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Modern Christianity:

EXEMPLIFIED AT

WEDNESBURY,

And other adjacent Places in

STAFFORDSHIRE.

Tua res agitur paries quum proximus ardet

PUBLISHED

BY JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

FELLOW of *Lincoln* College, OXFORD.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

IT was our Desire and Design, that the following Accounts, drawn up long since, should have slept for ever: But the gross Misrepresentations of these Facts, which are still spread abroad from Day to Day, constrain us at length to speak the naked Truth, in as plain a Manner as we are able; and now let any Man of common Humanity judge, Whether these Things ought to be so?



Modern Christianity, &c.

1. **I** John Eaton, of *Wednesbury* in *Staffordshire*, heard the Rev. Mr Charles Wesley, in the latter End of the Year 1742. preach Salvation by Faith, in the *Colepit Field*. I and many others rejoiced to hear it, particularly many of the poor People at *Darleston*, some of whom soon after began to meet together in the Evenings, to sing, and pray, and read the Bible.

Some of *Wensbury* used to go and meet with them; but one Evening the Mob at *Darleston* rose, pelted them with Clods and Stones, and broke all the Windows of the House where they had been.

On the 30th of *May* 1743. *John Adams* (whose House it was) fetch'd a Warrant, to carry some of the Rioters before Justice P, of *Walsal*. He desired some of us of *Wednesbury* to go with him; so four or five of us went: But the Mob at *Walsal* immediately rose upon us: so that we were obliged to take Shelter in a Publick House. Here we were kept close Prisoners till it was dark, several of us having been much hurt and abused. When it was Night, we escaped one or two at a Time. *Francis Ward* and I went last.

On the 21st of *June* 1743. a large Mob came to my House at *Wensbury*. I was then Constable; so I went to the Door with my Constable's Staff, and began reading the Act of Parliament against Riots; but the Stones flew so thick about my Head, that I was forced to leave off reading and retire; so they broke about half my Windows and went away: But some Hours after, they came again, and broke all the rest, and the Door of my House, and the Clock, to Pieces. This is a short Account of the first Damage that was done to me

John Eaton.

2. On the 30th of *May*, I *James Jones* went with *John Eaton* and some others to *Walsal*. As we were going to and from the Justice's House, the Mob pelted us with Dirt and Stones. They raged more and more.

A

till

till *Francis Ward* desired the Justice, who was present, to quiet them: But instead of that, he swung his Hat round his Head twice, and cried, "Huzza!" On which Encouragement, they grew so outrageous, that we were forced to take Shelter in a Publick House, and to stay there till it was dark.

On the 21st of *June*, a great Multitude gathered together in *Wensbury Church* yard; among them was *Harvey Walklet* of *Wensbury*, and *Richard Dorset* of *Darleston*. *Harvey* said to *Richard Dorset*, "Methinks they are not so well arm'd as I would have them." *Richard* answered, "There are many pretty Fellows from *Darleston*; I know them to be good Blood." *Harvey* replied, "There is *John Baker* with the Oak Bough in his Hat, he will break the first Pane of Mr *Eaton's* Windows." Accordingly they went to Mr *Eaton's* first, and from thence to other Houses. Here are above Fourscore Houses in and about *Wensbury*, in many of which there are not three Panes of Glass left.

Wednesbury, June 29.

James Jones.

3. I *Jonathan Jones*, in the County of *Stafford*, Farmer, am willing to pay the King and Country their Due, might I be at Peace, and go about my lawful Occasions, as I ought to do.

On the 20th of *June*, at my Neighbour *Adams's* House, two or three were singing a Hymn, and a Parcel of Prentices and others, in a very rude Manner, came and threw many Stones thro' the Windows; in particular Mr *Richard Taylor's* Prentice. So my Neighbour *John Adams* goes to Squire *P.* and brings a Warrant for him; but Mr *Taylor* goes to *Walsal*, to the Justice, before the Offenders were brought, and he was with Squire *P.* when we came, who would not act at his own Hall, but sent us down into the Town; where a great Mob was waiting for our coming.

So the Constable gave him the Warrant, and he said, "What! I understand you are *Methodists*! I will not act for you." Then he went to the Door, and told a great Mob, "They might do what they would;" and took off his Hat, and swung it about, and went away. They gave a great Shout, and some of them swore bitterly, they would murder us all. We sent for the

the Constable, to help us out of the Town; but he was not to be found. So we staid in the House about two Hours, till we thought the Mob was gone; but as soon as we came out, some began to follow, and the Street was quickly full. They beat and braised us very much; but thro' God's Mercy we escaped with our Lives.

About a Week after, there arose a great Mob at *Darleston*, and broke me nine large Windows, and many of my Goods. The same Day my Man was coming home with my Team, and they met him, and beat him, and much abused my Horses. At Night they came to break the rest of my Goods; but I gave them Money, and they went away.

So I was at *Richard Dorset's*, our Churchwarden, and many of the Mob came in and said, "Come now, d——n you, *Dorset*, we have done our Work, pay us our Wages." And I saw the Drink come in, in large Jugs, and every one drank what he would.

What I have here said, I am ready to make Oath of.

Jonathan Jones.

4. I *Francis Ward* of *Wednesbury*, went to *Walsal*, May 30. with *John Eaton*, to see if we could have Justice done to the Rioters, who had abused our Neighbours at *Darleston*. We went to *Benjamin Westley's*, at the Sign of the *George*, when one *Mr Taylor*, Curate of *Walsal*, came with the Mob to the House, and, in our hearing, encouraged them to insult us. Accordingly they pelted us with Dirt and Stones, all the Way we went to the Justice's Gate. The Justice came out and said, "We must go down into the Town, and then he would hear our Complaint." But as we went, the Mob continued to pelt us, tho' the Justice was with us. I desired he would be pleased to read the Act of Parliament against Riots; but he would not. When we came to *Benjamin Westley's*, the Justice would have had a Hearing in the Streets, among the Mob; but at last he was prevail'd with to go into the House. Then he called for *John Adams*, or his Wife, and, without hearing them speak, said, "What, you are *Methodists*," or Words to that Purpose, and immediately went out to the Mob. We staid in the House a considerable Time,

hoping they would disperse ; but, as soon as ever we came out, they gathered round us again, and beat and pelted us with whatever they could find. One of them came to me, and struck me on the Eye, and cut it so, that I expected to lose my Sight. I got into a Shop, and had my Eye dress'd, and then returned to my Friends. The Mob pursued me again, fetch'd me out of the House, and beat me very much ; but with much Difficulty I got from them again, and escaped a second Time into the House. They fetch'd me out again, and dragg'd me along the Street, and thro' the Kennel to and fro, till I had quite lost my Strength, and was so weak, I was not able to get up. There came a poor Woman and said to the Mob, " Will ye kill the Man ? " and lifted me up. With much ado I got home ; but the Abuse I there receiv'd threw me into a Fever.

