, was often associated with modern Sadducism, which doubted bodily miraculous behaviour and adopted a more flexible approach to traditional Christian teachings.<sup>6</sup> However, such Sadducism was popularly associated with freethinking, and even irreligion, and was often rejected by more orthodox Anglicans. The Leeds antiquary, Ralph Thoresby, for example, who was a friend of Samuel Wesley, made a direct link between scepticism towards the supernatural and freethinking.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, scholars have identified a tendency to associate belief in witchcraft and spirits with High Church Toryism.<sup>8</sup> In some respects, belief in manifestations of the supernatural became a badge of identity of High Churchmen who placed great emphasis on the sacred and mysterious nature of the sacraments and of faith.

It is too crude to suggest a hard and fast Whig–Tory and Low Church–High Church division between those who believed in manifestations of the supernatural and those who were sceptical, but there is some evidence that this might be a broad generalisation.<sup>9</sup> There were some individuals who exemplified this alignment, including Francis Hutchinson, rector of Hoxne, Suffolk, and later Bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland. Hutchinson was sceptical of the existence of witches, having observed or read about both the trials held in nearby Bury St Edmunds and those far away in Salem, Massachusetts. As a Latitudinarian, Hutchinson was a rationalist who was interested in science and faith and encouraged ‘reasonableness’ and religious moderation. Hutchinson conceded that there were spirits, both benign and malign, but he was deeply sceptical about the existence of witches. About 1708, he wrote a treatise entitled *An Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft*, but delayed publishing it for a decade partly because friends warned him against doing so, and because Archbishop Tillotson was concerned that he should not do so. Nevertheless, the trial of Jane Wenham for witchcraft in 1712 convinced Hutchinson that he was right. The published version

Early Modern England’, in S. Clark, (ed.), *Languages of Witchcraft: Narrative, Ideology and Meaning in Early Modern Culture*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2001, p. 104.

<sup>6</sup> M. Hunter, ‘The Decline of Magic: Challenge and Response in Early Enlightenment England’, *The Historical Journal*, vol. 55, no. 2, 2012, pp. 399–425. Simon Lewis makes the point that it could have stemmed from the Reformation belief in the cessation of miracles after Constantine’s conversion.

<sup>7</sup> Hunter, ‘The Decline of Magic’ p. 412–3. Thoresby made a study of supernatural events, and was especially interested in the story of the ghost of Madam Savage. Sangha, ‘The Social, Personal and Spiritual Dynamics of Ghost Stories’ and J. Hunter, (ed.), *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby of Leeds, 1677–1724*, London, H. Coulburn & R. Bennett, 1830, ii, 413.

<sup>8</sup> I. Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations, c. 1650–c.1750*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997; P. Elmer ‘Towards a Politics of Witchcraft in Early Modern England’; M. Gaskill, ‘Witchcraft Trials in England’, in B. Levack, (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America*, Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 283, 297–8.

<sup>9</sup> Peter Elmer has argued for the period after 1660 that Latitudinarians and Dissenters were often more likely to believe in the supernatural as a consequence of the persecution of Dissent, so the divisions in attitudes to the supernatural were not impermeable.

of *An Historical Essay Concerning Witchcraft* was consistently rational in its approach, arguing that, in all cases, the phenomenon was natural and belief in witches was simply misguided. Hutchinson claimed that prosecutions of witches unsettled communities and tended to divide them. He was also a strong and determined Whig, sent to Ireland as a bishop to advance the Whig anti-Jacobite agenda.<sup>10</sup> Andrew Sneddon is in no doubt that Hutchinson's politics and his scepticism about witchcraft went hand in hand with aspects of what he called Hutchinson's 'Whig-Latitudinarian ideology'.<sup>11</sup>

Throughout the period in which Wesley embraced the Tory position, Hutchinson espoused the Whig cause, voting for the Whig candidates in the election of 1705 in which Wesley voted Tory. Hutchinson strongly supported the Hanoverian succession—as did Wesley—but he saw the Whig position as one that would buttress the opposition to the anti-Catholic threat of 1715.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, Hutchinson seems to have associated belief in witchcraft and the supernatural with the superstition and idolatry that he connected to Catholicism.<sup>13</sup> So, for some clergy, there were political as well as theological propensities and inclinations for and against belief in the supernatural and the intervention of spirits into the temporal world.

The Whig position has been considered by scholars including Thomas Trautmann, who have argued for a 'Whig ethnology', which embraced science and rational explanations for natural phenomena as well as the rejection of 'priestcraft' and a turn away from the Tory elevation of the sacerdotal role of the clergy.<sup>14</sup> William Burns has also suggested that Whigs consciously associated Tories and Jacobites with popular wonders, omens, and superstition, of the sort often found in chapbooks. Tories sometimes seem to have exploited popular belief in prodigies and wonders for political ends, including loyalty to the crown.<sup>15</sup> By the 1735 repeal of the laws against witchcraft, the Whig ascendancy was complete and the Tory association with belief in witches could only strengthen the call for repeal.<sup>16</sup>

In the wake of the Jane Wenham witch trial of 1712, the extraordinary polarisation of public debate about witchcraft was powerfully demonstrated by the publication of two anonymous tracts: the first was entitled, *The impossibility of witchcraft further demonstrated*;<sup>17</sup> and the second *The belief of witchcraft*

<sup>10</sup> T. Barnard, 'Francis Hutchinson (1660–1739) in ODNB. A. Sneddon, *Witchcraft and Whigs: the Life of Bishop Francis Hutchinson, 1660–1739*, Manchester University Press, 2008.

<sup>11</sup> Sneddon, *Witchcraft and Whigs*, p. 77.

<sup>12</sup> Sneddon, *Witchcraft and Whigs*, p. 72.

<sup>13</sup> Sneddon, *Witchcraft and Whigs*, p. 76.

<sup>14</sup> T. R. Trautmann, 'Whig Ethnology from Locke to Morgan', *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford*, vol. 22, 1992.

<sup>15</sup> W. E. Burns, *An Age of Wonders: Prodigies, Politics, and Providence in England, 1657–1727*, Manchester University Press, 2002, pp. 107, 152, 157. This is a strong assumption in S. Timmons, 'Witchcraft and Rebellion in Late Seventeenth Century Devon', *Journal of Early Modern History*, vol. 10, 2006, pp. 327–9.

<sup>16</sup> Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations*, p. 182.

<sup>17</sup> The full title of which was: *The impossibility of witchcraft further demonstrated. Both from Scripture and reason, wherein several texts of Scripture relating to witches are prov'd to be falsely translated. . . . By the author of The impossibility of witchcraft, &c.*

*vindicated*...<sup>18</sup> The two authors clearly took diametrically opposite views of the Bible and its teachings regarding witchcraft. Episodes of polarised public debate and politics were associated with appearances of the supernatural. Abel Evans's satire poem *The Apparition*, of 1710, was subtitled 'a dialogue betwixt the Devil and a Doctor concerning the rights of the Christian Church' and sought to pitch the Deist Matthew Tindal against White Kennett, then Dean of Peterborough.<sup>19</sup> Evans, like Wesley, was a poet as well as a parson. He attacked Tindal as an ally of the Devil and tried to associate scepticism and rationalism with republican principles—thereby undermining Church and State.

Jane Wenham's trial for witchcraft in 1712 and the sensation of her conviction by the jury, followed by the setting aside of the verdict by the judge and an appeal to Queen Anne for a pardon, attracted national attention to the issue of the manifestation of evil.<sup>20</sup> Wenham was a widow who had prosecuted a local farmer for defamation for saying she was a witch, and, despite winning the case, was in turn charged with witchcraft. Local people gave evidence against her and claimed that she flew at night. She was supported by local Whigs and, on her pardon, was given refuge by Lord Cowper a Whig politician.<sup>21</sup>

The Wenham case was important because it also took place in a highly politicised environment in which belief in her guilt was associated with High Church Toryism. Francis Bragge's comments on the Wenham witch trial was that 'witchcraft is priestcraft', to which the historian Ian Bostridge added the observation 'priestcraft is Toryism'.<sup>22</sup> Bostridge has claimed that the Wenham trial represented 'an end to any idea that witchcraft belief could inhabit some sort of politically neutral and abstract realm'.<sup>23</sup> It existed in a political and ideological context. The trial also witnessed the unleashing of High Church attitudes to the supernatural, which were in some respects stimulated by the Sacheverell trial. After 1710, people were much more likely to accept a religious explanation for political and social events.<sup>24</sup>

Knights claims that, after the Sacheverell trial, there emerged 'a conviction that belief in the supernatural needed bolstering in order to support belief in God and the Church of England'.<sup>25</sup> The reason why the Church was thought to need

<sup>18</sup> The full title of which was *The belief of witchcraft vindicated: proving, from scripture, there have been witches; and from reason, that there may be such still. In answer to a late pamphlet, intituled, The impossibility of witchcraft*... Both tracts were published by J. Baker in London.

<sup>19</sup> Kennett was well known to Wesley as he had been chaplain to Bishop James Gardiner of Lincoln and subsequently Archdeacon of Huntingdon in Lincoln diocese.

<sup>20</sup> P. J. Guskin, 'The Context of Witchcraft: The Case of Jane Wenham (1712)', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1981.

<sup>21</sup> O. Davies, 'Jane Wenham, d.1730' in ODNB. Knights, *The Devil in Disguise*.

<sup>22</sup> Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations*, p. 134.

<sup>23</sup> Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations*, p. 135.

<sup>24</sup> See for example M. Knights, *The Devil in Disguise*, p. 196.

<sup>25</sup> Knights, *The Devil in Disguise*, p. 240. An example of the connections noted in Chapter 6 between Samuel Wesley and Henry Sacheverell was the supernatural. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, Henry Sacheverell's father, Joshua, rector of St Peter's Marlborough, had been a witness at a

support was because of the Toleration Act of 1689. The erosion of the Anglican monopoly on worship and religious observance was a powerful shift in society and one that affected the 'ideological fate of witchcraft'.<sup>26</sup> This ideological fate was to become one of the religious venues for the 'rage of party' between Whig and Tory. Indeed one of Bostridge's conclusions is that 'the ideological roots of witchcraft theory have been previously underplayed and consequently the role of politics in the demise of witchcraft theory has been ... obscured'.<sup>27</sup>

The politicisation of the supernatural was apparent in the print culture of the era. An example is 'The Genealogie of Anti-Christ', which treated the various religious sects and forms of religious Dissent, including Quakers, Anabaptists, and Presbyterians, as offspring both of the devil and of Oliver Cromwell's political factionalism (see Figure 8.1).<sup>28</sup>

In the mid-seventeenth century, the scholar Meric Casaubon associated the growth of witchcraft and spirits with the fact that, as he saw it, England had been 'over-run with Anabaptists'.<sup>29</sup> It may be no coincidence that Anabaptists were the majority of Dissenters in Epworth parish. As Mark Knights makes clear, this view of religious Dissent associated fanaticism, unbelief and all sorts of vices (like pride and prophaneness), with political fanaticism of republicanism and regicide.<sup>30</sup> Such images were embraced by the High Church Tories as endorsing the monopoly of the Church and the dangers of religious toleration.

Clergy were often in the forefront of the defence of belief in the supernatural. Joseph Glanvil's *Saducismus Triumphatus* (1681), was one of the best-known defences. Glanvil had corresponded with Richard Baxter, the leading Dissenter, whose *The Certainty of the World of Spirits* (1691) defended the supernatural. Baxter was a friend of Susanna Wesley's father and undoubtedly known to Samuel also. Of equal significance were Meric Casaubon's 1670 work *Of Credulity and Incredulity, in things natural, eveil and divine*, and William Turner's work, *A compleat history of the most remarkable providences both of judgment and mercy, which have hapned in this present age*.<sup>31</sup> Credulity did not in the seventeenth and

witch trial that had become celebrated in the West Country. J. Barry, *Witchcraft and Demonology in South West England, 1640-1789*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, pp. 52-6.

<sup>26</sup> Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations*, p. 105.

<sup>27</sup> Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations*, p. 242.

<sup>28</sup> This image in the National Portrait Gallery is NPG D28676 and dated in the early eighteenth century.

<sup>29</sup> M. Casaubon, *A True and Faithful Relation of What Passed for Many Yeers Between Dr John Dee - and Some Spirits*, London, Printed by D. Maxwell for T. Garthwait, 1659, pp. 51-2.

<sup>30</sup> Knights, *The Devil in Disguise*, pp. 55-6.

<sup>31</sup> The full title of which was *A compleat history of the most remarkable providences both of judgment and mercy, which have hapned in this present age extracted from the best writers, the author's own observations, and the numerous relations sent him from divers parts of the three kingdoms: to which is added, whatever is curious in the works of nature and art/the whole digested into one volume, under proper heads, being a work set on foot thirty years ago, by the Reverend Mr. Pool, author of the Synopsis criticorum; and since undertaken and finish'd, by William Turner...* London, John Dunton, 1697.

