

An Historiographical Correction

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In the Fall 1999 *Wesleyan Theological Journal* (pp. 111–35) Laurence Wood lodged 22 historiographical criticisms against my response to his earlier essay “Pentecostal Sanctification in Wesley and Early Methodism” (*WTJ* 34.1 [Spring 1999]: 24–53). I believe that my answers to these criticisms are readily evident to interested readers in my original response (*WTJ* 34.2 [Fall 1999]: 78–110). There is one point, however, that can now be updated. Wood relies heavily in making his case on a letter of 11 October 1783 that he claims is from John Wesley to John Fletcher and includes the line “I am quite satisfied with your motives and you had from the beginning my Imprimatur” (*WTJ* 34.1: 48). I noted in my response that the curator of the Methodist archives in the John Rylands Library was unable to locate such a letter for me to consult (*WTJ* 34.2: 101 note 57). I now know why. The letter Wood cites turns out not to be

from John Wesley but from Charles!¹ Moreover, it has a very specific context and scope. Charles is endorsing Fletcher's proposal to circulate to members of Parliament a pamphlet on "Three National Grievances" calling for improved conditions for working people.² It is historiographical missteps like this (and others noted in my original response) that render Wood's thesis less than compelling.

1. I am indebted to Peter Forsaith and Gareth Lloyd for help in sorting out this confusion and locating the letter in question (it exists only in manuscript and is stored in JRULM MAW F1 Box 18 at the John Rylands Library).

2. Cf. the discussion of this letter in Patrick Philip Streiff, *Jean Guillaume de la Flechere* (Frankfort am Main: Peter Lang, 1984), 468. The actual wording of the line in question is "I am quite satisfied about your motion, and you had from the beginning my Imprimatur."