5. About *Whitsuntide*, I *Joskua Constable*, of *Darleston*, had all my Windows broke by the Mob, and many of my Goods damaged or spoil'd, and so had many of my Neighbours ; in particular, *John Cotterell*, *Smith*, *Thomas Butler*, *Thomas Wilkinson*, *Aaron Lengmore*, *William Powell*, *Anne Evans*, *Walter Carter*, *Samuel Foster*, and *Thomas Wilks*, had their Windows all broke.

Edward Martin, *Anne Low*, *Joan Fletcher*, *Edward Horton*, *Mumford Wilks*, *Jos. Yardly*, and *Robert Deacon*, had all their Windows broke twice.

James Foster, Nailer, *Sarah Hires*, Widow, and *Jonathan Jones*, had their Windows broke, and Money extorted, to save their Houses.

John Foster, Nailer, and *Joice Wood*, had their Windows broke, and their Goods broken and spoiled.

Jos. Spittle, Collier, had his Windows broke, his House broke open, some Goods taken, and some lost.

William Woods, Brickmaker, had his Windows broke twice, and was compelled to go along with the Rioters.

Elizabeth Lingham, a Widow with five Children, had her Goods spoil'd, her Spinning-wheel (the Support of her Family) broke, and her Parish Allowance reduced from 2 s. 6 d. to 1 s. 6 d. a Week.

Valentine Ambersy, Collier, had his Windows broke twice,

twice, his Wife, big with Child, abused and beat with Clubs.

George Wynn had his Windows and Goods broke, and to save his House was forced to give them Drink.

Thomas Day had his Windows and Goods broke, and was forced to remove from the Town.

Jos. Stubs had his Windows broke twice, and his Wife so frightened, that she miscarried.

6. On *June 20.* *John Baker, Thomas Griffiths, and Daniel Oniens,* at the Head of a large Mob, came to my House, *Jonas Turner* by Name, at *West Bramwick,* near *Wensbury,* and asked, "Whether I would keep from these Men, and go to the Church? I answered, "I go to the Church very often, but I never see any of you there." Presently *Daniel Oniens;* with a great Club, broke great part of my Windows at one Blow. Others laid hold of me and said, "You shall go along with us." I told them, "I would not." They dragg'd me by Force about 60 Yards, and then I got loose from them. Afterwards they broke all my Windows, and threw into my House three Basket-full of Stones, to break my Goods.

7. Some time in *June,* about Four in the Afternoon, a Mob came to my House at *West Bramwick;* I was within, and my two Daughters without. They threw in Stones and Bricks so fast, that I thought I should have been knocked on the Head. Whereupon I opened the Door, and ran out amongst them. One of my Daughters cried out, "My Mother will be killed." On which they fell to throwing Stones at her. She ran into a Neighbour's House; but before she could shut the Door, they broke the Bottom off with a Brick End. They followed my other Daughter with Stones, and one with a great Stake. She ran into another House, much frightened, expecting to be murdered. I asked them, "How they could come and abuse us thus?" Upon which one came with a large Club, and swore, "If I spoke another Word, he would knock me on the Head, and bury me in the Ditch." Then he went to the Window, and broke two or three Panes of Glass, which were all that were left. A Woman then came

with a Club, and broke to Pieces part of the Tiling or the House.

Of this I am ready to make Oath.

Mary Turner.

8. On the 19th of June, James Yeoman, of Walsal, saw me in my Father's House at Wensbury, and swore, "By G— you are there now; but we will break the Windows, and kill you To-morrow." Accordingly he came with a Mob the next Day; and after they had broke all the Windows, he took up a Stone and said, "Now, by G— I will kill you". He threw, it and struck me on the Side of the Head. The Blood gushed out, and I drop'd down immediately.

Mary Bird.

9. June 20. the Mob came to the House of me John Bird, and demanded 5 s. of my Wife, or they would break all the Windows. She offered them some Money, which they snatch'd out of her Hand, and then broke ten Windows in Front, the Sash-frames, Shutters, Cases, Chest of Drawers, and Hanging-prefs, and damaged the Cieling, Doors, Dresser, and many other Things.

John Bird.

10. On the 20th of June, the Mob came to my House. John Baker by Name came first. They threw in Stones and Bricks as fast as they could throw them; so that we within were afraid of our Lives. They broke all the Windows I had in my House, and likewise the Casements and the Cieling; and when there was no more Damage for them to do, one of them cried out, "I suppose now you will go to your dear Jesus's Wounds, and see them open'd for you."

John Turner.

11. June 20. 1743. one Daliston, my Neighbour at Wensbury, after some Words, took me by the Throat, swore he would be the Death of me, gave me a great Swing, and threw me on the Ground. As soon as I arose, Equal Baker, a Collier, gave me a Blow on the Eye, and knocked me down again. When I got up, he came after me to my House, and said, "You Dog, I will kill you." I went in, got a proper Application to my Eye, and lay down on the Bed. In about half an Hour, there came a large Mob to my House, and broke

broke all the Windows, except about twenty Panes. The Kitchen Windows they clear'd, Lead, Bars and all, and broke the Window Posts, and threw them into the House. My Shop was shut up; but they soon broke it open, broke all my Pots and Bottles, and destroy'd almost all my Medicines. They broke also the Shelves and Drawers in the Shop to Pieces, and many of my Household Goods.

That Day and the next, they broke the Windows and Goods, in more than Four-score Houses.

