

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_tbhs\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_tbhs_01.php)

## Baptists in Recent Publications.

Historical study has suffered severe loss in the death of the Rev. Bryan Dale, late Secretary of the Yorkshire Congregational Union. His literary executors have issued a volume on Yorkshire Puritanism and Early Nonconformity, consisting of 219 biographies of ministers who suffered about 1660-1672, and were connected with that county. By the kindness of the Rev. John Haslam, D.D., F.R.Hist.S., a few items of information as to Baptists are extracted.

William Kaye, of a good family at Topcliffe, obtained possession of the rectory of Stokesley, when Thomas Pennyman was sequestered during the civil war. In July 1653 he became a Baptist by the instrumentality of the Hexham church, as has long been known to us; but whereas Crosby led us to think he thereupon left the rectory, this proves not to be the case. In 1657 he was scheduled as one of the Visitors for the proposed University of Durham, and the register of Stokesley has many entries of the birth and death of his children till 1660, when we read, "Charles II. was restored to the kingdom and in the same year Thomas Pennyman was restored to the rectory of Stokesley." The only further news may be contained in the entry, "1690, July 4. William Kaye of Stokesley buried." These entries necessitate corrections in Vol. I., pages 32 and 40.

At Bridlington, Nonconformist services were conducted by the ejected perpetual curate, William Luck, and the cause he founded still exists. Among his earliest hearers was Robert Prudom, who became a Baptist, and on 18th September, 1698, was ordained pastor of a new church in the presence of the pastors of Muggleswick and Pontefract.

Jeremiah Marsden preached at Wirrall, Blackburn, Heapey, Allerton, Thornton, Halifax, Whalley, High Shuttleworth; he was approved by the Tryers on the recommendation of Tombes, and went to Ireland, Kendal and Carlow; all this between 1649 and 1659. Then he succeeded John Canne as preacher to the garrison in Hull under Colonel Robert Overton, and actually stayed fifteen months: this is almost the first time that he came into contact with Baptists. Yet he felt no qualms about accepting an invitation in 1661 to take the living at West Ardesley, where he preached till Bartholomew's Day in 1662. Being accused—apparently with perfect justice—of fomenting the Farnley Wood plot, he fled to London and assumed the name of Ralphson; then retired

to Henley, where for the first time he was imprisoned in 1675. He was invited to succeed Hardcastle at Broadmead, and Carmichael at Lothbury, but could not settle down, preaching occasionally at Founders' Hall and Dyers' Hall. In the reaction after the Popish plot he was imprisoned in Newgate with Bampfield and Delaune; and the latter tells us that he died there about February, 1684.

Jonathan Grant, vicar of Ashley near Kidderminster, had a Baptist wife: the debate between Baxter and Tombes at Bewdley, led her to give up her views.

In the account of Samuel Eaton, facts are blended about two men who were carefully distinguished at the time. One was born in Cheshire and except for 1637-1640 in New England, spent all his public life in that county, dying in 1665. The other Samuel Eaton was a button maker of St. Giles without Cripplegate in London, known as in trouble with the High Commission 1632-1639, when he was buried in Bunhill Fields. The Cheshire rector became a leader of Congregationalism in the north: the Londoner was "baptized" on profession of his faith by John Spilsbury, and became an ardent Anabaptist. See Volume I., pages 214, 219, 220, 252.

### Regent's Park College. A Centenary Memorial.

An excellent little book of 108 pages has been issued by the principal of the college, president of this society, to commemorate the completion of a hundred years' work. He modestly says that the students are more important in the history of a college than its managers or tutors, but lest he should be drawn on into writing a large book, he contents himself with careful lists of all; presidents, professors and tutors, lecturers, treasurers, secretaries, alumni, lay students. To look over the lists, for one who has had no official connection with the college, is to realise faintly what it has been for the denomination, when personal links can be recognised with at least one man in every column. From such a theme Principal Gould warns us off.

There is a preliminary chapter dealing with earlier London Baptist attempts at education, as to which we may attend more closely. Then come sketches of William Taylor, Joseph Gutteridge, and William Newman, the founders. The story of thirty years follows, the installation in "an ancient keep and gateway of deep-red brick, popularly known as King John's Tower," with more modern buildings adjoining, and the successful start by Newman, followed up by Murch. The next twenty years show how Joseph Angus brought the college into touch with the new University of London, how he rescued it from disaster, and arranged for the work to be transferred to the west. Then comes the admission of lay students, a manful effort to provide higher education under Baptist auspices for the sons of Nonconformists, the return of Dr. Benjamin

Davies. The steady endowment of the college was practically accomplished in this period, though three chairs were only founded in the next. A brief chapter deals with what many know from experience; the founding of the *Senatus Academicus*, co-operation with other colleges, affiliation with the new University. The whole story is worthily told, and closes with the outline of a worthy policy for the future.

