

'NON-AUTHENTICATED' REGISTERS BEFORE 1837

Quite independently of parish records, Baptists quite often kept their own church's record of births, marriages and deaths. Not all churches kept records, and by no means have all survived. Following the 1837 introduction of civil registration, the law required all these nonconformist registers to be surrendered to the Registrar-General who was then empowered to issue from them certificates which would have the force of law. More recently these 'Non-Parochial Registers', as they are called, passed into the custody of the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1LR, where they are classified 'RG.4'.

Although the greatest concentration of surviving Non-Parochial registers is to be found at the Public Record Office, and these are all listed in a catalogue which was published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office in 1859, under the title *Lists of Non-Parochial Registers and Records in the Custody of the Registrar-General of Births, Deaths, and Marriages*, there are others which were not surrendered, partly because of the deep independence of spirit of many custodians and partly because registration was often done in Church Books which also included minutes and other records.

Indeed, these records were not always kept in the church buildings, but in the private homes of church officers. Some of these non-surrendered records have found their way to County Record Offices, to Baptist Church House, London (these records were removed to Regent's Park College, Oxford, in 1985), or to other repositories such as the Strict Baptist Historical Society or the Gospel Standard Baptist Library, whilst some remain in the custody of the churches to which they relate. Some records not previously surrendered have subsequently been deposited in the PRO, where they are described as 'Non-Authenticated Registers' and separately classified 'RG.8'. The Baptist registers in this class are:

RG.8/2	Cambridgeshire, Wisbech	Births & Baptisms Deaths & Burials Marriages	1700-1837 1706-1823 1715-1818
RG.8/5	Devonshire, Ashwater	Births	1828-1837
RG.8/10	Devonshire, Devonport, Morice Square	Baptisms Burials	1785-1794 1781-1806
RG.8/13	Kent, Chatham, Providence Chapel. Brook	Births	1814-1837
RG.8/15	Kent, Dover, Pentside Chapel	Births	1809-1837
RG.8/30	Lincolnshire, Kirton Lindsey	Births	1780-1837
RG.8/75	London, Southwark, St Olave, Maze Pond	Burials	1795-1853

RG 8/80	Norfolk, Diss, Roydon, and other places in Norfolk and Suffolk	Births, and a few Marriages and Deaths	1780-1834
RG.8/66	Suffolk, various places	Burials, a few entries of Deaths and a Marriage	1780-1834
RG.8/103	WALES, Carmarthen, Cwmnfelyn, Llanwnio Particular Baptist	Births	1779-1828

GEOFFREY R. BREED *Kent Baptist Association Archivist*

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THE ASSOCIATION OF DENOMINATIONAL HISTORICAL SOCIETIES AND COGNATE LIBRARIES

This Association was formally constituted at a meeting at Dr Williams's Library on 29 October 1993. The objectives are to facilitate the exchange of information among members by means of a newsletter, an annual meeting, and occasional conferences, and to encourage research into the denominational and related traditions, with special reference to projects which encompass more than one tradition.

Founders include the Baptist, Congregational, Friends', Unitarian, United Reformed, Welsh Baptist, Welsh Independents, Welsh Presbyterian and Wesley historical societies, together with such bodies having related interests as the Chapels Society, the Huguenot Society, and the Religious Archives Group of the Religious Society of Friends. Library members include Dr Williams's Library, the Friends' Library, the Huguenot Library, the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, the Angus Library, Regent's Park College, the Wesley Historical Society Library, and the libraries of Manchester and Mansfield Colleges, Oxford, Westminster College, Cambridge, and Wesley College, Bristol. Elected to serve as the committee were the Revd Professor Alan P. F. Sell of Aberystwyth (convener), Mr Malcolm Thomas (secretary) and Mr David J. Hall (treasurer), both of the Friends' Historical Library, Mr Gareth Lloyd of the John Rylands Library (newsletter editor), and the Revd J. E. Wynne Davies of the Presbyterian Church of Wales Historical Society.

The annual meeting will be held at the Dr Williams's Library on Thursday, 27 October 1994 at 2 p.m. The first conference will be at Westhill College, Selly Oak, Birmingham, 28-30 July 1995. Speakers from member bodies will be invited to discuss the contribution of the several traditions to Birmingham and the West Midlands.