Humphrey Hands.

12. In the latter End of June 1743. I *John Griffiths* of *Wensbury*, with *Francis Ward*, went to Mr D. Justice of the Peace. We told him what Condition we and our Neighbours were in, our Houses broken, and our Goods spoiled. He replied, "I suppose you follow these Parsons that come about." So he talk'd to us very roughly, refused us a Warrant, and said, "I will neither meddle nor make." And after he and some Gentlewomen that were with him, had made as much Game at us as they thought fit, we came away without any Justice at all.

13. I *Mumford Wilks*, heard the Rev. Mr E. say to the Mob at *Darleston*, (after they had committed these Outrages) "Well, my Lads, he that has done it *out of pure Zeal for the Church*, I don't blame him. My Lads, I hope you will let us *settle our Affairs in our own Parish ourselves*: But if these Men should come, and they should follow them, then *your Help will be needful*."

14. *Line* and *Mare's Green* have been long noted for Wickedness of every kind; for Cursing and Swearing, Sabbath-breaking, Idleness, and all manner of Debauchery. Few thereabouts used to go to Church, or trouble themselves about Religion, till some of them heard Mr *John* and *Charles Wesley*, who then had a Desire to flee from the Wrath to come. In order to this, they set apart one Evening in a Week, to meet and encourage one another, by reading a Chapter, singing a Psalm or Hymn, and praying and conversing together.

The Revellers, finding their old Companions had forsaken them, were enraged at them more and more; insomuch that they came one Evening when they were met,

met, in *November* 1743. and unroof'd the Shop that was aside the House, and thrust down the Walls.

The next Time we met, they came in more Fury than before, threw great Stones, broke the Windows and Looking-glass, and made the Roof of the House to crack and sink, and seem every Moment as if it would break in upon us; insomuch that we were obliged to press out in the Dark, in the Midst of a Shower of Stones.

We thought it would be best afterwards, to meet in the Day, and accordingly we did. Immediately they blew a Horn, to gather their Company together. When they had gathered fifty or sixty, they went from one House to another, threatening to kill those who would not go along with them. They went together to a House, where were Things of Value, with a great Shout, swearing they would plunder. The Woman of the House went out and ask'd, What they wanted? They did not make much Reply; but part of them immediately went into the Garden, and dashed in Pieces Things which cost several Pounds.

We made Complaint hereof to a Justice, Mr *W. G.* He took a Warrant to fill up, and asked us, "What Number there was in all?" We told him, "About sixty." He then said, "What, you are *Methodists!* Get about your Business; you shall have no Warrant: "I am informed you are the vilest Men that live."

George Hadley.

Samuel Hadley.

Jos. Moore.

15. Upon *January* 13. 174 $\frac{3}{4}$. I *Jonathan Jones* of *Darleston*, about Eight or Nine at Night met in the Street a great Company of Rioters, who told me, they were going to destroy the rest of my Goods, and pull my House down, as they had *Joshua Constable's*. So I asked for *Thomas Tunks*, who was called the Captain of the Mob, and gave him many good Words, and he took of me 2 s. 6 d. and some others I treated with Ale; so they persuaded the rest to let me alone for that Time.

The next Day came *John Stokes* with a great Club, and wanted some Money, or he said he would break my Windows; but I put him away for the present with some Drink. The same Night, about Six o'Clock, came

came *John Bagot* and *John Linyard*, with each a great Club, and said, " You have given Money to others, and " we will have some too ; or else we will call the rest " of our Company, and serve you as we have done your " Neighbours." So I gave them some Money, and they went off about Nine or Ten o'Clock. About Six or Eight with Clubs and Staffs came after, and *John Wilks* with a short Gun ; but my Neighbours and I, with giving them some Drink, persuaded them to go away.

It was some Time before, just after the great Mob had broken all our Windows, that the Rev. Mr —, with others, met at *Thomas Forsbeav's*, at the Sign of the *Crown*, and made a Writing, and the Mob was sent to bring as many as they had a mind to sign it. They declared, whoever did not come and sign this, they would immediately pull his House down. It was to this Effect: " That they would never read, or sing, " or pray together again, nor hear Mr *Wesley* preach."

16. In the Month of *January*, I *Sarah Longmore*, late of *Darleston*, was coming to *Wensbury*, with my Brother and Sister in-law ; and about thirty Men stop'd us in the Fields, and ask'd, " Where we were going ? " We said, " About our Business." Without any more to do, they began to throw Dirt and Stones at us, and then went before us and stop'd us at the Stile. Seeing a Gap in the Hedge, we offered to go thro' there ; but they would not let us. I was knocked down only once, but was bruised in many Places.

Some Time before this happened, the Mob rose at *Darleston*, to near a Thousand People. They took me by Force out of my Mother's House, gave me a Club in my Hand, and said, " If I did not go with them, " and pull down *Joseph Spittle's* House, they would " murder me." *William Corfield* was the Man who put the Club in my Hand, and haled me along the Street. I threw down the Club, and when I came to the Place, saw them break open the House, and bring out some of the Goods, the People belonging to it being fled for their Lives.

The same Day the Rev. Mr *E.* came to *Darleston* ; and *Nicholas Winspur*, the common Crier of the Town, gave Notice, ringing his Bell, that all the People belonging

longing to the Society, must come to Mr *Forscow's* House, and there set their Hands to a Paper, signifying, " That they would not hear these Men any more : But " if they did not come and set their Hands, they must " expect to have their Houses pulled down."

When I came, Mr *Forscow* asked me, " If I could write ? " I said, No. Then he bid me make my Mark ; so, thro' Fear, I did. I then laid down a Penny, which they made every one of us do, to make the Mob drink.

17. About *Candlemas*, my Wife was going to *Wensbury*, and a Mob met her in the Road, and threw her down several Times, and abused her sadly.

(The Manner is too horrible to write. The nearest to a parallel Case, is that of the Woman abused by the Men of *Gibeab* ; altho' in this Case are many Circumstances exceeding that.)

