

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

Notes.

Lymington.

The History of the Baptist Church, Lymington, Hants, from 1688 to 1909. Compiled from various documents, by the Rev. Thomas Douglas, Pastor; 1s. 6d.; 2s.; 2s. 6d.

This shapely quarto of 124 pages is an excellent example of how a busy pastor may set forth the story of his community. For the early days, Commonwealth tracts, bishop's reports, royal licences, parish records have been consulted; and they enable a picture to be drawn of Thomas Collier evangelising in the west, and scattering Baptist seed by 1646, which had flowered by 1672 and was yielding a good harvest in the times of William and Mary. Then the valuable Whitchurch papers have been examined, and the minutes of Association for 1698 have been printed in full, with extracts from those of 1701. But the church records before 1769 seem to have preserved nothing of any interest. With 1809 the church entered on a new era, having the ministry of several men whose work made them well known. In this sketch no narrow view is taken, and the career both before and after their residence at Lymington is given; while no pains have been spared to obtain portraits of the men, and of the buildings due to their labours, and at least in footnotes to dilate on their families and converts. The scale of the book naturally expands as the author speaks of events within his knowledge, and thus a very good picture is given of the existing activities. A table at the beginning sums up the pastorates. The one feature which the historical scholar will baulk at is the Introduction, explicitly claiming Baptist continuity from apostolic days. Better than this, or anything of the kind, which demands other gifts than painstaking local research, would be a longer sketch of work in the county, or a summary of external events in the town affecting the church.

Biggleswade.

History of the Old Meeting Baptist Church, Biggleswade, by the Rev. C. H. Chaplin, Pastor. 1s.

Fifty pages of letterpress, with a few portraits, contain many interesting local notices. Three pages at the start give an idea of the

town, and its great fire of 1785 which proved a turning point in the story of the church. Lists of Baptist and Independent causes in the county, also of the pastors at Biggleswade, give the reader an idea of the outline before he reads the continuous story. This is naturally based on the church book, many extracts from which are given verbatim. But as the extant book dates from after the fire, the tradition had grown up that the church originated only in 1771; whereas the author found that it was flourishing in 1715, with a congregation of 300, and he also found traces of Baptist work in the neighbourhood—as far back as 1654. Unfortunately these discoveries come to hand rather late, and he had not the courage to cancel three or four pages and rewrite them. The result is that for the period before 1785, the information is scattered about, retractions and corrections perplex the reader. But for the later period there is a very graphic account.

Bromsgrove.

The Puritan Vicars of Bromsgrove, and the rise of Local Nonconformity in the 17th century. By James Ford, F.R.Hist.S., Baptist Minister. 3d.

In this brochure of twenty pages, Mr. Ford deals with the interesting period 1624-1662. He has examined State papers and accounts, and interpreted their bare records so as to set before us a sturdy vicar, upholding Puritanism in a county predominantly royalist, and indoctrinating the town till it became a stronghold of Nonconformity, when his son-in-law and successor quitted the Establishment. A second chapter shows the still sturdier dissenters, who disdained all alliance with the State. Brief notice is given of the neighbouring churches, including Bewdley, from which came the Baptist impulse which resulted in a Bromsgrove church by 1666. Two thoughtful lectures, such as these, might be prepared and given in many towns.

Query.—Hodges, Benjamin or Nathaniel?

The anonymous "Impartial History of Michael Servetus," 1724, has usually been ascribed to Sir Benjamin Hodges, sometimes to Sir Nathaniel Hodges. Nathaniel Hodges was a some time Baptist minister, who received knighthood, and (according to his epitaph in Stepney Churchyard) died on 27 August, 1727, aged 52. Who was Sir Benjamin Hodges?

A. G.

Cambridge.

When Dr. Rippon was collecting material for his Baptist Register, he applied to the old and important church on St. Andrew's Street, Cambridge, then under the care of Robert Hall. The reply of the latter on 16 February 1801 shows that history was a study which did not interest the preacher:—

Dear Sir, I thank you for the baptist register you were so kind as to send me. With respect to my sending the church book I do not apprehend it would quite meet the wishes of our friends.

With respect to the sketches of the History of Churches it does not strike me to be of any particular utility. The records of particular churches are made for the benefit of that church, nor do I perceive any benefit resulting from their being exposed to public inspection. You are pleased to request me to draw up the history of our church for your register but such an undertaking would be utterly inconsistent with my other avocations and designs.

I am yours &c.,

R. HALL.

Grundisburgh.

Mr. Samuel Thompson of Beckenham has reprinted the life of his ancestor, who founded this little Suffolk church; also Mr. Bland's account of the centenary meeting and historical sketch in 1898. The extraordinary riots at Wickham Market show that religious liberty was not understood in the days of the French Revolution. The story of how from an obscure village, seven Baptist churches were formed in twenty-seven years, may inspire other country pastors to undertake Home Mission work.