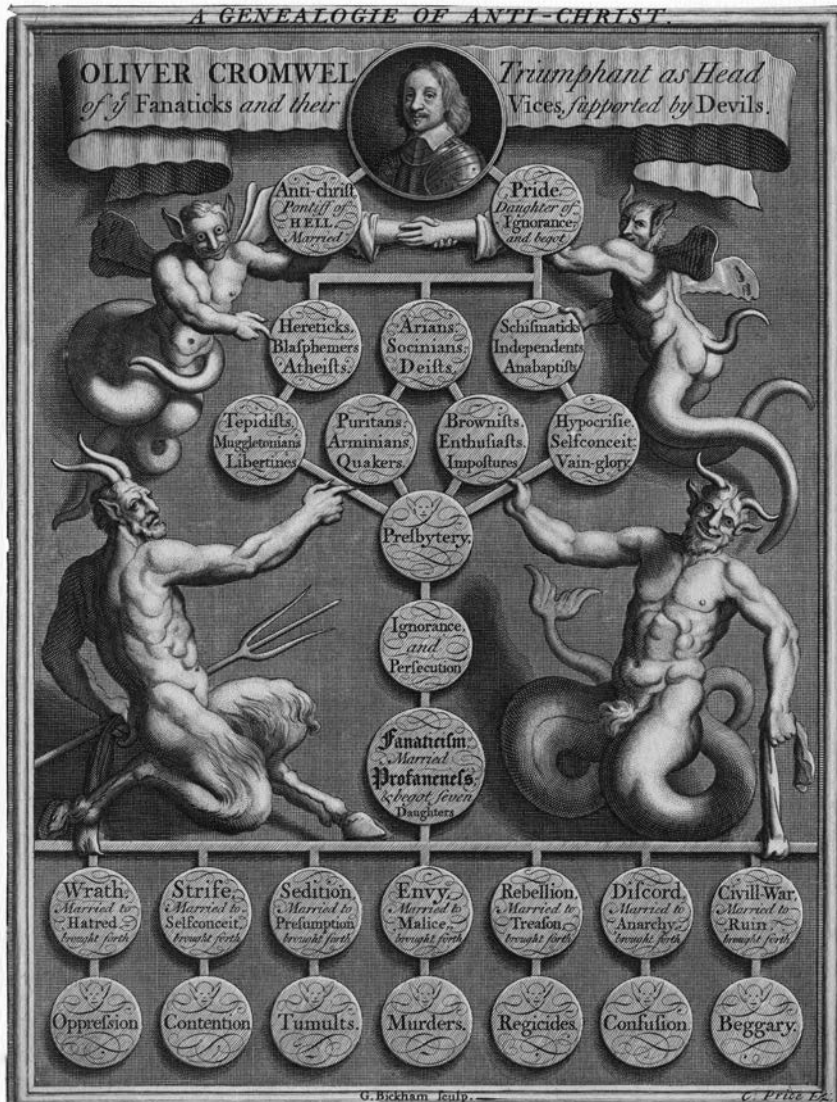


Figure 8.1 Oliver Cromwell in ‘A Genealogie of Anti-christ’ by George Bickham the Elder, published by Charles Price line engraving, early to mid-eighteenth century. © National Portrait Gallery.<sup>32</sup>

eighteenth centuries mean, as it does today, gullibility and naïvety; it simply meant the willingness to believe. So for writers like Casaubon, credulity was the opposite

<sup>32</sup> by George Bickham the Elder, published by Charles Price, NPG D28676.



of atheism. Casaubon asserted that the alternative to belief in witches and spirits was refusal to believe in anything.<sup>33</sup>

The politicisation of the supernatural was also strongly present in *The Westminster Dream* of 1710, in which Isaac Bickerstaffe wrote of a lawyer's vision at the time of Sacheverell's trial. It happened at the time of 'furies and hobgoblins', as the lawyer stood by the scaffold built for the trial. A Quaker woman 'foaming and raving' against Sacheverell was seen speaking of the whore of Babylon and the Church as the 'limb of Lucifer'. She was shouted down by a mob of Sacheverell's supporters.<sup>34</sup> Knights argues that this was part of a widespread association by High Churchmen of Dissenters and political foes as demonic, and of a reanimation of High Church antagonism of Dissenters.<sup>35</sup> The same reanimation of High Church attitudes to Dissent can be seen in the Convocation, in which Wesley served, and the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts.

The accusation of witchcraft was also raised by Whigs against the rebellion of 1715 that threatened the Hanoverian succession. White Kennett, then Dean of Peterborough, preached in St Mary Aldermary on 'the witchcraft of the present rebellion'. He compared the rebellion against George I with that of biblical rebellions, arguing that they were both caused by witchcraft and idolatry. The Jacobites were compared with Satan's attempts to dethrone God. Kennett blamed 'traps of crafty politicians' for attempting to overthrow the Hanoverian succession. He argued that 'the parallel between witchcraft and rebellion is so exact'.<sup>36</sup>

An important context for the Epworth ghost was the defeat of the Jacobite rising of 1715. The north of England had been especially affected by popular expressions of support for the Pretender and there were regular episodes of unrest between 1715 and 1719.<sup>37</sup> By the end of 1716, the leading rebels had been captured and the aristocratic leaders were executed early in 1716. Among these was Lord Derwentwater, whose death coincided with the appearance of the Northern Lights across England. Almost certainly seen from Epworth, the lights were widely discussed in the north and were quickly nicknamed 'Lord Derwentwater's Lights', since they first appeared on the day of his execution. They lasted until March 1716 and caused widespread consternation, in some areas people gathered in the streets and saw them as an omen of the end of the world.<sup>38</sup> For Tories and

<sup>33</sup> M. Casaubon, *Of Credulity and Incredulity, in Things Natural, Civil, and Divine. Wherein, Among Other Things, the Sadducism of these Times, in Denying Spirits, Witches, and Supernatural Operations, by Pregnant Instances, and Evidences, is Fully Confuted . . .*, London, T. Garthwait, 1668, pp. 7–29.

<sup>34</sup> I. Bickerstaffe, *The Westminster Dream, Relating to the Tryal of Dr Sacheverell with an Interpretation*, London, n.p., 1710.

<sup>35</sup> Knights, *The Devil in Disguise*, pp. 213–4.

<sup>36</sup> W. Kennett, *The Witchcraft of the Present Rebellion, A Sermon Preached in the Parish Church of St Mary Aldermary . . . 25 September 1715*, London, John Chiswell, 1715, pp. 7–11.

<sup>37</sup> J. D. Oates, 'Jacobitism and Popular Disturbances in Northern England, 1714–1719', *Northern History*, vol. XLI, 2004, pp. 111–28. G. Holder, *Jacobites and the Supernatural*, Stroud, Amberley, 2010.

<sup>38</sup> P. Fara, 'Lord Derwentwater's Lights: Prediction and the Aurora Polaris', *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, vol. 27, 1996, p. 239. R. Arnold, *Northern Lights: The Story of Lord Derwentwater*, London, Butler and Tanner, 1959, p. 14.

Jacobites, these lights were a providential statement on the politics of the day. Lady Cowper commented that 'The Whigs said it was God's Judgment on the horrid Rebellion, and the Tories said it came for the Whigs taking off the two Lords that were executed.'<sup>39</sup>

The wonders of 1716 were not confined to 'Lord Derwentwater's Lights' however. There was a series of lights seen in the sky as far south as London, and these were often thought of as 'sky battles' representing some great divine contest.<sup>40</sup> Many people were terrified and others saw the lights as presaging the end of the world. In such an environment, political polarisation was a common response.<sup>41</sup> What Vladimir Jankovic has called the 'theology of wonder' was one which was dominated by the Tories.<sup>42</sup> Whigs regarded credulity as part of Tory provincialism and rural ignorance.<sup>43</sup> Certainly in areas like Lincolnshire, people paid significant attention to such events that animated the local press.<sup>44</sup> In contrast, Whig churchmen like William Whiston dismissed the 'sky battles' as the movement of vapour, and advanced an entirely scientific explanation for them.<sup>45</sup> Jankovic argues that 'Tories and Jacobites might have intentionally resorted to superstitious stereotypes—if not to an unequivocal political interpretation—in an attempt to buttress their moral cause and to make [it] tangible.'<sup>46</sup> Jacobites naturally had a political reason for such a position, and Tories and High Churchmen embraced the opportunity to urge people to adhere to their faith and support the Church.

### Wesley and the Supernatural

It might have been assumed that, as a graduate and perhaps the most learned man in the neighbourhood, Wesley would be unlikely to have believed in spirits and the supernatural. In fact, often the most educated and socially elevated men in an area

<sup>39</sup> M. Cowper, *Diary of Lady Cowper, Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales, 1714–1720*, London, J. Murray, 1864, pp. 91–2.

<sup>40</sup> Anon. *A Dialogue Between A Whig and a Jacobite Upon the Subject of the late Rebellion And the Execution of the Rebel-Lords &c Occasion'd by The Phaenomenon in the Skie March 6. 1715–16 Wherein The Suspicion of the Pretender's Royal Birth appears, King George's undoubted Title to the Crown is proved, and his Government Vindicated, and the late Rebellion compared (with Respect both to the Crime and Punishment) with that under K. Charles II and K. James II*, London, Printed for J. Roberts, 1716.

<sup>41</sup> G. Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne*, London, Hambledon Press, 1967, p. 218.

<sup>42</sup> V. Jankovic, 'The Politics of Sky Battles in Early Hanoverian Britain', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 41, October 2002, pp. 429–59.

<sup>43</sup> Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations*, p. 135.

<sup>44</sup> Anon. *A Strange and Wonderful Account of the Appearance of a Fiery Meteor in the Air: Which was Seen by Many Hundreds of Spectators, at the Town of Boston in Lincolnshire, on Thursday the Nineteenth of March 1718–19. With a Full and Perfect Relation of Its Rise and Progress Through the Heavens*, Boston, Henry Wilson, 1719.

<sup>45</sup> W. Whiston, *An Account of a Surprizing Meteor: Seen in the Air March 19. 1718/19. At Night. Containing, I. A Description of this Meteor, from the Original Letters of those who Saw it in Different Places*, London, W. Taylor, 1719.

<sup>46</sup> Jankovic, 'The Politics of Sky Battles in Early Hanoverian Britain', p. 456.

were those who pursued the prosecution of witches. Elmer detected a strengthening of ‘elite preoccupation with witchcraft’ in the years after 1660.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, Wesley had studied science while at a Dissenting academy under Morton, who had written a scientific text, *Compendium Physicae*, for his students.<sup>48</sup> Morton believed that science was the counterpart of the study of theology. His *Compendium Physicae* sought to limit what could be claimed to be supernatural and to seek rational and scientific causes for phenomenon before resorting to supernatural explanations.<sup>49</sup> So Wesley was by no means ignorant of scientific thinking and ideas; but he does seem to have accommodated a scientific education with a firm belief in spirits.

This accommodation of scientific and religious ideas in the seventeenth century mind was not exceptional. It is now understood that Isaac Newton was deeply committed to belief in the supernatural. In his draft history of the Church Newton advanced his belief that men and women had the power of ‘divining, enchanting, bewitching conversing with spirits conjuring & raising the souls of the dead’.<sup>50</sup> He also took a specific interest in the ancient use of spirits and conjuring.<sup>51</sup> Even in his mathematical notebooks, Newton referred to ‘auditory spirits’.<sup>52</sup> His ‘Prophecies Concerning Christ’s Second Coming’ acknowledged ‘spirits of devils going forth to gather the kings of the whole earth’.<sup>53</sup> In Newton’s world it was the supernatural power that had ‘placed the Sun in the center of the orbs of the six primary Planets’. So ghosts and spirits were by no means in conflict with a Newtonian view of the world.<sup>54</sup>

Wesley had been raised in a milieu in which belief in the supernatural was not questioned. Through his work on the *Athenian Mercury*, Wesley had come into contact with the Revd William Turner, author of *A compleat history of the most remarkable providences Both of Judgment and Mercy, which Have Hapned in this*

<sup>47</sup> Elmer ‘Towards a Politics of Witchcraft in Early Modern England’, pp. 105, 111.

<sup>48</sup> G. D. McEwen, *The Oracle of the Coffee House: John Dunton’s Athenian Mercury*, San Marino, CA, Huntington Library Press, 1972, p. 123.

<sup>49</sup> Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations*, p. 112–3.

<sup>50</sup> Isaac Newton, Draft History of the Church, from Yahuda Ms. 15.7, National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, Israel, digitised at the Cambridge Newton Papers Project <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00237> (accessed 15 March 2019). See also R. Iliffe, *Priest of Nature, The Religious Worlds of Isaac Newton*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2017.