I got a Warrant for some of them from Justice *G*. As soon as this was known, the Mob rose and broke all my Windows again. All who were served with the Warrant, escaped, but one the Constable took and brought before the Justice, who came back and told his Companions, " That the Justice bid them go home about " their Business." So they went home and told the Mob ; and then they came to my House, broke some Goods, and went away for a little Time ; but when they came again, they broke and destroy'd all the necessary Goods we had in the House. They likewise broke and spoil'd all my Shop Tools ; threw the Tiles off of the Roof of the House, pull'd down one Room, the Joist of which they carried away with them. Many Things they took away ; particularly all my Gun-locks, both them that were filed, and them that were in the rough. They tore to Pieces all my Wife's Linnen, cut the Bed and Bedstead, so that it was good for nothing ; broke her Box into little Bits, and tore her Bible and Common Prayer Book all to Pieces. We retired to a Friend's House ; but one telling them we were there, they swore they would tear it down, if he let us stay any longer. So we went out in the Frost and Snow, not knowing where to lay our Head.

18. *John Allen* of *Wensbury*, in the County of *Stafford*, *John Darby*, of *Brerely*, in the said County, and
James

James Constable, of *Wensbury* aforesaid, jointly and severally make Oath and say : And first, *John Allen*, for himself saith, That on *Monday*, the 6th Day of this instant *February*, being inform'd, that the Mob would come the next Day, to plunder several of his Friends and Acquaintance, he went to the House of one *Francis Ward* of *Wensbury*, and assisted in removing Goods and Furniture : And that on *Tuesday* Morning, (being *Shrove-Tuesday*) this Deponent hearing the Mob was come to the Town, assisted in removing divers other Goods ; and that afterwards, on the same Day, he met about 300 Persons, assembled together in a riotous Manner ; and that presently after, one *George Winspur* of *Darleston*, and divers others, broke and enter'd the House of *Francis Ward*, broke down the Fire-grate fix'd therein, and then pull'd down, took and carried away all such Goods as were left there, and which they were able to carry. After which one *John Baker* of *Wensbury*, and a great Number of other riotous Persons, came to the House of *Francis Ward*, and broke the Windows ; and then the said *Baker*, with divers others, enter'd the same, and broke to Pieces and destroy'd the Bed-steads, and other Goods and Furniture.

The said riotous Company then went to another Village, call'd *West Bramwick*, and return'd back again to *Wensbury*, where this Deponent saw one *Tho. Horton* of *Darleston*, with divers others, go in a riotous Manner to the House of *John Griffiths* of *Wensbury*, and saw *Thomas Horton*, with a Sledge-hammer, break open the Door of that House, which he, with others, enter'd, and destroy'd and broke to Pieces divers of the Household Goods, and took and carried away the Remainder, or the greatest Part thereof.

19. And the said *John Darby* for himself saith, That on the said 6th Day of *February*, he heard a great many People making a Noise : That he went thereupon into his own House, and locked and bolted the Door : That in about a Quarter of an Hour, about Seventy Persons came up to this Deponent's House ; nine or ten of whom bid him give them Money, else they would break the Door : That *John Hammersley* of *Darleston*, and several others, with a great Rail of Wood, broke down the
Door,

Door, and enter'd the House, and caught up a large Ax, and broke to Pieces and destroy'd this Deponent's Goods and Windows. After which they destroy'd five Stalls of Bees, and kill'd and took away all his Hens, and threw the Hay out of his Barn; and carrying away what they thought proper, went to the House of *Samuel Smith*, a Quarter of a Mile further, and broke his Windows. Thence they went in a riotous Manner to *Bilston*, and in the Morning to *Wensbury*.

20. *James Constable* saith, That on Monday the 6th instant, *Henry Old*, *Thomas Adams*, and *Francis Longmore*, all of *Darleston*, came to *Wensbury*, and, with Oaths and Curses, in this Deponent's Hearing, protested, "That they would come the next Day, and pull down the House of one *Benjamin Constable*, and have his Heart and his Liver out." That accordingly, the next Day, about Ten in the Morning, he heard a great Huzza in the Town Street, and went to see what was the Matter, when he, this Deponent, was immediately, by one *Samuel Cotterel* of *Darleston*, and three others, seiz'd by the Collar, and forced to go into a great Concourse of People, (about 300 Persons) who had just broken into the House of one *John Bird*, and were throwing the Goods of the said *John Bird* out of the Windows of his House: That those who held this Deponent then letting him go, and running to get their Share of the Plunder, he went to the House of *Benjamin Constable*; and about Two or Three o'Clock the same Day, the said riotous Persons came up to the House, which was locked and bolted; and as this Deponent stood on the Outside, he saw *Thomas Horton* with a large Hammer strike at the Door, in order to break it open; which he not being able to do, *Joseph Page* of *Darleston* broke the Window, and forced out the Iron Bars of the said Window with a Pike, and afterwards broke and enter'd the same, and unbolting the Door, let the other Rioters in: That *Thomas Tonks* of *Darleston*, and divers others, with an Ax, wrenched and forced open the Door of *Benjamin Constable's* Ware-house, riotously enter'd into the same, and broke to Pieces and destroy'd the Goods therein, spilt the Liquors therein placed, plunder'd and destroy'd such Goods as they could not carry away, both Household Goods

Goods and Grocery Goods, and also Chandlers' Ware: That afterwards they went to this Deponent's House, broke to Pieces all the Windows of his House, plunder'd the same from Top to Bottom, broke to Pieces many of his Goods, and carried a great Part of them away: That thence they went to the House of *Daniel Constable*, broke open and plunder'd it in the like Manner; and from thence to the House of *Thomas Atherley*, which they also damaged and plunder'd.

All three sworn at *Serjeants-Inn*,
London, on *Feb. 24. 1743.* be-
 fore
Wm Chapple.

} *John Allen.*} *John Darby.*} *James Constable.*

21. *Monday, Feb. 6.* we kept as a Fast. Sixty or more of us met at One, and join'd in Prayer. About Eight we heard the Mob was at *John Griffith's*, the Elder, breaking the House and spoiling his Goods. This put some of us on removing our most portable Goods. When I came home, my Wife had awakened my youngest Girls, and carried them to a Neighbour's House. We then laid down and committed our own Souls to God.