Its appearance tempts to look at the early state of education among London Baptists, and the "Academies" of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The notices of the latter, whether by Bogue and Bennett, or in the calendars of the *Senatus Academicus*, are silent about early Baptist work; there is hardly even a chapter heading as on the famous precedent of "Snakes in Iceland," with the text—There are no snakes in Iceland.

Early Baptists were not enamoured of a professional ministry, whereas they were very strong in their insistence that a man be called by God to preach; consequently, the closing of the Universities to Nonconformists hardly attracted their attention. We have shown in our first number that the only ex-clergy connected with Baptist churches in London under Charles II. were Abbot, Bampffield, Denne, Dike, Gosnold, Hardcastle, Harrison, Jessey, Knowles, Maisters, Oates, Wise, and perhaps Palmer. There is some evidence that a few of these and of their country brethren desired to provide for the continuance of an educated ministry, and Principal Gould points out that the Assembly of 1689 was called partly for this object. But he also quotes from the epistle of 1693 to show that this very attempt contributed to the cessation of the London Assemblies, proving that Londoners at least were distinctly averse to such training; though Bristol favoured, and had made a beginning in 1680.

The technical phrase of these days was, Academy. This really meant a private school where a minister took pupils to board in his house, and coached them for the ministry. Some such private ventures became very popular, boarders were sent by brother ministers from their congregations, rich dissenters would send their sons, as the universities were closed to them though they did not aim at the ministry. We should expect that many out of the hundreds of Presbyterians ejected would have opened such private schools, until we recollect that even to be a schoolmaster was difficult under the Act of Uniformity, and was not too easy under the Act of Toleration. The day had not yet arrived when a man who had failed in other walks of like could open Dotheboys Hall without license from a bishop. Of the few Baptist ministers who had been clergy and did open schools, we only know Knowles in London, for John Evans at Wrexham is hardly to be esteemed Baptist. Fourteen Presbyterians up and down the land are known doing the same thing, with five in London.

Under William III. and George I. the conditions were more

favourable from the side of government. The Congregational Fund Board was founded in 1695, and next year appointed a tutor, putting him so distinctly under their patronage that they soon forbade him to take other pupils than those they sent. The precedent was followed in 1702 by the General Baptists in Association resolving "that there be a school of universal learning erected in and about this city in order to bring up persons (who by the grace of God shall be soberly inclined) to the work of the ministry." But it is hard to trace what was done, and by 1732 the Assembly was only encouraging the elders generally to foster the gifts of the younger ministers in their churches. Meanwhile a more organised attempt was initiated in 1717 by the establishment of the Particular Baptist Fund "more especially for the support and maintenance of honourable ministers, and providing for a succession of such." Principal Gould points out that the appeal was addressed exclusively to congregations in and about London. It is interesting to notice that New College and Regent's Park College, closely associated with these two funds, maintain friendly co-operation to-day. Meanwhile, the old Academies were still being added to. At Trowbridge, the Baptist pastor, John Davisson, kept such a school, and when he died in 1721, his successor in the pastorate, Thomas Lucas, succeeded also to the Academy. This attracted the attention of the great Paul's Alley church in London, which had accumulated an excellent library, and in 1737 some of the books were presented to the Academy; a fact which suggests that a semi-public status was being acquired here also. But though a pupil here, William Waldron, succeeded as pastor in 1743, the Academy seems to have flickered out, and he supported himself as a clothier.

The next step was taken about 1752. Caleb Ashworth, son of a Lancashire Baptist minister, was appointed by the Coward Trustees to take charge of the Congregational students hitherto under Philip Doddridge at Northampton, and they were moved to board with him at Daventry. It was provoking to see the talents of the denomination turned to account outside its borders, and several London Baptists founded an Education Society for assisting students, whose attainments and hypercalvinism would be assured under the superintendance of Dr. Stennett and Dr. Gill, with Wallin and Brine. Principal Gould describes the misfortunes of this venture, its connection with Bristol and Rawdon, and its final merging with the Particular Baptist Fund.

Another attempt was made at this time by Dr. John Ward, professor at Gresham College, who put stock in trust during 1745 for educating to the ministry English Baptists, or, failing them, other Nonconformists. This plan was not connected with any special place, although it emanated from London.

Under the influence of the evangelical revival of Whitfield and the Wesleys, there was a general impulse to education, which led first

among the Baptists to the Rhode Island College in America. Then at Bristol, the Baptist ministers co-operated, a sign that the old private-school system was evolving to something more permanent. The Societas Evangelica in 1778 appointed three tutors, and presently took over premises in Hoxton Square where two previous private schools had been conducted. A private academy at Newport Pagnel which had already trained a young Baptist, was put on a more public footing by the famous John Newton of Olney in 1783, and the name of Charles Williams will remind us that it continued to prepare for the Baptist ministry. Then John Sutcliffe at the Baptist Church in Olney took in pupils on the familiar private plan, while John Fawcett at Ewood Hall in Yorkshire did the same.