<sup>51</sup> Newton, Untitled Treatise on Revelation (section 1.4) from Yahuda Ms. 1.4, National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, Israel, digitised at the Cambridge Newton Papers Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00182> (accessed 15 March 2019).

<sup>52</sup> Isaac Newton, Mathematical Notebook Ms. Add. 4000, Cambridge University Library, digitised at the Cambridge Newton Papers Project <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/NATP00128> (accessed 15 March 2019).

<sup>53</sup> Isaac Newton, Prophecies Concerning Christ’s Second Coming, from ASC Ms. N47 HER, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, USA, digitised at the Cambridge Newton Papers Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00088> (accessed 15 March 2019).

<sup>54</sup> Isaac Newton, Original letter from Isaac Newton to Richard Bentley, dated 10 December 1692, digitised at the Cambridge Newton Papers Project, <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00254> (accessed 15 March 2019).

*Present Age* . . . (1697), which recounted all sorts of apparitions and ghostly manifestations. One of the churchmen who Samuel Wesley admired, Anthony Horneck, had contributed to Joseph Glanvil's *Saducismus Triumphantus*, which strongly asserted that witches and spirits existed.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, contemporaries of the Wesleys were affected by instances of the supernatural. William Mompesson, a Wiltshire gentleman, was plagued by the 'drummer of Tedworth' that was a celebrated instance of a poltergeist.<sup>56</sup> As will be seen later, the Wesleys had some connection with Mompesson.

Wesley's attitudes to the supernatural can be seen in some of the responses he wrote to questions in the *Athenian Mercury*. In the publication he replied to enquiries saying that the souls of the dead were visible to human senses, and he gave two examples in London and Lancashire of apparitions that he was certain were ghosts. He also claimed that it was 'beyond controversy' that spirits had appeared on earth. Wesley argued that to deny the existence of spirits was to deny that of the soul. His proof of the existence of witches was that there was no language or society on earth which did not acknowledge their existence.<sup>57</sup> In the second volume, Wesley responded to a query about a Dutch child who, when suckling his mother's breast, found the milk turned to dirt in his mouth. His suggestion was first to seek a rational explanation for the episode, and to check the pillows and surroundings, but in the end he accepted that the phenomenon might be caused by witchcraft.<sup>58</sup> In another response, to an account of witches in Kent in 1682, Wesley claimed that one of the women confessed to being a witch and when a correspondent asked whether this could be simply the 'effects of dotage', his reply was 'we are not by any means so credulous as to believe there is no such thing as witches in nature who with the help of the devil can act many things unaccountable by any divines'.<sup>59</sup>

In a more direct answer to a question, Wesley wrote:

I answer, there are witches unless we can suppose that God and man would conspire to deceive us . . . To be more explicit, by witches we mean such as act beyond the ordinary power of nature by the help of wicked spirits.

<sup>55</sup> J. Glanvil, *Saducismus Triumphatus, or, Full and Plain Evidence Concerning Witches and Apparitions in Two Parts: the First Treating of their Possibility, the Second of their Real Existence, by Joseph Glanvil. With a Letter of Dr Henry More on the Same Subject and an Authentick but Wonderful Story of Certain Swedish Witches Done into English by Anth. Horneck*. London, J. Collins and S. Lownds, 1681.

<sup>56</sup> M. Hunter, 'New Light on the "Drummer of Tedworth" Conflicting Narrative of Witchcraft', *Historical Research*, vol. 78, no. 201, 2005.

<sup>57</sup> L. Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. Samuel Wesley MA, Rector of Epworth, and Father of the Rev. John and Charles Wesley, The Founders of the Methodists*, London, Simpkins, Marshall & Co., 1866, pp. 349–50.

<sup>58</sup> J. Dunton, *The Athenian Oracle: Being an Entire Collection of All the Valuable Questions and Answers in the Old Athenian Mercuries*, London, Andrew Bell, 1712, vol. 2, p. 73.

<sup>59</sup> *Athenian Oracle*, vol. 2, p. 221.

And he cited numerous instances of witches in the Bible.<sup>60</sup> It was a topic he returned to on a number of occasions, each time arguing that the existence of witches was biblical and so God would not deceive humanity by referring to things that did not exist.<sup>61</sup> He even argued that witches could change their shape so that they could travel through keyholes and up chimneys.<sup>62</sup>

Wesley also responded to questions in the *Athenian Mercury* about apparitions, in which he had as firm a belief. On one occasion he reported an apparition in Lancashire which had taken the form of a greyhound and on other occasions made hissing noises.<sup>63</sup> This sounds remarkably similar to the animal appearances and noises at Epworth. Wesley also argued that the dead might return to earth, as happened with Moses and Elias, and suggested that the dead certainly knew what was happening on earth.<sup>64</sup> He told one correspondent that ghosts and apparitions were the souls of the dead.<sup>65</sup>

As discussed in Chapter 6, Samuel Wesley was also a member of Convocation in 1712 when debates on Church policy were pursued. To members of the Lower House of Convocation, those who threatened the Church by refusing to attend its services and join in national worship, were those who doubted all sorts of Anglican doctrine, including the existence of witches and the supernatural forces in the world.<sup>66</sup> Such a position endorsed the prevailing trend to associate belief in witchcraft and the supernatural with Tory Anglicans and scepticism about them to Whigs and Dissenters.

The Wesley family was also connected, albeit distantly, to three of the great celebrated hauntings of the period. The first of these was the previously mentioned 'Tedworth Drummer'. The case dated back to 1661 when a Wiltshire landowner, William Mompesson, prosecuted a vagrant drummer for begging. Having won the case, his house was later plagued by the sound of drumming, for which there seemed to be no natural cause. The claim grew that the drummer was either haunting the house, or had used witchcraft to curse Mompesson. The accounts of the haunting, which grew into a national sensation, were read by Samuel Pepys and brought Joseph Glanvil and Christopher Wren to visit the house. Prints were sold of the drummer, usually depicting a demonic cause of the noises.<sup>67</sup> In the end, Mompesson, sick of the attention, was reported to have said that the drumming was a hoax.

<sup>60</sup> *Athenian Oracle*, vol. 2, p. 328.

<sup>61</sup> *Athenian Oracle*, vol. 3, p. 154.

<sup>62</sup> *Athenian Oracle*, vol. 3, p. 252.

<sup>63</sup> *Athenian Oracle*, vol. 3, p. 186. His son, John, later took the view that the dead entered an 'intermediate state' before elevation to heaven or condemnation to hell; visits to earth from this 'intermediate state' were possible. I owe this to Dr Clive Norris.

<sup>64</sup> *Athenian Oracle*, vol. 3, p. 206.

<sup>65</sup> *Athenian Oracle*, vol. 3, p. 499.

<sup>66</sup> Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations*, p. 125.

<sup>67</sup> As late as 1761, the drummer appeared in Hogarth's *Credulity, Superstition and Fanaticism*. I owe this to Simon Lewis.

Sometime later, while he was at Christ Church, Oxford, between 1711 and 1715, Samuel Wesley Jnr was friendly with William Mompesson's cousin who was also at the University. John Wesley wrote in 1768, of the claims that the drummer was a fraud:

my eldest brother then at Christ Church Oxon inquired of Mr Mompesson, his fellow collegian, whether his father had acknowledged this [a fraud] or not. He answered: 'the resort of gentlemen to my father's house was so great he could not bear the expense, he therefore took no pains to confute the report that he had found out the cheat although he and I and all the family knew the account which was published to be punctually true'.<sup>68</sup>

John Wesley took this to be confirmation of the reality of the supernatural. Michael Hunter commented that Wesley's journal entry 'illustrates... how the imputation of fraud could be effectively sidestepped by those who were willing to believe in the reality of the phenomena involved'.<sup>69</sup>

The second episode, of which Wesley almost certainly knew, was the story of the apparition of Mrs Veal in Canterbury. This was a story, based on a folk tale, written and published by Wesley's old school fellow, Daniel Defoe in 1706. The story was that Mrs Veal appeared to a friend in Canterbury on the day after her death.<sup>70</sup> Defoe wrote the tale in a rationalist mode, seeking to explore the possible rational explanations for the events before turning to a supernatural one. In this, he drew on Charles Morton's scientific method.<sup>71</sup> The Veal story caused a great stir and attracted attention from all over the country. In Cambridge, the academic William Warren wrote on Christmas day 1705 to the Non-juror Thomas Brett asking for the latter's opinion of the episode, which Warren said was 'making a great noise'.<sup>72</sup> Another academic, John Parkes, also wrote to Brett in June 1706 about the Veal case.<sup>73</sup> Even John Flamsteed, the Astronomer Royal, wrote to

<sup>68</sup> John Wesley's journal May 1768, *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley Vol. 3: The Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Numbers of His Journal*, New York, J. Harper, 1827, p. 246. Michael Hunter has shown that John Wesley misidentified the Mompesson his brother knew at Christ Church; Mompesson was a cousin of the owner of the house at Tedworth, not a son. M. Hunter, *The Decline of Magic, Britain and the Enlightenment*, London and New Haven, Yale University Press, 2020, pp. 116–7.

<sup>69</sup> Hunter, *The Decline of Magic*, p. 117.

<sup>70</sup> Published as D. Defoe, *A True Relation of the Apparition of One Mrs. Veal, the Next Day After her Death: to One Mrs. Bargrave at Canterbury*. The 8th of September, 1705, London, B. Bragg, 1706. The book was an example of a literary craze of the period known as the 'apparition narrative'. J. E. Lewis, *Air's Appearance: Literary Atmosphere in British Fiction, 1660–1794*, University of Chicago Press, 2012. See also A. W. Secord, 'A September Day in Canterbury: The Veal-Bargrave Story', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 54, no. 4, 1955. Handley, *Visions of an Unseen World*, chapter 3.

<sup>71</sup> Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations*, p. 112.

<sup>72</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, Ms. Eng. th. c. 24 fols 265–7.

<sup>73</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, Ms. Eng. th. c. 24 fols 283–4.

friends about the episode.<sup>74</sup> And by December 1706, there were what appeared to have been ‘copycat’ apparitions in Oxfordshire, which also caused a stir.<sup>75</sup> Certainly the issue of apparitions following or preceding the death of an individual was a feature of the Wesleys’ supernatural experience.

The Wesleys would certainly have known of a third episode; this was one that happened in the neighbourhood of Epworth. Samuel’s daughter, Emilia, recounted that, a year before the disturbances at Epworth,

there was a disturbance at a town near us that was undoubtedly witches, and if so near, why might they not reach us? Then my father had for several Sundays . . . , preached warmly against consulting those that are called cunning men, which our people are given to . . .<sup>76</sup>

Tyerman thought that this was an important element in the story of Old Jeffrey.<sup>77</sup> Certainly the Wesley family and their neighbours were credible and fertile ground for either a supernatural or a deceiving phenomenon.

### Old Jeffrey

The information about Old Jeffrey is particularly rich because members of the Wesley family in Epworth wrote to Samuel Wesley Jnr and John Wesley, who were both away at school, with accounts of the episodes. Later on, John Wesley collected as many accounts as he could to publish in the *Arminian Magazine*. In 1917, at the height of the Spiritualist movement, Dudley Wright, a leading folklorist and spiritualist, collated all the published and manuscript evidence and issued it as *The Epworth Phenomena*.<sup>78</sup> So there are few aspects of the manifestation which have not been considered.<sup>79</sup>

The first written description of the phenomena came in January 1717 when Susanna wrote to her eldest son, Samuel. She recounted that in December 1716 the Wesley’s family maid had been frightened by hearing groans, following which various family members also heard knocking. Every member of the family heard

<sup>74</sup> E. G. Forbes and L. Murdin, (eds), *The Correspondence of John Flamsteed, The First Astronomer Royal*, Institute of Physics, 2002, vol. 3, p. 247.

<sup>75</sup> Bodleian Library, Oxford, Ms. Ballard 1, fol. 74; Ms. Rawl. letters 92, fol. 333.

<sup>76</sup> J. Priestley, *Original Letters by the Rev John Wesley and his Friends*, Birmingham, Thomas Pearson, 1791, p. 138.

<sup>77</sup> Tyerman, *Life and Times of Samuel Wesley*, p. 360.

<sup>78</sup> D. Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, London, William Elder and Son, 1917.