Next Morning, *Feb. 7. (Shrove-Tuesday)* all Things were pretty still till Ten. We were all very cheerful. The greatest Fear we had, was lest we should deny our Master. For they had got a Paper, which if any one would subscribe, his House was not to be plundered: But the far greater Part, by the Grace of God, chose rather the Loss of all Things.

About half an Hour after Ten, great Numbers of Men were gathered together on the *Church-hill*. We could see them march down, some armed with Swords, some with Clubs, and some with Axes. They first fell upon *Benjamin Watson's* House, and broke many of the Tiles, and all the Windows. Next they came to Mr *Addinbrock's*, broke a fine Clock, with many of his Goods, and stole all the Things they could carry away; among which were Writings of Importance, and Papers relating to the Land-tax. The next House was *Jane Smith's*, whose Windows they broke, with what little Goods she had. The next was Mr *Bird's*, where they destroy'd every thing they found, except what they carried away, cutting the Beds in Pieces, as they did all

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the Beds they could any where find. Thence they went to Mr *Edge's* House : He was ill of a Fever ; so, for a Sum of Money, they pass'd it over. The next House was mine : They were going by it ; but one who used to be my familiar Friend, called them back. They broke my Counter, Boxes, and Drawers, to Chips, and all that Ax or Hammer could break, except my Bedsteads. They spilt all my Drugs and Chymical Medicines, and stole every thing they could carry, even all my Wife's Wearing Apparel and mine, besides what we had on.

Mr *Eaton's* House was next. They broke all his Windows, and all his Inside Doors in Pieces, cut the Lead off his House, destroy'd or stole whatever they could lay their Hands on. The Gentlemen offered to stop them, if he would set his Hand to the Recantation Paper. But he told them, " He had felt already what " a wounded Conscience was ; and, by the Grace of " God, he would wound his Conscience no more."

The next Day they came with another Mob, and said, " If he did not sign it, they would level his House " to the Ground." He told them, " They might " do as they pleas'd ; but he would not sign it if they " tore him Bit from Bit."

The Mob on *Tuesday*, after they had done at Mr *Eaton's*, plunder'd several other Houses in *Wensbury*, and several in *West Bramwick*. It is impossible to describe the Outrages they have committed. We keep meeting together Morning and Evening, are in great Peace and Love with each other, and in nothing terrified by our Adversaries. God grant we may endure to the End.

Feb. 26.

Humphrey Hands.

22. On *Tuesday, Jan. 31. 1743*. *Henry Old* came to *John Griffith, Senior's* House, saying, " if they did not " leave following *this Way*, he had 100 Men at his " Command, who should come and pull the House " down." Soon after he brought seven or eight Men with him, swearing what he would do, unless they gave him a Guinea. She said, " A Guinea was not so soon " shaken out of poor Folks' Sleeves." Then he said he would go and fetch the Mob ; but the Neighbours gave him Money, and sent him away for that Time.

Monday,

Monday, Feb. 6. between Seven and Eight at Night, came Part of the same Company. Hearing them afar off, *John* and his Wife fasten'd the Door, and left the House. Some of the Neighbours going in soon after, found them destroying all they could. Two Chairs and several Bundles of Linen were laid upon the Fire. They did not dare to touch them, but persuaded the Men all they could to go home. After they had destroy'd what they could, they loaded themselves with Cloaths and Meat, and went their Way.

John Griffiths, Sen.

23. My Father sending me word, that the Mob had been at his House, and broke many of his Goods, and stole many, I removed as many as I could of mine, before they plunder'd my House. And hearing they would force me to go with them, I sent my Wife and Children before, and then followed them to her Father's; but he did not care to receive us. My Wife wept: I was full of Love, and not at all moved. At last their Hearts relented, and they took us in. This indeed was the Case with many of us. We were driven out of our own Houses, and our Friends did not dare to receive us into theirs. The Reason for which my old Companions have the greatest Spite to me is, because I will not drink and game, and break the Sabbath with them, as I used to do.

John Griffiths, Jun.

24. I *Edward Smith* of *Wensbury*, standing by my own Door, on *Shrove-Tuesday*, there came a great Mob, and broke into and plunder'd *Benjamin Constable's* House; then they came to my House, and the foremost of them, *Thomas Horton*, with a great Hammer, broke open the Door. I begg'd them to let me unlock the Door; but he swore, if I did not get away, he would knock me down. At the same Time, *Richard Adams*, with a large Iron Bar, broke the House window, and got through. A great Number of them followed both Ways, and plunder'd the House, breaking some Goods, and stealing others; several Neighbours endeavouring to save them, but to no Purpose.

25. I *Edward Slater* of *Wensbury*, was inform'd the Night before, that the Mob design'd to plunder my House the next Day. And between Ten and Eleven on

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Tuesday,

Tuesday, standing in the Fields, I saw them come down the Town, with Clubs and other Weapons, to Mr *Eaton's* House. Then the Colliers, by themselves, swinging their Clubs round their Heads, gave a great Shout and a Jump together. Then they began breaking his Windows; and those who first broke into the House and went up Stairs, threw the Goods out of the Chamber Windows, which *Henry Old* cut to Pieces with an Ax. I saw some come out, with their Pockets, and Waistcoats, and Breeches, loaded with Goods. I went down the Field towards my own House, got into a Valley, read part of a Chapter, and pray'd for them. Then I got up, and saw the Light thro' my own House, both Doors and Windows being knock'd to Pieces. After they had plunder'd some other Houses, I saw them go up the Street, laden with Brass, Pewter, and Linnen.

26. According to your Request, I send you some Account of what the Mob did on *Shrove-Tuesday*. When I heard they were in Town, and broke and stole all before them, I got out our Beds and Wearing Apparel, and hid them in the Hedges, and went and stood aside of a Hedge, about 60 Yards off my own House.

