

DID THE WESLEYS USE TAVERN, DRINKING SONGS AS MELODIES FOR THEIR HYMNS?

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There is a popular misconception that continues to survive among United Methodists that John and Charles Wesley made use of tavern, drinking, or bar songs, as melodies for their hymns. The same is often heard of the great reformer and musician, Martin Luther. This claim is sometimes made to show the extent of their evangelistic zeal; namely, that they would go out into the secular culture, even into the taverns, saloons, and parlors frequented by the sinners they sought to redeem and make use of the musical language, the familiar drinking song tunes, for their own sacred hymns. The claim continues to be made today by some musicians, pastors, worship leaders, composers, and hymn writers. Unfortunately, this is a misapplication of a historical inaccuracy.

<http://www.gbod.org/resources/did-the-wesleys-really-use-drinking-song-tunes-for-their-hymns>