<sup>79</sup> This account of Old Jeffrey draws on Wright’s work principally because he arranged the accounts chronologically and because it is the single compilation of primary sources that assembles all the extant evidence. Wright also tracked down accounts including those in the Beinecke Library at Yale University which had been erroneously ascribed to Samuel Wesley Snr when they were in fact written by his son, Samuel.

it, except Samuel Wesley, and the family were worried that it might be a supernatural phenomenon that was a sign of the impending death of the person who did not hear it. The knocking became so intense that it was often continuous, day and night, and people did not like to be alone in the house. (For an image of the rectory see Figure 8.2.)<sup>80</sup> Finally, Samuel heard it, and the occurrences became more extreme, including the sound of smashing glass and more groaning. One night, Samuel Wesley got a neighbouring parson, Mr Hoole of Haxey, to witness it and the knockings and noises were again heard. Susanna wondered whether it was the spirit of one of her dead children, and Samuel asked the noises whether that was the cause, but there was no reply. Susanna also wondered whether it was a warning that Samuel Jnr was in peril, and was relieved to receive a letter from him.<sup>81</sup>

On 30 January 1717, Samuel Jnr wrote to his father asking for information and suggesting that Mr Hoole should write to him also. He had written separately to



**Figure 8.2** Epworth Rectory, erected in 1709 following a fire. This was the house affected by ‘Old Jeffrey’. From Thomas Dugdale’s, *Curiosities of Great Britain. England & Wales Delineated* c.1835–1860. From the author’s own collection.

<sup>80</sup> The intense knocking, often on a bedstead and sometimes close to the head, bears a striking resemblance to the activities in the Fawcett household in Hovingham, N. Yorkshire in 1707. Sangha, ‘The Social, Personal and Spiritual Dynamics’, pp. 339–40.

<sup>81</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, pp. 14–16. Questioning spirits and ghosts was a common phenomenon, Barry, *Witchcraft and Demonology in South West England*, p. 148. Ralph Thoresby was convinced that haunting was sometimes a forewarning of a death, Sangha, ‘The Social, Personal and Spiritual Dynamics’, p. 316.



his mother. Samuel Jnr's comments firmly endorsed the idea of the supernatural. He wrote:

Those who are so wise as not to believe any supernatural occurrences, though ever so well attested, could find a hundred questions to ask about those strange noises you wrote me an account of; but for my part, I know not what question to put, which, if answered, would confirm me more in the belief of what you tell me. Two or three I have heard from others.

Nevertheless, Samuel Jnr quizzed his mother about rational explanations, such as whether a maid or other servant might 'play tricks', whether anyone was in the rooms where the footsteps were heard, whether the family was all together when they heard things, and whether she had ruled out cats, mice, or rats as the cause. He went on:

Such doubts as these being replied to, though they could not, as God himself assures us, convince them who believe not Moses and the prophets, yet would strengthen such as do believe.<sup>82</sup>

Samuel Jnr added that he thought the intentions of spirits were always hidden and that they puzzled 'the most subtle politicians'. He also asked his mother to get each family member to write an account for him.

On 27 January, Susanna replied to her son. She gave her own view of the supernatural:

Though I am not one of those that will believe nothing supernatural, but am rather inclined to think there would be frequent intercourse between good spirits and us, did not our deep lapse into sensuality prevent it, yet I was a great while 'ere I could credit anything of what the children and servants reported concerning the noises they heard in several parts of our house.

Susanna said that her first instinct was that the noises were caused by rats or weasels and had arranged for a horn to be blown through the house to frighten them away; but having heard the noises afterwards, 'I was entirely convinced that it was beyond the power of any human creature to make such strange and various noises.'<sup>83</sup> Susanna also wrote that she did not believe the servants were responsible, especially as they were just as frightened as the family members. She assured Samuel Jnr that the family had all been together in one room when they had heard the noises, particularly when the whole household was together at prayers.

<sup>82</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, pp. 16–17.

<sup>83</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, pp. 17–19.

The only feature she and her husband had noted when they went through the house when everyone was asleep was that the noises were closest to nineteen-year-old Hetty.

Samuel Jnr's sister, Susanna Jnr or Sukey, wrote to him of the 'groans, squeaks, tinglings, and knockings'. She reported that her father had challenged the phenomenon and commented: 'My father spoke, but nothing answered. It ended that night with my father's particular knock very fierce.' It was in Sukey's letter that there is the first mention of the response to prayers for the royal family. She wrote:

It is now pretty quiet, only at our repeating the prayers for the king and prince, when it usually begins, especially when my father says, 'Our most gracious Sovereign Lord,' etc. This my father is angry at, and designs to say THREE instead of TWO [prayers] for the royal family. We all heard the same noise, and at the same time, and as coming from the same place.<sup>84</sup>

Samuel Jnr's response to Sukey was a jocular comment: 'As to the devil being an enemy to King George, were I the King myself I should rather Old Nick should be my enemy than my friend.'<sup>85</sup> But Samuel Jnr was troubled by two aspects of Sukey's letter: he wrote, 'I do not like the noise of the nightgown sweeping along the ground, nor its knocking like my father.' Presumably to Samuel Jnr both of these instances suggested that there might be a human origin in the episode.

In February, Samuel Jnr wrote to his mother that it was impossible for so many people to have been deceived by what was happening, and soon after he wrote to his father (addressing him as 'honoured sir') asking him about the disturbances. And he wrote to his sister Emily, ('Emmy'), asking for her account. Samuel Wesley Snr replied to his son, saying that he didn't think he had heard about even a third of what had happened. He also commented that he thought that his brother-in-law, John Dunton, 'would make a glorious penny book' out of it. He also said that he thought the phenomenon had ended.<sup>86</sup>

Emmy's account of the manifestation was of noises and sounds of things being thrown about in other rooms. She also said that at first their father had put it down to the girls in the family and her mother to rats and weasels. But they had soon come to believe that it was not caused by the girls. The spirit seemed unresponsive to most provocation, but Emmy wrote that 'It would answer to my mother if she stamped on the floor and bid it.' She also observed that the sounds often followed Hetty, though she was not afraid of it. Emmy blamed the events on witchcraft; she was convinced that it was witchcraft because she had seen a white rabbit appear in the kitchen. Emmy also seemed to think that the spirit was associated with her

<sup>84</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, pp. 20–1.

<sup>85</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, p. 21.

<sup>86</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, p. 23.

father, writing that it has a 'particular spite' against her father.<sup>87</sup> In a short letter, Sukey reported that 'last Sunday, to my father's no small amazement, his trencher danced upon the table a pretty while, without anybody's stirring the table'.<sup>88</sup>

Susanna Wesley wrote to her son on 27 March 1717, expressing surprise at his persistent curiosity about their 'unwelcome guest'. Like Sukey, she was becoming bored with the whole business. Five days later, when Emmy wrote to Mr Borry in London, she asked him to pass on the message to her brother Samuel that 'the spright was with us last night' and opened and shut doors and knocked and was heard by all the family.

The pressure from Samuel Jnr to tell him all that they knew led his father, Samuel Snr, to write a full account of the occurrences.<sup>89</sup> Wesley called it 'an account of noises and disturbances in my house at Epworth, Lincolnshire'. It is a single account that narrates the whole episode. Wesley recounted that from 1 December 1716 the servants and children heard 'many strange noises, groans, knockings, etc., in every story and most of the rooms of my house', but he heard nothing. His daughters heard footsteps or noises in the rooms below or above them, and the maids heard groans of 'a dying man'. Bottles in the understairs cupboard were smashed, rumblings were heard in the cellars and steps were heard all over the house. Wesley's manservant was disturbed in his garret room by the noise of someone rattling by his side, and it was he who heard the noise of turkey-cock gobbling. Knocking was heard in rooms that were locked, including the nursery.

Samuel Wesley did not hear anything until 21 December,

That night I was waked a little before one by nine distinct very loud knocks, which seemed to be in the next room to ours, with a sort of pause at every third stroke.

After that, Wesley bought a mastiff to protect the family. He may have thought back to the malicious attacks on his house and family that occurred while he was in prison in 1705. Nevertheless, the next night the knocks happened again; and the following night Emmy heard the knockings in her bedroom and she knocked back. There was an answer, and she saw something that looked like a badger in her room.<sup>90</sup> The next night the noises were so violent 'it was in vain to think of sleep while they continued'. The family searched every room, 'and generally as we went into one room, we heard it in that behind us'. There was the sound of smashing

<sup>87</sup> Priestley, *Original Letters by the Rev John Wesley*, p. 138.

<sup>88</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, pp. 24–7.

<sup>89</sup> These were transcribed some time later by John Wesley; the dates given for the transcription were August 1726 and February 1731, i.e. while his father was still alive.

<sup>90</sup> The other animal appearance was a man servant who saw a rabbit appear and then run away, which seemed to terrify him.

glass 'our mastiff came whining to us . . . then he barked violently at it, but was silent afterwards, and seemed more afraid than any of the children'. The only room unaffected was Wesley's own study 'where as yet it never came'. On 26 December, Emmy sensed it was back, she had heard a strong winding noise which was a sign of it coming. It began to make noise and Wesley:

went downstairs, and knocked with my stick against the joists of the kitchen. It answered me as often and as loud as I knocked; but then I knocked, as I usually do, at my door, 1-23456-7, but this puzzled it, and it did not answer, or not in the same method, though the children heard it do the same twice or thrice after.

The knocking and noises continued, and Wesley 'observed my children that they were frightened in their sleep, and trembled very much till it waked them'. Wesley asked 'why it disturbed innocent children, and did not come to me in my study if it had anything to say to me. Soon after it gave one knock on the outside of the house'. Hetty continued to be the focus of much of the activity, including the lifting of latches. On one occasion she was forced against a door by it.

Then Wesley observed a feature which he described:

When we were at prayers and came to the prayer for King George and the Prince it would make a great noise over our heads constantly, whence some of the family called it a Jacobite.<sup>91</sup>

He could not hear a voice but heard 'two or three feeble squeaks, a little louder than the chirping of a bird'. It was at this point that Wesley resolved to ask his neighbouring clergyman, Mr Hoole of Haxey, to witness the phenomenon. Joseph Hoole was not a learned man, he had been ordained by Archbishop Sharp of York as a literate rather than a graduate. Hoole had served as a curate in York for four years before Bishop Wake had nominated him to the modest living of Haxey in 1712.<sup>92</sup> On 28 December, Hoole came and at ten o'clock the noises began. Together with the servants, Wesley and Hoole searched the house and found no cause. Thereafter the noises continued until 24 January.

Apparently stimulated by his son, Wesley noted this:

this day at morning prayer the family heard the usual knocks at the prayer for the king. At night they were more distinct, both in the prayer for the king and that

<sup>91</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, pp. 29–35.

<sup>92</sup> Hoole remained at Haxey for twenty-five years before moving to Manchester as curate and then rector of the parish church of St Ann's. Samuel Wesley had written a reference for Hoole in 1707 when he was appointed to Haxey, which spoke of his educational ability despite not having attended a university. Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Curnock slides, M002, image 5.

for the prince, and one very loud knock at the AMEN was heard by my wife and most of my children at the inside of my bed. I heard nothing myself.

On 25 January,

having prayers at church, I shortened as usual those in the family at morning, omitting the confession, absolution, and prayers for the king and prince. I observed when this is done there is no knocking. I therefore used them one morning for a trial; at the name of King George it began to knock, and did the same when I prayed for the Prince. Two knocks I heard, but took no notice after prayers, till after all who were in the room, ten persons besides me, spoke of it, and said they heard it. No noise at all at the rest of the prayers.

Sunday, January 27.-Two soft strokes at the morning prayers for King George above stairs.<sup>93</sup>

Wesley was not alone in trying to communicate with 'Old Jeffrey'. Ten years afterwards, Susanna told her son John Wesley that she had tried to stamp her foot to get it to respond. She was more successful than Samuel, she wrote:

knocking several times with my foot on the ground with several pauses, it repeated under the sole of my feet exactly the same number of strokes, with the very same intervals. Kezzy, then six or seven years old, said, let it answer me too if it can, and stamping, the same sounds were returned that she made, many times, successively.

Moreover on one occasion, Susanna asked 'Old Jeffrey' not to disturb her prayers between five and six o'clock in the morning and he stayed silent.<sup>94</sup> Susanna also saw the apparition of a badger, or something 'pretty much like a badger'.

Of Samuel's daughters' accounts none mentioned the issue of knocking during prayers, other than Nancy, who wrote to John:

Mr. Hoole read prayers once, but it knocked as usual at the prayers for the King and Prince. The knockings at these prayers were only towards the beginning of the disturbance, for a week or thereabouts.

Hoole also gave an account of the occasion when he visited the Epworth rectory. He wrote:

<sup>93</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, pp. 34–5.

<sup>94</sup> J. H. Overton, 'Epworth Rectory, 1696–1735: or The Wesleys in Epworth', in *Lincoln Diocesan Architectural Society Proceedings*, 1885, p. 22.