When the Mob came, they began with breaking the Windows. They then broke and stole all they could lay Hands on. They search'd and found the Beds and Linnen which I had hid, and took all they thought worth carrying away. I waded thro' the Brook to try if I could save some of my Goods, which a Man was pulling out of the Ditch where I had hid them; his Name was *David Garington*. He told me, *It would be the same here, as it was in Ireland; for there would be a Massacre very quickly, and he wisht it was now.*

When they were gone, my Wife, and I, and two Children, came home. Our House was all laid open: For both the Doors were gone, and all the Windows, and the Middle Posts, were broke out. Being wet and very cold, we gathered up some of the Chips, (for our Goods were mostly broke into Chips, and strew'd about the Rooms) and made a Fire; but the Wind blew the Smoak so about, that we could not bear to sit by it. We knew not what to do, till one of our Neighbours sent us word, we might come to his House. But one went
to

to *Walsal* the next Day, and told the Landlord, who came and told them that received us, "They must turn out." And we expected there would not be an House to receive a *Methodist* in the whole Country.

On *Asb-Wednesday* I was helping Mr *Eaton* to remove some Corn, which they had not found the Day before; when Mr *William Horton* came with a Paper in his Hand, and about 100 Persons with him. He press'd Mr *Eaton* to sign it, who refused. Then they laid hold of me, and swore I should. I told them, I would not. They caught hold of my Collar, shook me, tore my Shirt and Waistcoat, push'd me from one to another, and ask'd again, "Will you sign the Paper yet?" I told them, No. They then got a Cord, put it about my Neck, and swore they would hang me out of hand. Others cried out, "Draw him thro' the Brook." But one of them snatch'd away the Cord, and said, "If I would not set my Hand, I might go about my Business." They followed me, however, with many Stones; but, by the Providence of God, I was not hurt.

March 5. 1743.

John Turner.

27. Having Notice that the Mob was coming, I *William Sitch*, of *West Bramwick*, and my Wife, (who had been deliver'd but a Fortnight) thought it best to go out of the House, and leave it to them. My Wife, with her young Child, was forced to stay in the Fields, none daring to take her into their House. At length one Man did; but he was in a little Time persuaded to turn her out again.

The Rioters plunder'd my House three several Times, and did all the Mischief they could; but blessed be God, I could rejoice therein. He has said, *As thy Day, so thy Strength shall be.* And never did I find his Promise fulfilled more than at that Time.

William Sitch.

28. On *Shrove-Tuesday*, after two large Mobs were past by, came four or five Men to my next Neighbour, *Jonas Turner's* House. I and another Woman followed them, to see what they would do. They first broke the Windows, then broke down the Door, and went into

ed it, they would murder them. Soon after they flung out a Bible, and one of them came out, and in great Rage cut it into Pieces with his Ax.

Mary Turner, of West Bramwick.

29. The first that came to my House (*Thomas Parkes of West Bramwick*) on *Tuesday, Feb. 7.* were five with great Clubs, whom I met at the Door. They demanded, "Whether I would deny hearing these Parsons?" I told them, "No; for I believed they spoke the Truth as it is in Jesus; and if I were to deny them, I should deny him that sent them." They told me, "If I would not, they would plunder my House." I replied, "They must answer it at God's Bar, and I would meet them there." I asked, "Whether I had done them any Harm?" They said, "No; but they would have me keep to the Church." I told them, "Some of you may know, that I worship among the Dissenters; but I love a good Man, let him go where he will: For there is but one Church of Christ; and if you do not belong to that Church, you had better never have been born."

I told them, "God has allowed me Liberty of Conscience, and so have the King and Parliament, and I hope my Neighbours will too; but if not, a Day is coming, when the Persecuted and the Persecutor shall stand together; and if you wrong me now, God will right me then."

While I was speaking, I caught hold of their Clubs, and the Words seem'd to have some Influence on them: But by this Time there was a great Body of them gathered together; so they broke my Windows, and then the Door, and flock'd into my House, and began to break my Goods. But here the Lord suffered them not to go so far as they had done in other Places: For they soon fell to plundering and loading themselves with the Things I had for myself, a Wife, and seven Children.

However, in a while, I had prevail'd with some of them to stop. But then they said, "I must set my Hand to their Paper." I told them, "They were cloak'd over with the Name of Protestants; but none but a *Papish* Spirit would tie Mens Consciences." So

I commended my Cause to God, and withdrew from my House and them.

As I went along, one who thinks herself a Christian said, "Now I might see God was against me." I told her, "I did now feel that God was for me, and that he loved me never the less for this: For God loved Job on the Dunghill with only a Potsherd, as well as he did in all his Plenty." I thought she, in effect, bid me "curse God and die." May the Lord make her a Christian indeed!

When I returned to my House and saw it in Ruins, I found nothing in my Heart towards my Persecutors but Love. Neither could I doubt of God's Love to my Soul. All that is within me bless his holy Name!

One Day six or eight of the Mob got me among them, and said, "They were going to make a Law, and we should all set our Hands to it." I told them, "I would submit to the Laws of God and my Prince; but I could not to the Laws of the Devil." One of them swore, "He would break my Windows again." I ask'd him, "If ever he heard of Jesus Christ doing so? And, how he durst, when he must answer it at his Bar?" At which he stood silent.

30. On *Shrove-Tuesday*, about Eleven o'Clock, *Sarah*, the Wite of *John Sheldon* of *West Bramwick*, being told, the Mob was coming to her House, went and met them at the Gate. Mr S——, Mr J——, and Mr S—— L——, Cornet, were at the Head of them. She asked *John Baker*, who was Captain of the Mob, What they were come for? He answered, "If she would have nothing more to do with these People, not a Penny-worth of her Goods should be hurt." She made no Reply. Then they broke the Door open, and began breaking and plundering the Goods. One coming out with a Fire-shovel, she begg'd him, "not to take it away." He swore. "if she spoke another Word.

would not pull up the Cow's Stakes; so they looked no further; but seeing a Calf, they beat and lamed it in such a Manner, that they were obliged to kill it.

John Sheldon was this while helping *Thomas Parkes* to hide his Goods, tho' he knew by the Noise they were breaking his own in Pieces. Between Two and Three he came to his House with *William Sitch*. *William* asked *Sarah*, how she did? saying, "For his Part, he took joyfully the spoiling of his Goods." She answered, That "seeing so much Wickedness, she could not rejoice; but she blessed God she could bear it patiently, and found not the least Anger in her." *John Sheldon*, seeing the Spoil they had made, smiled and said, "Here is strange Work." His Wife told him, "If she had complied with their Terms, not one Pennyworth would have been hurt." He replied, "That if she had complied to deny the Truth, and he had found his Goods whole on that Account, he should never have been easy as long as he lived; but he blessed God that she had rather chose to suffer wrong."