The General Baptists were next to realise new conditions, and in 1794 the ancient General Assembly opened an annual subscription, which by 1796 was training a student. This provoked the New Connexion to emulation, and on 11th December, 1797, a committee met to organise a General Baptist Academy, which meant as heretofore that boarders were taken in Dan Taylor's private house at Mile End.

Out of Fawcett's boarding school arose in 1804 the Northern Baptist Education Society, backed by men like Robert Hall and John Sutcliffe, who ultimately bequeathed his library. This roused the Londoners again, and Abraham Booth urged a fresh attempt, which resulted in a plan to board out students with an approved minister for two years. Next arose the Welsh and English Baptist Education Society, founded at Abergavenny, close to the ancient church of Llanbadarn fawr.

Thus there were not only numerous Pædobaptist institutions of various kinds at Wrexham, Wymondley, Rotherham, Idle, Axminster, Cheshunt; and Baptist colleges on a society basis with premises of their own at Bristol and Bradford; but there were two General Baptist academies in London itself, while the Calvinistic Baptists here could not be persuaded to go beyond exhibitions—to use a modern phrase—tenable under very lax supervision. And this when Pædobaptists had academies at Homerton, Hoxton and Hackney.

Now William Newman had been assistant at Enfield in the school opened by J. C. Ryland, senior, and had thus been won to Baptist views, as Principal Gould tells with sympathy. When he took charge of the Old Ford church, he opened a day school, and presently established a boarding school at Bromley. Mr. William Taylor saw that the time had come, and the man, so he presented £3,600 to buy premises; by February, 1810, the Education Society of 1804 decided to support the new venture, while the Particular Baptist Fund was brought into close harmony by giving its managers the right to appoint future trustees. London Baptists at last took a natural place in the development of the denomination, and the pages of Principal Gould's booklet show what we owe to them.

**Seventh Day Baptists in Europe and America. Historical Papers. 1500 pages in 2 volumes.**

The paper on Peter Chamberlen by our Treasurer, Dr. Thirtle, which was read in brief at our April meeting, and whose concluding part is printed in this number, has brought us into touch with the Seventh-Day Baptists of America. They have favoured us with several of their publications. Their Year-book of nearly 300 pages shows that they are organised in six associations, 73 churches containing 6,000 members. Their educational work culminates in a University at Alfred in New York: the theological department alone includes about forty students: there is a strong normal department to prepare teachers for the numerous denominational schools; twelve professors and four tutors form the headquarters staff, and there are endowments of about £70,000 besides the buildings and equipment.

When the centenary was celebrated of establishing a conference in 1802, it was decided to draw up a series of historical papers. There has been such a generous response to the request for information and pictures, that finally two enormous volumes, profusely illustrated, have been issued, which contain all that an enquirer can want in the first instance. We are not competent to appraise the value of the American work; but ninety pages are given in one volume to the Seventh-Day Baptists in the British Isles, with pictures of Mill Yard, Bull-stake Alley, Natton in Gloucestershire, and portraits of leaders like Chamberlen, the Stennetts, W. H. Black and others more recent.

Another section records all publications by Seventh-Day Baptists or bearing on their peculiar tenets; another gives biographical sketches, and these eighty pages again have much of interest, especially in the cross lights thrown by four different authors.

Much critical work may be done on the English sections by those who have the advantage of more general information. It is interesting to note that the greatest number of Seventh-Day Baptist churches supposed to have existed in the British Isles since 1600, amounts to thirty, met in every division of the kingdom. Here is one quaint item: "About the year 1825, there came to Banagher from the north of Ireland a certain Charles Monk, who was a Protestant and a Sabbath-keeper, probably also a preacher. He established a school to fit young men for Trinity College, Dublin. Very soon he gathered about him a little band of Sabbath keepers, who met for regular worship in the chapel of Mr. Monk's Academy. One of the converts was William Buchanan, one of the local lords, who was a man of marked individuality. He, with his wife and family, lived in a large stone castle on one side of the village; and it was source of diversion to the children of the village to gather of a Saturday and watch him drive by in his fine equipage, with gilded harness and liveried servants, on the way to church."

There is quite a list of notable English adherents, including Thomas Bampfield, the speaker of Parliament in 1659, John Belcher, who was a source of terror to Charles' spies, Christopher Pooley, of Norwich, another great evangelist, the famous Stennett family, Nathan Bailey the lexicographer, Professor William Whiston [?], Sir William Tempest, F.R.S., W. H. Black, F.S.A., and many hardly known outside the body.