As soon as I came to Epworth, Mr. Wesley telling me he sent for me to conjure,<sup>95</sup> I knew not what he meant, till some of your sisters told me what had happened, and that I was sent for to sit up. I expected every hour to hear something extraordinary, but to no purpose. At supper too, and at prayers, all was silent, contrary to custom; but soon after one of the maids, who went up to sheet a bed, brought down the alarm that Jeffery was come above stairs. We all went up, and as we were standing round the fire in the east chamber something began knocking just on the other side of the wall, on the chimney-piece, as with a key. Presently the knocking was under our feet. Mr. Wesley and I went down, he with a great deal of hope, and I with fear. As soon as we were in the kitchen the sound was above us, in the room we had left. We returned up the narrow stairs, and heard, at the broad stairs head, some one slaring with their feet (all the family being now in bed beside us) and then trailing, as it were, and rustling with a silk nightgown. Quickly it was in the nursery, at the bed's head, knocking as it had done at first, three by three. Mr. Wesley spoke to it, and said he believed it was the devil, and soon after it knocked at the window, and changed its sound into one like the planing of boards. From thence it went on the outward south side of the house, sounding fainter and fainter, till it was heard no more.

I was at no other time than this during the noises at Epworth, and do not now remember any more circumstances than these.<sup>96</sup>

In 1784, John Wesley drew up a description of the events for his *Arminian Magazine* in which he recited most of the details outlined above.<sup>97</sup> His comments on the knocking during prayers for the King were that,

At six in the evening he had family prayers as usual. When he began the prayer for the king, a knocking began all round the room, and a thundering knock attended the 'Amen.' The same was heard from this time every morning and evening while the prayer for the king was repeated.<sup>98</sup>

In a significant conclusion, Wesley went on that, as both his parents were dead 'and incapable of being pained thereby', he thought that the reader should have what he called 'a key to this circumstance'. He then gave an account of the dispute between Samuel and Susanna in 1701 of prayers for William III, discussed in Chapter 7. John Wesley recorded that his father had 'vowed he would never

<sup>95</sup> Literally to jointly decide 'con jure'.

<sup>96</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, pp. 47–8. Robert Brown, Samuel's manservant, also gave an account which does not add anything of significance to the other accounts.

<sup>97</sup> John Wesley called the article 'An Account of the Disturbances in my Father's House', *Arminian Magazine* October 1785, pp. 548–50.

<sup>98</sup> J. Wesley, 'An Account of the Disturbances in my Father's House', p. 550.

cohabit with her till she did... [say] Amen'. But he returned without Susanna's agreement to do so. Wesley's conclusion was that 'I fear his vow was not forgotten before God.' In other words, John Wesley associated the events with a punishment of his father for breaking a vow not to return to Epworth until Susanna obeyed him.

The account in John Wesley's *Arminian Magazine*, includes matters that were not contained in the letters to Samuel Wesley Jnr. One was an occasion on which Samuel Wesley Snr was accompanying his daughter Nancy into a downstairs room. They had been trying to get the source of the knockings to communicate, and Samuel said, 'Nancy, two Christians are an overmatch for the devil. Go all of you downstairs; it may be when I am alone he will have courage to speak.' When Nancy had gone, Samuel said, 'If thou art the spirit of my son Samuel, I pray, knock three knocks and no more.' But there was silence and no more knocking that night.

John Wesley wrote that several local gentlemen and clergymen advised Samuel Wesley to leave the house. But he always replied, 'No, let the devil flee from me; I will never flee from the devil.' But he was sufficiently concerned to ask his eldest son, Samuel, to come home from London.<sup>99</sup>

### Natural or Supernatural?

There are different interpretations of the Epworth Rectory ghost. Most have seen it as a poltergeist, which consists of a pattern of noises and sounds which are unexplained.<sup>100</sup> Others have been more sceptical, and have seen some striking contradictions in the accounts which suggest a human source. Writing in 1908, Addington Bruce was certain that the source was Hetty, who not only named the phenomenon 'Old Jeffrey' (after an old man who had died in the chamber where the knocking was heard some time before) but was also precocious and likely to derive pleasure from the troubles caused by the hauntings.<sup>101</sup> The Unitarian, Joseph Priestley, who made a detailed study of the episode and wrote an account of it, was convinced that it was a trick of the family's servants and neighbours for their amusement.<sup>102</sup> There were other rational accounts of the episode.<sup>103</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge believed that the cause of the phenomenon might have been a

<sup>99</sup> Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, pp. 51–9.

<sup>100</sup> M. B. Crain, *Haunted Christmas: Yuletide Ghosts and Other Spooky Holiday Happenings*, n.p., Globe Pequot, 2009.

<sup>101</sup> A. Bruce, *Historic Ghosts and Ghost Hunters*, New York, Moffat, Yard & Company, 1908, pp. 54–5.

<sup>102</sup> Priestley, *Original Letters by the Rev John Wesley*, Introduction.

<sup>103</sup> T. H. Hall, *New Light on Old Ghosts*, London, Gerald Duckworth, 1965.

contagious hallucination caused by eating yeast-infected grain. J. H. Overton, who was rector of Epworth in the late nineteenth century, was loath to concede any supernatural cause. He wrote that the rectory:

is so constructed that any noise made on the floor (which is of gypsum...) reverberates in a remarkable way throughout the whole house... Jeffrey's chamber has a dormer window, which is easily accessible from the outside, and through which machinery could be easily let down. Some of the noises heard were as of a jack being wound up and as a mill turning. Now, was it likely that people from the outside would wish to play tricks upon the Wesley family?<sup>104</sup>

More recent scholars have hinted obliquely at human action. Kelly Yates suggested that Samuel Wesley was 'overstressed' and pointed out that when he invited the spirit to his study it opened the door 'at just the right moment' to hit Wesley.<sup>105</sup> Yates has suggested that there was a strong link between Susanna's Jacobitism and the Epworth poltergeist, though she stops short of suggesting that it might have been manufactured by Susanna herself.<sup>106</sup>

However, Priestley included a letter from Emilia Wesley in which she reported to her brother, Samuel:

I am so far from being superstitious, that I was too much inclined to infidelity; and I therefore heartily rejoice at having such an opportunity of convincing myself, past doubt or scruple, of the existence of some beings besides those we see.<sup>107</sup>

The poet Robert Southey, who wrote on the Wesley family, was convinced that it was a supernatural occurrence.<sup>108</sup> Tyerman made the point that all the contemporary observers, family, servants, neighbours, and outsiders like Mr Hoole, were convinced that the occurrence was supernatural.<sup>109</sup>

The issue of the cause of the noises and apparitions is perhaps unresolvable, and less interesting than the ways in which it can be considered as part of the political and theological composition of the household. Samuel Wesley, and perhaps

<sup>104</sup> Overton, 'Epworth Rectory, 1690–1735; or the Wesleys at Epworth', p. 22.

<sup>105</sup> K. D. Yates, 'Jeffrey the Jacobite Poltergeist, the Politics of the Ghost that Haunted the Epworth Rectory in 1716–17', *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, vol. 50, no. 2, 2015, p. 71. One of the problems with Yates's article is that it is riddled with errors, so Defoe is claimed as a colleague of Samuel Annesley (rather than a school fellow of Samuel Wesley) and Dissenters are confused with Non-jurors.

<sup>106</sup> Yates, 'Jeffrey the Jacobite Poltergeist', pp. 68–80.

<sup>107</sup> Priestley, *Original Letters by the Rev John Wesley*, p. 135.

<sup>108</sup> R. Clarke, *A Natural History of Ghosts, 500 Years of Hunting for Proof*, London, Particular Books, 2012, p. 102.

<sup>109</sup> Tyerman, *The Life and Times of Rev Samuel Wesley*, p. 357.



Susanna, saw themselves as the representatives of a beleaguered Church. It was a Church that was struggling against irreligion and spiritual indiscipline in a remote parish, and was losing ground nationally to a Low Church Whig factionalism that was intent on condoning the rights of Dissenters.<sup>110</sup> As a Tory High Church parson and his wife, the Wesleys were isolated and exceptional. They were also, as High Church Tories, more likely to both believe in the supernatural and to see its intervention as endorsing their position. Moreover the defeat of the Jacobite rebellion of 1715, notwithstanding Samuel's Hanoverian loyalism, and the subsequent phenomena of the 'sky battles' of 1716, heightened the political tension of both the country and in the north.

Emmy Wesley's comment that the experience had moved her from someone close to 'infidelity' to being 'convinced' of the existence of the supernatural was significant. This might be a key to the 'benefit' of such a phenomenon. For the Epworth Dissenters, those inclined to unbelief and infidelity, the Wesleys' scoffers and deriders, the news of Old Jeffrey, attested by the family, servants, other clergy, and the rest, might have led to a pause for thought. If it had encouraged credulity, in the eighteenth-century sense, it would have done Samuel Wesley a good service.

<sup>110</sup> Sangha argues that 'an important context' for supernatural events 'was the perceived rise of "irreligion" and "atheism"'; Sangha, 'The Social, Personal and Spiritual Dynamics of Ghost Stories', p. 343.

# Bibliography

## Manuscript

- Bodleian Library, Oxford, Ballard Mss 1, 62, 34.  
English Mss th. c. 24.  
Rawlinson Ms. letters 45; 92, C406.
- British Library, London, Add. Mss 33, 286.  
Add. Ms. 61364.  
Western Manuscripts, RP, 550.
- Cambridge University Library, Ms. 7113.  
SPCK, D2/2, Abstract Letter 65.  
SPCK Letterbooks, 'An Account of a Society of some of the Clergy and Others in  
Lincolnshire, for the Promoting Christian Knowledge'.  
Wanley Mss, SPCK Archives, Wanley Mss.
- Christ Church, Oxford, Wake Ms. 279. Visitation of Lincoln, 1712, Epworth entry.  
Wake Letters, 1, 2, 3, 5.
- Corporation of London Guildhall Library Mss 9540/6.
- Hull History Centre, GA. D3549/6/2/3, Societies for the Reformation of Manners.
- Lambeth Palace Library, London, VB 1/6/399.  
F V/1/VIII f 39.
- Lancashire Archives, DDKE/HMC/1088.
- Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, Curnock slides, M002.
- University of Leeds, Brotherton Library, Misc. Lt, 35, Commonplace book.
- Lincolnshire Archives, Lincoln Massingberd Mss, 20.  
LA, Sub. V/6.  
DIOC/CONVOCATION/4/48.  
LPL, Ms. 3171, fol. 239.

## Digitised primary sources

- Isaac Newton, Draft History of the Church, from Yahuda Ms. 15.7, National Library of  
Israel, Jerusalem, Israel, digitised at the Cambridge Newton Papers Project: <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00237>.
- Newton, Untitled Treatise on Revelation (section 1.4) from Yahuda Ms. 1.4, National  
Library of Israel, Jerusalem, Israel, digitised at the Cambridge Newton Papers Project:  
<http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00182>.
- Isaac Newton, Mathematical Notebook Ms. Add. 4000, Cambridge University Library,  
digitised at the Cambridge Newton Papers Project: <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/NATP00128>.
- Isaac Newton, Prophecies Concerning Christ's Second Coming, from ASC Ms. N47 HER,  
James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, USA, digitised at

the Cambridge Newton Papers Project: <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00088>.

Isaac Newton, Original letter from Isaac Newton to Richard Bentley, dated 10 December 1692, digitised at the Cambridge Newton Papers Project: <http://www.newtonproject.ox.ac.uk/view/texts/normalized/THEM00254>.

### Printed contemporary sources

- J. Adamson, *A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of Sir Edmund Turner Kt at Stoke Lincolnshire*, London, Sam Keble, 1707.
- R. Allestree, *The Causes of the Decay of Christian Piety, or, An Impartial Survey of the Ruines of Christian Religion*, London, R. Norton for T. Garthwait, 1667.
- Anon., 'The Age of Riddles', Broadsheet n.p., n.d [c. 1689].
- Anon., *Some Reasons Why a Learned and Reverend Divine Hath Lately Taken the Oaths to their Majesties King William and Queen Mary*, London, n.p., 1690.
- Anon., *A Short Abstract of the Behaviour of the Occasional Communicants: towards the Members of the Church of England, since the Revolution. Humbly Dedicated to the Honourable the Commons in Parliament Assembled*, London, n.p., 1703.
- Anon., *A Review of the Case of Judah and Ephraim, And its Application to the Church of England and the Dissenters... In A Letter to the Revd Dr Willis, Dean of Lincoln...*, London, A. Baldwin, 1705.
- Anon., *Poems on Affairs of State from 1620 to the Present Year 1707*, London, n.p., 1707.
- Anon., *An Encouragement Early to Seek the Lord: and be Faithful to Him: in an Account of the Life and Services of that Ancient Servant of God, Thomas Thompson*, London, J. Sowle, 1708.
- Anon., *A Collection of Cases, and Other Discourses, Lately Written to Recover Dissenters to the Communion of the Church of England, by Some Divines of the City of London*, London, J. Walthoe, B. Tooke and others, 1708.
- Anon., *The Impossibility of Witchcraft Further Demonstrated*, London, J. Baker, 1712.
- Anon., *A Journal of the Life, Travels, Sufferings, and Labour of Love in the Work of the Ministry, of... William Edmundson, who Departed this Life, the Thirty First of the Sixth Month*, London, n.p., 1712.
- Anon., *A Dialogue Between A Whig and a Jacobite Upon the Subject of the Late Rebellion And the Execution of the Rebel-Lords &c Occasion'd by The Phaenomenon in the Skie March 6. 1715-16 Wherein The Suspicion of the Pretender's Royal Birth Appears, King George's Undoubted Title to the Crown is Proved, and his Government Vindicated, and the Late Rebellion Compared (with Respect both to the Crime and Punishment) with that under K. Charles II and K. James II*, London, Printed for J. Roberts, 1716.
- Anon., *Methods Used for Erecting Charity-schools, with the Rules and Orders by which they are Governed. A Particular Account of the London Charity-schools: with a list of those Erected Elsewhere in Great Britain & Ireland*, London, Joseph Downing, 1717.
- Anon., *A Strange and Wonderful Account of the Appearance of a Fiery Meteor in the Air: Which was Seen by Many Hundreds of Spectators, at the Town of Boston in Lincolnshire, on Thursday the Nineteenth of March 1718-19. With a Full and Perfect Relation of Its Rise and Progress Through the Heavens*, Boston, Henry Wilson, 1719.
- M. Astell, *Some Reflections upon Marriage Occasion'd by the Duke and Duchess of Mazarine's Case which is Also Consider'd*, London, John Nutt, 1700.