31. The Mob continued to rise for six Days together. The Damage they did in and about *Wednesbury*, at the very lowest Computation, is as follows:

			L.	s.	d.
<i>Benjamin Constable</i>	—		103	00	00
<i>Humphrey Hands</i>	—	—	44	06	07
<i>John Eaton</i>	—	—	43	11	00
<i>John Bird</i>	—	—	43	00	00
<i>Richard Bolton</i>	—	—	40	00	00
<i>Francis Ward</i>	—	—	22	14	06
<i>Godfrey Ward</i>	—	—	22	06	04
<i>John Turner</i>	—	—	20	00	00
<i>William Mason</i>	—	—	19	10	04
<i>Thomas Parkes</i>	—	—	14	00	00
<i>John Sheldon</i>	—	—	09	06	06
<i>John Griffiths</i>	—	—	03	15	08
<i>Lydia Partridge</i>	—	—	02	00	00
<i>Joseph Perry</i>	—	—	01	10	00
<i>John Darby</i>	—	—	08	13	06
<i>Jonas Turner</i>	—	—	03	12	00
<i>Richard Spittle</i>	—	—	02	17	00
<i>Jos. Spittle</i>	—	—	01	05	00

Edward

(21)

<i>Edward Holdbury</i>	—	—	04	10	00
<i>Humphrey Hadley</i>	—	—	13	11	00
<i>John Griffiths</i>	—	—	06	06	00
<i>Benjamin Watson</i>		—	02	11	00
<i>Thomas Smith</i>	—	—	07	15	06
<i>Edward Smith</i>	—	—	02	05	00
<i>William Sitch</i>	—	—	05	06	00
<i>Daniel Constable</i>	—	—	02	13	05
<i>Henry Addinbrook</i>		—	15	14	04
<i>Josua Constable</i>	—	—	14	11	00
<i>Jos. Stubs and Robert Dakin</i>			02	00	00
<i>Jonathan Jones</i>	—	—	03	00	00
<i>William Small</i>		—	04	12	07
<i>Thomas Edwardly</i>	—	—	05	00	00
<i>Edward Slater</i>	—	—	09	12	10

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32. I *Benjamin Constable* was induced to go to a Justice of Peace, on account of a Warrant fetch'd by the Wife of *Josua Constable*, for Abuse done to her, as she went over the Field betwixt *Wensbury* and *Darleston*. She swore against five Men, before Mr G. The Warrant was executed upon one of them; but the Justice would not act any thing against him, unless the other four were brought before him. The Man returning home, raised a Mob the same Evening, went to the House of *Josua Constable*, pulled part of it down, and destroy'd his Goods. This I thought proper to acquaint the Justice of.

A second Thing which induced me was, That on the last Day of *January*, there came to my House *Henry Old*, *Francis Longmore*, and *Thomas Baylis*, and demanded Money, "else, they said, they would break my "Goods." But it being Day-time, and their Strength small, (tho' they had large Clubs in their Hands) I re-

day following, *February 7.* they threaten'd to rise and pull down our Houses. He answered me in a rough Manner, and ask'd, "What I would have him to do?" "He could do no more than give out his Warrant; and if the Constable would not or could not execute it, he could not help it." I desired him, "That he would write a Line to the Officers of *Wensbury* and *Darleston*, to exert themselves for the discouraging any Rising on *Tuesday.*" But he refused, and told me, "If we could not agree among one another, we must go to the Devil which Way we would."

33. *John Bird*, of *Wensbury*, in the County of *Stafford*, Carpenter, is ready to make Oath, That he, together with *William Mumford*, and *Mary Bird*, on the 10th Day of this instant *April*, went to the House of *W—— G——*, Esq; Justice of Peace, in order to have a Warrant for some of the principal Rioters, who had lately done great Damage to this Deponent, and divers other Persons; but the said Justice refused to grant any Warrant against them: That *William Mumford* then demanded a Warrant against some of the said Rioters, who had done Damage to him; to which the said Justice said, They were *Methodists*; and, after several other Words, refused to grant it: That on the 13th inst. this Deponent, together with *William Mumford*, and *Mary Bird*, went to the House of *J—— D——*, Esq; a Justice of the Peace in the said County, and requested the said Justice to grant him a Warrant to take up some of the Rioters; which the said Justice refused to do: That on the 17th instant, this Deponent, together with *Mary Bird*, went to the House of *W—— P——*, Esq; a Justice of the Peace for the said County, and requested a Warrant to take up some of the Rioters; to which the said Justice answered him roughly, That he should have no Warrant: And farther said, That he, and the rest of the Justices in the Neighbourhood, had concluded and agreed to grant us no Warrants. And this Deponent further saith, That he himself hath sustained Damage by the Rioters, to the Value of 50 *l* and upwards: And that neither he, nor any other Person, who hath sustained Damage by them, are able to bring the said Rioters to Justice; because not any of the above mentioned

tioned Justices of the Peace, will grant any Warrant to apprehend them.

Such is the Liberty of Conscience which Protestants grant one another ! Does not he that is higher than the Highest regard it ?

34. *Wednesday, Oct. 19. 1744.* I *John Wesley* came to *Birmingham*, in my Way to *Newcastle*. *Thursday, Oct. 20.* several Persons from *Wensbury* earnestly desired me to call there. I yielded to their Importunity, and went. I was sitting and writing at *Francis Ward's*, in the Afternoon ; when the Cry arose, That the *Darleston* Mob had beset the House. I call'd together those that were in the House, and prayed, that God would scatter the People that delight in War. And it was so : One went one Way, and one another ; so that in half an Hour the House was clear on every Side. But, before Five, they returned with greater Numbers. The Cry of all was, " Bring out the Minister."