The volumes are admirably indexed, printed and bound, and are a distinct accession to our nascent library.

### The Tombs in Bunhill Fields.

The Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society for September, 1910, contain an article dealing with the burials at the Bonehill in Finsbury from 1549. It explains minutely the steps by which part of this ground became practically a Dissenters' cemetery till further interments were forbidden in 1852, and till this part was dedicated to public use in 1869. Full justice is done to the labours of Dr. Rippon and Mr. J. A. Jones in their transcripts and memoirs, and a reminder is given that the official registers of all burials from 1713 onwards are accessible at Somerset House. Then on the basis of Mr. Jones' "Bunhill Memorials," and the plan by the City Lands Committee, a map is given showing the tombs where rest 260 ministers and 55 laymen.

We miss, with some surprise, any reference to the interment here of Samuel Eaton on 25 August, 1639, as reported in the State papers; this fact, to which we drew attention a year ago, quite dispels the doubt expressed on page 348 whether burials took place here between 1561 and 1662; moreover, the tone of the report suggests that burials did take place here often. Three Baptists mentioned in these lists are not so identified; Francis Smith, the General Baptist of Cornhill and Croydon; Nehemiah Cox, pastor of Petty France, formerly a minister of Bedford; and John Gammon, at whose meeting in Boar's Head Yard, Bunyan preached his last sermon. Cox is given the title M.D., he is sometimes called D.D., we should like to know the authority for styling him Doctor in any faculty; he was a cord-wainer originally. There are three doubtful cases, Professor John Ward of Gresham College, Daniel Defoe as to whose exact denomination we have never seen a clue, and Anthony Palmer, M.A., of Pinners' Hall; though in these lists he is classed as Baptist, every new fact about him seems to class him rather with Pædo-baptists; when he was at Bourton, a Baptist church was there, to which he did not belong, but belonged to another in the same town.

The lists give the names of seventeen Baptists known to be buried here, with nothing to mark their tombs, and of forty-five whose tombs are known. The very earliest recorded here is of Henry Jessey in 1663; before that century ran out, there were laid to rest Vavasor

Powell, Gosnold of Paul's Alley, Dike of Devonshire Square and Bunyan, Nehemiah Cox, William Marnor, Francis Smith and Hanserd Knollys, Mordecai Abbot and John Gammon; while Kiffin hallowed the opening eighteenth century. In this it may suffice to mention Gale, Key, two Stennetts, Gill, MacGowan, Gifford. The nineteenth century saw here Dan Taylor, Joseph Hughes, Joseph Ivimey, and John Rippon.

### John Spencer, 1639-1672?

John Spencer's short treatise concerning the lawfulness of every man exercising his gift as God shall call him thereunto, is reprinted in the September issue of the Transactions of the Congregational Historical Society. The editor regrets that so little is known about a man who gave such a fine lead as to lay-preaching.

It is well known that out of his Crutched Fryers church of 1639, there departed Paul Hobson, who in 1644, was both a Captain and head of a Baptist church. The treatise reprinted was replied to in February 1642; and on 30 March, Spencer preached at St. Michael, subsequently printing the sermon: E 135 (29) and E 145 (10) at the British Museum. Yet another answer to him was published on 14 March, 1643-4, "Lay-Preaching Unmasked," E 37 (14). After this he is not certainly identified.

We suggest that he may be the Captain Spencer who was heard on 22 November, 1652, praying at London House for a new Parliament; who in the Clarke papers of 1658, figures as a Baptist, objecting to the accession of Richard Cromwell as Lord Protector; the Captain Spencer who in 1669 was reported to the bishop of Lincoln as having a congregation of 400 Anabaptists at Hertford, with three places openly fitted up; the John Spencer who in 1672 took out a licence to conduct Anabaptist worship at the house of Anthony Spinage in Cheshunt.

### Anabaptist, Baptist, Antipædobaptist.

Murray's Oxford Dictionary is very disappointing as to the history of these words. Contributions are invited as to the earliest use of each. "Anabaptist" is quoted there as used first by Sir Thomas More when confuting Tindale in 1532. "Baptist" is quoted there as used first by W. Britten in his book called *The Moderate Baptist*: but on 31 May, 1644, I.E. published a tract, *The Anabaptists Groundwork* found false, on page twenty-three of which he asks Thomas Lamb "and the rest of those Baptists, or Dippers, that will not be called Anabaptists" what rule they have for their manner of dipping? The word "Anti-pædobaptist" is not given at all by Murray. It is used freely by Christopher Blackwood, in his *Apostolical Baptisme*, published 13 January, 1645-6: and at page 55 he explains it, as if it were a word newly coined and needing justification. See page 78 of this issue.