- M. Astell, *An Impartial Enquiry into the Causes of Rebellion and Civil War in this Kingdom in An Examination of Dr Kennett's Sermon, Jan 31 1703/4 And Vindication of the Royal Martyr*, London, E. P., 1704.
- M. Astell, *The Christian Religion, as Profess'd by a Daughter of the Church of England*, London, W. B., 1705.
- J. Dunton, *The Athenian Oracle: Being an Entire Collection of All the Valuable Questions and Answers in the Old Athenian Mercuries*, London, Andrew Bell, 1712.
- I. Bickerstaffe, *The Westminster Dream, Relating to the Tryal of Dr Sacheverell with an Interpretation*, London, n.p., 1710.
- A. Boyer, *History of Life and Reign of Queen Anne*, London, W. Taylor, 1711.
- J. Browne, *A Sermon Preached at Caister in Lincolnshire May the 28th, MDCCVI, at the Primary Visitation of the Right Reverend Father in God, William, Lord Bishop of Lincoln*, Stamford, R. Sare & E. Palmer, 1706.
- E. Calamy, *A Defence of Moderate Nonconformity . . .*, London, Thomas Parkhurst, 1704.
- T. Carte, *The Irish Massacre Set in a Clear Light. Wherein Mr. Baxter's Account of it in the History of his Own Life, and the Abridgment thereof by Dr. Calamy, are Fully Consider'd. Together with Two Letters from Mr. Chaundler . . . to . . . Mr. Thomas Cart . . . with his Two Replies . . .* London, George Strahan, 1714.
- J. Cary, *An Account of the Proceedings of the Corporation of Bristol in Execution of the Act of Parliament for the Better Employing and Maintaining the Poor*, London, F. Collins, 1700.
- M. Casaubon, *A True and Faithful Relation of What Passed for Many Yeers Between Dr. John Dee . . . and Some Spirits*, London, Printed by D. Maxwell for T. Garthwait, 1659.
- M. Casaubon, *Of Credulity and Incredulity, in Things Natural, Civil, and Divine. Wherein, Among Other Yhings, the Sadducism of these Times, in Denying Spirits, Witches, and Supernatural Operations, by Pregnant Instances, and Evidences, is Fully Confuted . . .*, London, T. Garthwait, 1668.
- H. Collins, *The Marrow of Gospel History or a Diversion for Youth in their Spare Hours*, London, Collins, 1696.
- M. Cowper, *Diary of Lady Cowper, Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales, 1714–1720*, London, J. Murray, 1864.
- (D. Defoe), *A True Relation of the Apparition of One Mrs. Veal, the Next Day After her Death: to One Mrs. Bargrave at Canterbury. The 8th of September, 1705*, London, B. Bragg, 1706.
- J. Dunton, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Late Citizen of London, Written by Himself in Solitude; with an Idea of a New Life, Wherein is Shewn How he'd Think, Speak, and Act, Might he Live Over his Days Again . . .*, London, S. Malthus, 1705.
- J. Dunton, *The Life and Errors of John Dunton, Citizen of London*, London, Nichols and Bentley, 1818.
- W. Eratt, *Anabaptism Considered. Wherein the Chief Objections of that Sect Against Infant-baptism, and the Manner of Baptizing by Aspersion, or Sprinkling, are Fairly Stated and Answered; and Reasons Given Why Dipping is not to be taken as the Essential or Necessary Mode of Administration. In a Familiar Letter of Advice to a Parishioner Inclining that Way. By William Eratt, M.A. and minister of Hatfield near Doncaster*, London, J. Churchill, 1700.
- E. H. Gentleman, *The Abridgement of the English Chronicle, First Collected by M. John Stow, and After him Augmented with Very Many Memorable Antiquities, and Continued with Matters Forreine and Domesticall, vnto the Beginning of the Yeare, 1618. by E.H. Gentleman*, London, E. Allde & N. Okes, 1618.

- J. Glanvil, *Saducismus Triumphatus, or, Full and Plain Evidence Concerning Witches and Apparitions in Two Parts: the First Treating of their Possibility, the Second of their Real Existence*, by Joseph Glanvil. With a Letter of Dr Henry More on the Same Subject and an Authentick but Wonderful Story of Certain Swedish Witches Done into English by Anth. Horneck, London, J. Collins and S. Lownds, 1681.
- J. Goodman, *A Winter-Evening Conference Between Neighbours*, London, J.L. for L. Meredith, 1692.
- C. Haynes, *Pictures and Popery, Art and Religion in England, 1660–1760*, Aldershot, 2006, p. 131.
- B. Hoadly, *The Reasonableness of Conformity to the Church of England Represented to the Dissenting Ministers*, London, J. Knapton, 1703.
- B. Hoadly, *A Persuasive to Lay Conformity*, London, J. Knapton, 1705.
- B. Hoadly, *A Brief Defence of Episcopal Ordination*, London, J. Knapton, 1707.
- J. Hooke, *A Necessary Apology for the Baptized Believers: wherein they are Vindicated from the Accusations of W. Eratt*, London, R. Tookey, 1701.
- Judicium et Decretum Universitatis Oxoniensis latum in convocatione habita Jul. 21, an. 1683, contra quosdam perniciosos libros & propositiones impias*, Oxford, n.p., 1683.
- G. Keith, *Serious Call to the Quakers Inviting Them to Return to Christianity*, London, W. Haws, 1700.
- W. Kennett, *The Witchcraft of the Present Rebellion, A Sermon Preached in the Parish Church of St Mary Aldermary . . . 25 September 1715*, London, John Chiswell, 1715.
- R. Laurence, *Lay Baptism Invalid, or an Essay to Prove That Such Baptism Is Null and Void*, London, W. Taylor, 1708.
- H. Newcome, *A Serious Admonition to all Despisers of the Clergy: In a Sermon Preach'd Before . . . William, Lord Bishop of Chester, at his Triennial Visitation held at Manchester, in the County-palatine of Lancaster, July 19. 1712. By Henry Newcome*, London, W. Clayton, and D. Midwinter, 1712.
- J. Oliver, *Sermon at the Primary Visitation of the Bishop of Chester: Namptwich (sic), May 30 1709*, London, n.p., 1709.
- Pietas universitatis Oxoniensis in Obitum augustinissimi et desideratissimi regis Caroli secundi*, Oxford, 1685.
- J. Priestley, *Original Letters by the Rev John Wesley and his Friends*, Birmingham, Thomas Pearson, 1791.
- The Proceedings of the Lower House of Convocation, upon Her Majesty's Gracious Messages and Letters, Sent to the Convocation: Being the Substance of a Report Drawn up by a Committee of the Lower House Brought into it, and Received by it, July 1. 1713*, London, J. Morphew, 1713.
- T. Pyle, *The Heinous Sin and Danger of Prevaricating With God and the Government, A Sermon Preached at Lyn Mart, Feb 5 1714/15*, London, John Wyat, 1716.
- G. R., *The Belief of Witchcraft Vindicated, Proving from Scripture There Have Been Witches . . .*, London, J. Baker, 1712.
- A Representation of the Present State of Religion: with Regard to Infidelity, Heresy, Impiety and Popery: Drawn Up and Agreed to by both Houses of Convocation in Ireland, Pursuant to Her Majesty's Command in her Royal Licence*, London, John Morphew, 1711.
- The Representation of the Lower House of Convocation of the English Clergy Examined, Being Remarks on the Present State of Religion Now in England*, London, J. Morphew, 1712.
- H. Sacheverell, *The Nature and Mischief of Prejudice and Partiality Stated*, London, Henry Hills, 1708.

- H. Sacheverell, *The Communication of Sin: A Sermon Preached at the Assizes held at Derby, August 15th, 1709*, London, Henry Clements, 1709.
- W. Talbot, *The Bishop of Oxford's Charge to the Clergy of His Diocese at the Visitation in the Year 1712*, London, Jonah Bowyer, 1712, p. 13.
- J. Toland, *Christianity Not Mysterious . . .*, London, n.p., 1696.
- W. Turner, *A Compleat History of the Most Remarkable Providences Both of Judgment and Mercy, Which Have Hapned in This Present Age*, London, John Dunton, 1697.
- C. Wallace, (ed.), *Susanna Wesley, The Complete Writings*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- (E. Ward et al.), *The Secret History of the Calves-head Club, Compleat, or, The Republican Unmask'd. Wherein is Fully Shewn, the Religion of the Calves-head Heroes, in their Anniversary Thanksgiving-songs on the Thirtieth of January, by them called Anthems; for the Year 1693, 1694, 1695, 1696, 1697, 1698, 1699, &c. With Reflections thereupon. Now Published to Demonstrate the Restless, Implacable Spirit of a Certain Party Still Among us, who are Never to be Satisfy'd, 'till the Present Establishment in Church and State, is Subverted. To which is Annex'd A Vindication of the Royal Martyr King Charles the First . . . With the Character of a Presbyterian by Sir John Denham . . . and The Character of a Modern Whig*, London, B. Bragge, 1707.
- J. Wesley, *Concise History of England*, London, Robert Hawes, 1775.
- J. Wesley, 'An Account of the Disturbances in my Father's House', *Arminian Magazine*, October 1785.
- S. Wesley, *Maggots, or, Poems on Several Subjects, Never Before Handled. By a Scholar*, London, John Dunton, 1685.
- S. Wesley, *The Life of Our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: An Heroic Poem in Ten Books; Also a Prefatory Discourse Concerning Heroic Poetry*, London, Charles Harper, 1693.
- S. Wesley, *A Sermon Concerning Reformation of Manners Preach'd at St. James's Church, Westminster, Feb. 13, and Afterwards at St. Brides, to One of the Religious Societies*, London, Charles Harper, 1698.
- S. Wesley, *An Epistle to a Friend Concerning Poetry*, London, Charles Harper, 1700.
- S. Wesley, *The Pious Communicant Rightly Prepar'd*, London, Charles Harper, 1700.
- S. Wesley, *The History of the New Testament in Verse*, London, Charles Harper, 1701.
- S. Wesley, *A Defence of A Letter Concerning the Education of Dissenters in the Private Academies, With A More Full and Satisfactory Account of the Same, and of their Morals and Behaviour Towards the Church of England: Being an Answer to The Defence of the Dissenters Education*, London, R. Clavell & J. Knaplock, 1704.
- S. Wesley, *Marlborough, or the Fate of Europe, A Poem*, London, Charles Harper, 1705.
- S. Wesley, *A Letter from a Country Divine To His Friend in London Concerning the Education of the Dissenters, In Their Private Academies; In Several Parts of this Nation*, London, R. Clavell, 1706.
- S. Wesley, *A reply to Mr. Palmer's Vindication of the Learning, Loyalty, Morals, and Most Christian Behaviour of the Dissenters Towards the Church of England*, London, Robert Clavell, 1707.
- S. Wesley, *A Collection of Divine Hymns and Poems on Several Occasions . . .*, London, J. Burrough, 1707.
- S. Wesley, *Holy Communicant Rightly Prepar'd*, London, Charles Harper, 1700.
- S. Wesley (Jnr), *Poems on Several Occasions*, London, Edward Say, 1737.
- W. Whiston, *An Account of a Surprizing Meteor: Seen in the Air March 19. 1718/19. At Night. Containing, I. A Description of this Meteor, from the Original Letters of those who Saw it in Different Places*, London, W. Taylor, 1719.