I desired one to bring the Captain of the Mob into the House. After a few Words interchanged, the Lion was as a Lamb. I then desired him to bring in one or two more of the most angry of his Companions. He did so ; and, in two Minutes, their Mind was changed too. I then bade them who were in the Room make Way, that I might go out among the People. As soon as I was in the Midst of them, I said, " Here I am : " What do you want with me ? " Many cried out, " We want you to go with us to the Justice." I told them, " That I will with all my Heart." So I walked before, and two or three hundred of them followed, to *Bentley Hall*, two Miles from *Wensbury* : But a Servant came out, and told them, " Justice Lane was not to be spoken with." Here they were at a Stand, till one advised, to go to Justice *Persehouse*, at *Waljal*. About Seven we came to his House : But he also sent word,

down, and others much hurt, the rest ran away, and left me in their Hands.

To attempt to speak was vain, the Noise being like that of taking a City by Storm: So they dragged me along till we came to the Town, at a few hundred Yards Distance; where, seeing the Door of a large House open, I endeavoured to go in: But a Man, catching me by the Hair, (my Hat having been caught away at the Beginning) pull'd me back into the Middle of the Mob; who were as so many ramping and roaring Lions. They hurried me from thence, through the main Street, from one End of the Town to the other. I continued speaking all the Time to those within hearing, feeling no Pain or Weariness. At the West End of the Town, seeing a Door half open, I made towards it, and would have gone in; but a Gentleman in the Shop would not suffer me, saying, "They would pull the House down, if I did." However, here I stood, and asked, "Are you willing to hear me speak?" Many cried out, "No, no: Knock his Brains out." Others said, "Nay; but we *will* hear him speak first." I began asking, "What Hurt have I done you? Whom among you have I wronged in Word or Deed?" And continued speaking till my Voice fail'd. Then the Floods lifted up their Voice again; many crying out, "Bring him away, bring him away."

Feeling my Strength renewed, I spoke again, and broke out aloud into Prayer. And now, one of the Men who had headed the Mob before, turned, and said, "Sir, Follow me: Not a Man shall touch a Hair of your Head." Two or three more confirmed his Words. At the same Time the Mayor (for it was he that stood in the Shop) cried out, "For Shame, for Shame; let him go." An honest Butcher spoke to the same Effect; and seconded his Words by laying hold of four or five, one after another, who were running on the most fiercely. The People then dividing to the Right and Left, those three or four Men who had spoken before, took me between them, and carried me through the Midst; bitterly protesting, "they would knock down any that touched him:" But, on the Bridge, the Mob rallied again: We therefore went on one Side; over a Mill-dam,

Dam, and thence thro' the Meadows, till a little after Ten, God brought me safe to *Wensbury*, having lost only a Part of my Waistcoat, and a little Skin from one of my Hands.

I never saw such a Chain of Providences before; so many convincing Proofs, that the Hand of God is on every Person and Thing, over-ruling all as it seemeth him good.

Among these I cannot but reckon the Circumstances that follow: 1. That they endeavoured abundance of Times to trip me up, as we went down Hill, over the wet slippery Grass to the Town; as well judging, that if I was once on the Ground, I should hardly rise again: But I made no Slip, nor the least Stumble at all, till I was entirely out of their Hands. 2. That altho' many strove to lay hold on my Collar, or Cloaths, they could not fasten at all; their Fingers, I cannot tell how, slipping along, without fixing once: Only one Man seiz'd the Flap of my Waistcoat, and took it away with him; the other Flap, in the Pocket of which was a Twenty Pound Bank Note, was torn but half off. 3. That a lusty Man just behind, struck at me many Times with a large Oaken Stick; with which, if he had struck me once on the Back of the Head, I should probably have preach'd no more: But every Time the Blow was turn'd aside, I know not how; for I could not move to the Right-hand or Left. 4. That another Man came rushing thro' the Press, raised his Arm to strike, let it sink again, and stroking my Head, said, "What soft Hair he has? I can't find in my Heart to hurt him." 5. That I went as streight to the Mayor's Door, when I was a little loosed, for a few Moments, as if I had known it, (which they probably thought I did) and found him standing in the Shop, which gave the first Check to the Fury of the People. 6. That no Creature (at least within my Hearing) laid any thing to my Charge. either

ing I cannot tell) "Crucify the Dog, crucify him."

By how gentle Degrees does God prepare us, either for doing or suffering his Will! Two Years since, one threw at me a Piece of Brick, which grazed on my Shoulder, but hurt me not. It was a Year after, that another threw a Stone, which struck me between the Eyes: But the Hurt was soon healed; and still no Man had Power to lay a Hand upon me. At *St Ives*, last Month, I received one Blow, the first I ever had, on the Side of the Head; and this Night two, one before we came into the Town, and one after I was gone out into the Meadows. But tho' one Man struck me on the Breast with all his Might, and the other on the Mouth, so that the Blood gushed out, I felt no more Pain from either of the Blows, than if they had touch'd me with a Straw.

— *Oct. 22. 1743.*

"*Lo, I come! If this Soul and Body may be useful to any thing, to do thy Will, O God. And if it please thee to use the Power thou hast over Dust and Ashes, over weak Flesh and Blood, over a brittle Vessel of Clay, over the Work of thine own Hands; lo, here they are, to suffer also thy good Pleasure. If thou please to visit me either with Pain or Dishonour, I will humble myself under it, and thro' thy Grace, be obedient unto Death, even the Death upon the Cross. Whatsoever may befall me either from Neighbours or Strangers, since it is Thou employest them, tho' they know it not, (unless thou help me to some lawful Means of redressing the Wrong) I will not open my Mouth before the Lord who smiteth me, except only to bless the Lord. Hereafter no Man can take away any thing from me, no Life, no Honour, no Estate: Since I am ready to lay them down, as soon as I perceive Thou requirest them at my Hands. Nevertheless, O Father, if Thou be willing, remove this Cup from me; but if not, thy will be done. Whatever Sufferings hereafter may trouble my Flesh, or whatever Agonies may trouble my Spirit, O Father, into thy Hand will I commend my Life, and all that concerneth it. And if thou be pleased, either that I live, yet a while, or not, I will, with my Saviour bow down my Head; I will humble myself under him; I will give up all Thou art pleased to ask, and at last I give up the Ghost."*

W. S.