- J. Woodward, *An Account of the Rise and Progress of the Religious Societies in the City of London &c. and of the Endeavours for Reformation of Manners which have been made therein*, London, J.D., 1698.
- J. Woodward, *The Great Charity of Instructing Poor Children A Sermon Preached at St. Botolph Aldgate; upon Lord's-day, Mar. 24. 1700. On the Occasion of a Charity-school Newly Erected in that Parish. By Josiah Woodward, minister of Poplar*, London, Astwood, 1700.
- J. Woodward, *A Kind Caution to Profane Swearers. By Josiah Woodward*, London, B. Dod, 1700.
- J. Woodward, *An Account of the Progress of the Reformation of Manners, In England, Scotland, and Ireland and Other Parts of Europe and America: With Reasons and Directions for our Engaging in this Glorious Work. In a Letter to a Friend. To which is added Her Majesty's Proclamation for the Encouragement of Piety and Virtue*, London, Downing, 1706.
- The Works of the Rev. John Wesley Vol 3: The Twelfth, Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Numbers of His Journal*, New York, J. Harper, 1827.

### Printed secondary sources

- W. O. B. Allen and E. McClure, *Two Hundred Years: the History of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1698–1898*, London, SPCK, 1898.
- S. Apetrei, *Women, Feminism and Religion in Early Enlightenment England*, Cambridge University Press, 2010.
- S. Apetrei and H. Smith, (eds), *Religion and Women in Britain, c 1660–1760*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2014.
- D. J. Appleby, *Black Bartholomew's Day, Preaching, Polemic and Restoration Nonconformity*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2007.
- R. Arnold, *Northern Lights: The Story of Lord Derwentwater*, London, Butler and Tanner, 1959.
- D. W. R. Bahlman, *The Moral Revolution of 1688*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1957.
- F. Baker, 'John Wesley's Publishing Apprenticeship', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, vol. 70, no. 1, 1988.
- A. W. Barber, 'Censorship, Salvation and the Preaching of Francis Higgins: A Reconsideration of High Church Politics and Theology in the Early 18th Century', *Parliamentary History*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2014.
- J. Barry, *Witchcraft and Demonology in South West England, 1640–1789*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- R. A. Beddard, 'Tory Oxford', in N. Tyacke, (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford, IV: Seventeenth-Century Oxford*, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- R. A. Beddard, 'James II and the Catholic Challenge', in N. Tyacke, (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford: Volume IV Seventeenth-Century Oxford*, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- H. E. Beecham, 'Samuel Wesley Senior: New Biographical Evidence', *Renaissance and Modern Studies*, vol. VII, 1963.
- G. V. Bennett, *White Kennett, 1660–1728*, London, SPCK, 1957.
- G. V. Bennett, 'The Convocation of 1710: An Anglican Attempt at Counter-Revolution', in *Councils and Assemblies Studies in Church History*, 7, Cambridge, 1971.

- G. V. Bennett, *The Tory Crisis in Church and State*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976.
- J. Black, *Charting the Past, The Historical Worlds of Eighteenth Century England*, University of Indiana Press, 2019.
- R. Blake, *Evangelicals in the Royal Navy 1775–1815*, Woodbridge, Illustrated Press, 2008.
- P. Bliss, (ed.), *Reliquae Hearnianae: The Remains of Thomas Hearne by Philip Bliss*, London, J. Russell Smith, 1869, 3 vols.
- J. R. Bloxam, (ed.), *Magdalen College and King James II 1686–8*, Oxford Historical Society, vol. VI, 1886.
- C. W. Boase, *Registrum Collegii Exoniensis, Register of the Rectors, Fellows, and Other Members on the Foundation of Exeter College, Oxford with a History of the College and Illustrative Documents*, Oxford Historical Society, 1894.
- I. Bostridge, *Witchcraft and its Transformations, c. 1650–c.1750*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- G. Bray, (ed.), *Records of Convocation Vol. IX, Canterbury 1701–1708*, Boydell and Brewer for the Church of England Record Society, 2006.
- G. Bray, (ed.), *Records of Convocation Vol. X, Canterbury 1710–1713*, Boydell and Brewer for the Church of England Record Society, 2006.
- G. Bray, (ed.), *Records of Convocation Vol. XI, Canterbury 1714–1760*, Boydell and Brewer for the Church of England Record Society, 2006.
- J. Broad, *Bishop Wake's Summary Visitation Returns from the Diocese of Lincoln 1706–1715*, Oxford University Press/British Academy, 2012, 2 vols.
- H. Broxap, *The Later Non-Jurors*, Cambridge University Press, 1934.
- A. Bruce, *Historic Ghosts and Ghost Hunters*, New York, Moffat, Yard & Company, 1908, pp. 54–5.
- W. E. Burns, *An Age of Wonders: Prodigies, Politics, and Providence in England, 1657–1727*, Manchester University Press, 2002.
- E. Carpenter, *Thomas Tenison*, London, Church History Society, 1948.
- J. S. Chamberlain, *Accommodating High Churchmen: The Clergy of Sussex, 1700–1745, (Studies in Anglican History)*, Champaign, IL, University of Illinois Press, 1997.
- A. Clarke, *Memoirs of the Wesley Family Collected Principally from Original Documents*, London, J & T Clarke, 1823.
- R. Clarke, *A Natural History of Ghosts, 500 Years of Hunting for Proof*, London, Particular Books, 2012.
- R. E. G. Cole, (ed.), *Speculum Dioeceseos Lincolniensis sub Episcopis Gul: Wake et Edm: Gibson*, Part 1, 1705–23, Archdeaconries of Lincoln and Stow, Lincoln Record Society, vol. 4, 1913.
- J. J. College, *Ships of the Royal Navy: the Complete Record of All Fighting Ships of the Royal Navy from the 15th Century to the Present*, Oxford, Casemate, 2010.
- K. Collins, 'John Wesley's Correspondence with His Father', *Methodist History*, vol. 26, no. 1, October 1987.
- R. Cornwall, *Visible and Apostolic: The Constitution of the Church in High Church Anglican and Non-Juror Thought*, University of Delaware Press, 1993.
- R. D. Cornwall, (ed.), *Bishop Burnet's Discourse of the Pastoral Care*, Lewiston, Edwin Mellen Press, 1997. (yes, in chapter 5)
- R. D. Cornwall, 'Politics and the Lay Baptism Controversy in England, 1708–1715', in R. Cornwall and W. Gibson, (eds), *Politics, Religion and Dissent, 1660–1832*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2010.



- B. Cowan, 'The Spin Doctor: Sacheverell's Trial Speech and Political Performance in the Divided Society', in M. Knights, (ed.), *Faction Displayed: Reconsidering the Impeachment of Dr Henry Sacheverell*, Parliamentary History, 2012.
- E. Cruickshanks, S. Handley and D. W. Hayton, (eds), *The House of Commons 1690–1715*, Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- G. and T. Cutforth, *Parish Church of St Andrew's Epworth, Baptisms, 1610–1708*, Isle of Axholme Family History Society, n.d.
- R. Darwall-Smith, *A History of University College Oxford*, Oxford University Press, 2008.
- O. Davies, *Witchcraft, Magic and Culture, 1736–1951*, Manchester University Press, 1999.
- P. Dillon, *The Last Revolution: 1688 and the Creation of the Modern World*, London, Jonathan Cape, 2006.
- C. E. Doble, *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, vol. 1, Oxford Historical Society, 1885.
- R. Eagles, 'John Sheffield (1648–1721)', in R. Paley, (ed.), *The House of Lords 1660–1715, History of Parliament*, Cambridge University Press, 2016.
- M. Edwards, *Family Circle. A Study of the Epworth Household in relation to John and Charles Wesley*, London, Epworth Press, 1949.
- P. Elmer, 'Towards a Politics of Witchcraft in Early Modern England', in S. Clark, (ed.), *Languages of Witchcraft: Narrative, Ideology and Meaning in Early Modern Culture*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2001.
- E. J. Evans, *The Contentious Tithe 1750–1850*, London, Routledge Kegan Paul, 1976.
- G. Every, *High Church Party*, London, SPCK, 1956.
- P. Fara, 'Lord Derwentwater's Lights: Prediction and the Aurora Polaris', *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, vol. 27, 1996.
- J. Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: The Members of the University of Oxford 1500–1714. Their Parentage, Birthplace and Year of Birth, with a Record of their Degrees. Being the Matriculation Register of the University*, Oxford, J. Parker, 1891.
- W. B. Gardner, 'George Hickee and the Origins of the Bangorian Controversy', *Studies in Philology*, vol. 39, no. 1, 1942.
- M. Gaskill, 'Witchcraft Trials in England', in B. Levack, (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America*, Oxford University Press, 2013.
- W. Gibson, *A Social History of the Domestic Chaplain, 1530–1840*, London, Leicester University Press, 1997.
- W. Gibson, *The Church of England, 1688–1832, Unity and Accord*, London, Routledge, 2001.
- W. Gibson, *Enlightenment Prelate, Benjamin Hoadly (1671–1761)*, Cambridge, James Clarke, 2004.
- W. Gibson, 'Altitudinarian Equivocation: George Smalridge's Churchmanship', in W. Gibson and R. G. Ingram, (eds), *Religion, Politics and Identity in Britain 1660–1832*, Ashgate Publishing, 2005.
- W. Gibson, *Religion and the Enlightenment 1600–1800, Conflict and the Rise of Civic Humanism in Taunton*, Oxford, P. Lang, 2007.
- W. Gibson, 'William Talbot and Church Parties 1688–1730', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 58, no. 1, January 2007.
- W. Gibson, 'Dissenters, Anglicans and the Glorious Revolution: The Collection of Cases', *The Seventeenth Century*, vol. XXII, no. 1, 2007.
- W. Gibson, (ed.), *Benjamin Hoadly's Original and Institution of Civil Government, Discuss'd*, New York, AMS Press, 2007.

- W. Gibson, 'The Limits of the Confessional State: Electoral Religion in the Reign of Charles II', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 51, no. 1, 2008.
- W. Gibson, *James II and the Trial of the Seven Bishops*, Basingtoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.
- W. Gibson, 'Samuel Wesley's Conformity Reconsidered', *Methodist History*, vol. XLVII, no. 2, 2009.
- W. Gibson, 'Tory Anti-exclusionism in Church and State: Richard Thompson of Bristol in 1678–85', *The Seventeenth Century*, vol. 31, no. 3, 2016.
- W. Gibson, 'English Provincial Engagements in Religious Debates: The Salisbury Quarrel 1705–15', *The Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 80, no. 1, 2017.
- W. Gibson, 'Strenæ Natalitiæ: Ambivalence and Equivocation in Oxford in 1688', in *History of Universities*, vol. XXXI, no. 1, Oxford University Press, 2018.
- W. Gibson, '"None but Presbyterian Baptism": Samuel and Susanna Wesley, Monarchy and Marriage', *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, vol. 61, part 5, 2018.
- W. Gibson, 'Strenæ Natalitiæ: Ambivalence and Equivocation in Oxford in 1688', *History of Universities*, vol. XXXI, no. 1, 2018.
- W. Gibson and J. Begiato, *Sex and the Church in the Long Eighteenth Century*, London, IB Tauris, 2017.
- H. Gill and E. L. Guilford, (eds), *The Rectors Book, Clayworth Notts*, Nottingham, H. B. Saxton, 1910.
- M. Goldie, 'The Theory of Religious Intolerance in Restoration England', in O. P. Grell, J. I. Israel and N. Tyacke, (eds), *From Persecution to Toleration: the Glorious Revolution and Religion in England*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1991.
- M. Goldie, *Roger Morrice and the Puritan Whigs*, Woodbridge, Boydell, 2016.
- M. Goldie and J. Spurr, 'Politics and the Restoration: Edward Fowler and the Struggle for St Giles Cripplegate', *English Historical Review*, vol. 109, no. 2, 1994.
- L. Gowing, 'The Haunting of Susan Lay: Servants and Mistresses in Seventeenth-century England', *Gender and History*, vol. 41, 2002.
- E. G. Forbes and L. Murdin, (eds), *The Correspondence of John Flamsteed, The First Astronomer Royal*, Institute of Physics, 2002.
- V. H. H. Green, *Young Mr Wesley*, London, Edward Arnold, 1961.
- M. Greig, 'Heresy Hunt: Gilbert Burnet and the Convocation Controversy of 1701', *Historical Journal*, vol. 37, no. 3, 1994.
- C. Gribben, *John Owen and English Puritanism, Experiences of Defeat*, Oxford University Press, 2016.
- E. Griffin, 'A Conundrum Resolved? Rethinking Courtship, Marriage and Population Growth in Eighteenth-century England', *Past and Present*, vol. 215, no. 1, 2012.
- E. Griffin, 'Sex, Illegitimacy and Social Change in Industrialising Britain', *Social History*, vol. 38, no. 2, 2013.
- P. J. Guskin, 'The Context of Witchcraft: The Case of Jane Wenham (1712)', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 15, no. 1, 1981.
- T. H. Hall, *New Light on Old Ghosts*, London, Gerald Duckworth, 1965.
- G. Hammond, 'The Revival of Practical Christianity: the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, Samuel Wesley, and the Clerical Society Movement', *Studies in Church History*, vol. 44, 2008.
- G. Hammond, *John Wesley in America*, Oxford University Press, 2014.
- S. Handley, *Visions of an Unseen World: Ghost Beliefs and Ghost Stories in Eighteenth-century England*, London, Routledge, 2007.

- T. Harris, *Revolution: The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy, 1685–1720*, London, Allen Lane, 2006.
- L. M. Hawkins, *Allegiance in Church and State, The Problem of the Non-jurors in the English Revolution*, London, G. Routledge & Sons, 1928.
- S. Himsworth, 'Samuel Wesley (1662–1735) and St Botolph-without-Aldersgate A biographical note of the early years', *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, vol. 54, 2003.
- D. R. Hirschberg, 'A Social History of the Anglican Episcopate, 1660–1760', Michigan University, PhD thesis, 1976.
- G. Holder, *Jacobites and the Supernatural*, Stroud, Amberley, 2010.
- G. Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne*, London, Hambledon Press, 1967.
- G. Holmes, *The Trial of Doctor Sacheverell*, London, Eyre Methuen, 1973.
- C. A. Hulbert, (ed.), *Extracts from the Diary of the Rev. Robert Meeke...*, London, H. G. Bohn, 1874.
- J. Hunter, (ed.), *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby of Leeds, 1677–1724*, London, H. Coulburn & R. Bennett, 1830, 2 vols.
- M. Hunter, 'New Light on the "Drummer of Tedworth" Conflicting Narrative of Witchcraft', *Historical Research*, vol. 78, no. 201, 2005.
- M. Hunter, 'The Decline of Magic: Challenge and Response in Early Enlightenment England', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 55, no. 2, 2012.
- M. Hunter, *The Decline of Magic, Britain and the Enlightenment*, London and New Haven, Yale University Press, 2020.
- R. Iliffe, *Priest of Nature, The Religious Worlds of Isaac Newton*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2017.
- C. Jackson, (ed.), *The Diary of Abraham de la Pryme*, Surtees Society, 1870.
- T. Jackson, *Life of the Revd Charles Wesley*, London, John Mason, 1841.
- W. M. Jacob, 'John Wesley and the Church of England 1736–40' in J. Gregory, (ed.), 'John Wesley Tercentenary Essays', *The Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, vol. 85, nos. 2 & 3, 2003.
- V. Jankovic, 'The Politics of Sky Battles in Early Hanoverian Britain', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 41, 2002.
- C. Jones, 'Debates in the House of Lords on "The Church in Danger", 1705, and on Dr Sacheverell's Impeachment, 1710', *Historical Journal*, vol. 19, no. 3, 1976.
- M. G. Jones, *The Charity School Movement*, London, Frank Cass, 1964.
- B. Kirk, *The Taunton Dissenting Academy*, Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society, 2005.
- M. Knights, *The Devil in Disguise, Deception, Delusion and Fanaticism in the Early English Enlightenment*, Oxford University Press, 2011.
- A. Lacey, *Cult of King Charles the Martyr*, Woodbridge, Boydell, 2002.
- T. Lathbury, *A History of the Convocation of the Church of England*, London, J. Parker, 1842.
- J. E. Lewis, *Air's Appearance: Literary Atmosphere in British Fiction, 1660–1794*, University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- W. K. Lowther Clarke, *A History of the S.P.C.K.*, London, SPCK, 1959.
- D. Maclean, *A History of Pembroke College, Oxford*, Anciently Broadgates Hall, Oxford Historical Society, vol. 33, 1897.
- D. Madden, *A Cheap, Safe and Natural Medicine, Religion, Medicine and Culture in John Wesley's Primitive Physick*, New York, Rodopi, 2007.
- A. G. Matthews, *Calamy Revised*, Oxford University Press, 1934.

- J. McElligott, *Fear, Exclusion and Revolution: Roger Morrice and Britain in the 1680s*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006.
- G. D. McEwen, *The Oracle of the Coffee House: John Dunton's Athenian Mercury*, San Marino, CA, Huntington Library Press, 1972.
- H. McLachlan, *English Education Under the Test Acts, Being the History of the Nonconformist Academies, 1662–1820*, Manchester University Press, 1931.
- H. Moore, *The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.: Including an Account of the Great Revival of Religion in Europe and America, of which He was the First and Chief Instrument*, London, J. Robbins, 1837.
- C. F. Mullet, 'A Case of Allegiance: William Sherlock and the Revolution of 1688', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 10, 1946–7.
- J. A. Newton, 'Samuel Annesley', *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, vol. XLV, 1985.
- J. Nichols, *Letters on Various Subjects, Literary, Political and Ecclesiastical to and from William Nicolson, DD, Bishop of Carlisle . . .*, London, John Nichols, 1809.
- E. Nicholson, 'Sacheverell's Harlots: Non-Resistance on Paper and in Practice', in Special Issue: *Faction Displayed: Reconsidering the Impeachment of Dr Henry Sacheverell*, *Parliamentary History*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2012.
- J. D. Oates, 'Jacobitism and Popular Disturbances in Northern England, 1714–1719', *Northern History*, vol. XLI, 2004.
- J. H. Overton, 'Epworth Rectory, 1696–1735: or The Wesleys in Epworth', in *Lincoln Diocesan Architectural Society Proceedings*, 1885.
- J. H. Overton, *The Nonjurors, their Lives, Principles and Writings*, London, Smith Elder & co., 1902.
- R. Paley, (ed.), *The History of Parliament: The House of Lords 1660–1715*, Cambridge University Press, 2016.
- I. Parker, *Dissenting Academies in England*, Cambridge University Press, 1934.
- G. G. Perry and J. H. Overton, *Biographical Notices of the Bishops of Lincoln From Remigius to Wordsworth*, Lincoln, G. Gale, 1900.
- S. Pincus, *1688, the First Modern Revolution*, London and New Haven, Yale University Press, 2009.
- S. Porter, 'The University and Society', in N. Tyacke, (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford, vol. iv, Seventeenth Century Oxford*, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- G. V. Porteus, *Caritas Anglicana*, London, A. R. Mowbray, 1912.
- H. D. Rack, 'Samuel Wesley, (1662–1735)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004.
- H. Reynolds, *A Short History of the Ancient Diocese of Exeter*, Exeter, H. Besley, 1895.
- C. Rose, 'The Origins and Ideals of the SPCK, 1699–1716', University of Cambridge, PhD thesis, 1989.
- C. Rose, '"Seminaries of Faction and Rebellion": Jacobites, Whigs and the London Charity Schools, 1716–1724', *Historical Journal*, vol. 34, no 4, 1991.
- L. Ryan, *John Wesley and the Education of Children, Gender, Class and Piety*, London, Routledge, 2017.
- L. Sangha, 'The Social, Personal and Spiritual Dynamics of Ghost Stories in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal*, vol. 63, no. 2, 2019.
- A. W. Secord, 'A September Day in Canterbury: The Veal-Bargrave Story', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 54, no. 4, 1955.
- F. Secretan, *Memoirs of the Life and Times of the Pious Robert Nelson . . .*, London, John Murray, 1860.

- J. S. Simon, *John Wesley and the Religious Societies*, London, Epworth Press, 1921.
- J. S. Simon, 'The Early Societies for Reformation of Manners', *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, vol. 13, no. 8, 1922.
- B. S. Sirota, *The Christian Monitors, The Church of England and the Age of Benevolence, 1680–1730*, London and New Haven, Yale University Press, 2014.
- D. Slatter, *The Diary of Thomas Naish*, Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, vol. xx, 1965.
- M. G. Smith, 'Toleration and Parish Ministry: Some Long Terms Effects of James II's Religious Policy', *The Churchman*, vol. 97, no. 2, 1983.
- A. Sneddon, *Witchcraft and Whigs: the Life of Bishop Francis Hutchinson, 1660–1739*, Manchester University Press, 2008.
- W. M. Spellman, *The Latitudinarians and the Church of England, 1660–1700*, Athens, Georgia, University of Georgia Press, 1993.
- R. Stevens, *Protestant Pluralism, The Reception of the Toleration Act, 1689–1720*, Woodbridge, Boydell and Brewer, 2018.
- G. J. Stevenson, *Memorials of the Wesley Family: Including Biographical and Historical Sketches of All the Members of the Family for Two Hundred and Fifty Years*, London, Partridge, 1876.
- N. Sykes, *Edmund Gibson*, Oxford University Press, 1926.
- N. Sykes, 'The Cathedral Chapter of Exeter and the General Election of 1705', *English Historical Review*, vol. 45, 1930.
- N. Sykes, *William Wake*, Cambridge University Press, 2 vols, 1957.
- G. Tapsell, (ed.), *The Later Stuart Church 1660–1714*, Manchester University Press, 2012.
- G. Taylor, *The Sea Chaplains a History of the Chaplains of the Royal Navy*, London, Illustrated Press, 1978.
- R. Thomas, 'Comprehension and Indulgence', in G. Nuttall and O. Chadwick, (eds), *From Uniformity to Unity, 1662–1962*, London, SPCK, 1962.
- H. P. Thompson, *Thomas Bray*, London, SPCK, 1954.
- A. T. Thomson, *Memoirs of Viscountess Sundon, Mistress of the Robes to Queen Caroline, consort of George II . . .*, London, Henry Colburn, 1847.
- S. Timmons, 'Witchcraft and Rebellion in Late Seventeenth Century Devon', *Journal of Early Modern History*, vol. 10, 2006.
- A. Torpy, 'Samuel Wesley Sr: A Late Seventeenth Century English Abolitionist', *Methodist History*, vol. 47, no. 1, 2008.
- A. Torpy, *The Prevenient Piety of Samuel Wesley*, Lanham, MD, Scarecrow Press, 2009.
- P. Tovey, *Anglican Confirmation 1662–1820*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2014.
- T. R. Trautmann, 'Whig Ethnology from Locke to Morgan', *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford*, vol. 22, 1992.
- N. Tyacke, 'Religious controversy', *The History of the University of Oxford, vol. iv, Seventeenth Century Oxford*, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- L. Tyerman, *The Life and Times of the Rev. Samuel Wesley MA, Rector of Epworth, and Father of the Rev. John and Charles Wesley, The Founders of the Methodists*, London, Simpkins, Marshall & Co., 1866.
- A. Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors, at Home in Georgian England*, London and New Haven, Yale University Press, 2009.
- J. B. Wakeley, *Anecdotes of the Wesleys, Illustrative of their Character and Personal History*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1878.
- C. Wallace, *From a Mother's Pen, Selections from the Spiritual Writings of Susanna Wesley*, London, Methodist Church, 2019.

- R. Walmsley, 'John Wesley's Parents, Quarrel and Reconciliation', *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, vol. XXIX, 1953.
- W. R. Ward, *Early Evangelicals: A Global Intellectual History*, Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- P. Watson, 'Two Scrubby Travellers': *A Psychoanalytic View of Flourishing and Constraint in Religion through the Lives of John and Charles Wesley*, London, Routledge, 2018.
- R. Weil, *Political Passions, Gender, The Family and Political Argument in England, 1680–1714*, Manchester University Press, 1999.
- J. R. Wigelsworth, *All Souls College, Oxford in the Early Eighteenth Century. Piety, Political Imposition and the Legacy of the Glorious Revolution*, Leiden, Brill, 2018.
- F. Wilder, *Father of the Wesleys*, New York, Exposition Press, 1971.
- A. Wright, *Annesley of Surat and his Times, The True Story of the Mythical Wesley Fortune*, London, Andrew Melrose, 1918.
- D. Wright, *The Epworth Phenomena*, London, William Elder and Son, 1917.
- G. Wright: 'Manuscript, Print, and Politics in Anne Finch's "Upon the Hurricane"', *Studies in Philology*, vol. III, no. 3, 2014.
- D. L. Wykes, 'The Contribution of the Dissenting Academies to the Emergence of Rational Dissent', in K. Haakonssen, (ed.), *Enlightenment and Religion: Rational Dissent in Eighteenth Century Britain*, Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- K. D. Yates, 'Jeffrey the Jacobite Poltergeist, the Politics of the Ghost that Haunted the Epworth Rectory in 1716–17', *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, vol. 50, no. 2, 2015.
- G. M. Yould, 'The Origins and Transformation of the Nonjuror Schism, 1670–1715: Illustrated by Special Reference to the Career, Writings and Activities of Dr. George Hickee, 1642–1715', Hull University, PhD thesis, 1979.