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Baptists in the State Papers.

The Public Record Office, between Chancery Lane and Fetter Lane contains documents of all sorts which belong to the King as King, from Domesday Book onwards. Since 1854 they have been brought into the custody of the Master of the Rolls, and calendars are being prepared and published to guide searchers. Those who study for historical purposes are afforded every facility, freely.

For Baptist purposes, the series of most value are the State Papers, Domestic, from Charles I. to William and Mary; while occasional papers are to be found in the Irish series and the Colonial series. From the calendars certain items have been selected by the editor, and are being copied from the originals, a few by Mr. Horace Warde, M.A., others by Mr. J. Leslie Chown. The editor supplies a heading to each extract, and occasional notes in brackets.

THE HIGH COMMISSION.

... **W**E . . . do by these our letters patents under our great seal of England give and grant full free and lawful power and authority unto . . . any three or more of you . . . to enquire . . . of all and singular apostasies, heresies, great errors in matters of faith and religion, schisms, unlawful conventicles tending to schism against the religion or government of the Church now established; and also of all persons which have [refused] or shall refuse to have their children baptized . . .

§ iii, *repeated from Patent Roll, 9 Jac. I, Part 18; printed by Prothero, Select Statutes, Oxford, 1898, page 425.*

[Similar commissions were issued from 1559, and the commissioners formed the supreme ecclesiastical court. Laud became archbishop of Canterbury and head of the commission in 1633; next year he turned his attention specially to Protestant conventicles. To this he was prompted by a letter from Joseph Hall, bishop

of Exeter, who had been troubled about Separatists for more than twenty years, having known Smyth and Robinson. Of the eleven churches he had heard of in London, two are known to be Baptist, and a third became such. The others are not identified as having survived the enquiry, instigated by Laud. The three interesting to us are:—The 1612 church of Helwys and Murton, which then met in Spitalfields, the leaders being soon confined in Newgate prison; General Baptist. The 1616 church of Henry Jacob, in 1632 under John Lathorp; Calvinist Separatists; as to these see *Transactions*, i. 203-250, and a document below. The 1624 church of Elias Tookey, in Southwark; General Baptist; as to this see iv. 228. Most of the High Commission records have been deliberately destroyed, after the abolition of the court; but a few have survived.]

SARAH JONES, MARK LUCAR, SAMUEL EATON, &c.

IN THE COURT OF HIGH COMMISSION, 3 MAIJ, 1632
 This day were brought to the Court out of prison divers persons (and some of them appeared by bond) which were taken on Sunday last at a Conventicle mett at the house of [Humphrey] Barnett, a brewer's clarke, dwelling in the precinct of Black Fryars: by name, John Latroppe their minister, Humphrey Bernard, Henry Dod, Samuell Eaton, [William] Granger, Sara Jones, Sara Jacob, Pennina Howse, Sara Barbon, Susan Wilson; and divers other there were which appeared not this day. . . . Samuel Eaton and two women and a maid appeared, who were demanded why they were assembled in that Conventicle when others were at church? *Eaton*. "We were not assembled in contempt of the Magistrate." *London* [*Laud*]. "Noe, it was in contempt of the church of England. *Eaton*. "It was in conscience to God, (May it please this Hono^{ble} Court) and, we

were kept from Church, for we were confyned in the house together by those that besett the house, els divers would have gone to Church and manie came in after the sermons were done." *London*. "These were first discovered at Lambeth, and then at other places and now taken heere, they have in their meetinge booke printed against the Church of England": [*Abbot*] *Archbishop of Canterbury*. "Where were you in the morninge before you came hither to this house?" "We were in our owne families." *Canterbury*. "What did you?" "We read the Scriptures and catechized our families" saith Eaton: "and may it please this honourable Court to heare us speake the truth, we will shew you what was donne, and, free us from the contempt of authority, wee did nothing but what you will allow us to doe." *London*. "Who can free you? These are dangerous men, they are a scatterd companie sown in all the citty, and about St Michaell of the Querne, St Austins, Ould Jury, Redriffe, and other remoter places. Hould them the booke." *Eaton*. "I dare not sweare, nor take this oath, though I will not refuse it, I will consider of it." *St Henry Martin*. "Heare, heare, you shall sweare but to answeare what you know, and as far as you are bound by law. You shall have time to consider of it, and have it read over and over till you can say it without booke if you will, when you have first taken your oath that you will make a true answeare." *Eaton*. "I dare not, I know not what I shall sweare to." *King's Advocate*. "It is to give a true answeare to articles put into the Coart against you, or that shall be put in touching this conventicle of yours, and divers your hereticall tenents, and what wordes, and exercises you used, and things of this nature." *Eaton*. "I dare not."

Archbishop of Canterbury. "What say you, woman?" *S. Jones*. "I dare not worship God in

vaine." But saith *The Bishop of London*, "will you not sweare and take an oath when you are called to it by the Magistrate?" *S. Jones*. "Yes, I will answeare upon my oath to end a controversy before a lawful magistrate." *Earle of Dorsett*. "What, doest thou thinke woman of these grave Fathers of the church, that these heare be not lawful Magistrates?" [*Sara Jones*.] "I would doe any thing that is according to God's word." [*Harsnet*] *Archbishop of Yorke*. "Would you? Then you must take your oath, now you are required by your governours, you must sweare in truth, in judgement, in righteousnes." *S. Jones*. "Yes, and they that walk in righteousnes shall have peace, but I dare not forswear my selfe." . . . Soe they were all committed to the New Prison, and it was appointed, that at the next Court, being a fortnight after this, because of Ascention Day, they should be brought again to the Consistorie at Paules, because of trouble and danger in bringinge so manie prisoners as there were over the water to Lambeth.

IN THE COURT OF HIGH COMMISSION
AT THE CONSISTORY IN PAULES, 8 MAY, 1632.

. . . Then was called Marke Lucar: who was asked of what parish he was and when he was at church? *M. Lucar*. "I am yet to chuse of what parish to be; and I doe not remember the day of the moneth when I was at church." *London*. "He doth not remember, I dare say, the day of the moneth nor the moneth of the yeare when he was at church, but he dwelleth in St. Austin's parish. Offer him the booke." *M. Lucar*. "If I may knowe a law and ground for takeing this oath, I will take it, but I desire to know my articles before I take my oath." *Archbishop of Yorke*. "Whether doe you know or noe that the King hath power to take an account of your proceedings?" . . .

Samuell Eaton being demaunded whether he

would take the oath: he answered, "I doe not refuse it, though I doe not take it: it is not out of obstinacie, but, as I shall answere it at the Last day, I am not satisfied whether I may take it."

"*Samuel Howe!*" saith the *King's Advocate*, "you are required by your oath to answere to the articles." *Howe*. "I have served the King both by sea and by land, and I had been at sea if this restraint had not been made upon me. My conversation, thank God, none can tax." *Register*. "*Will you take the oath?*" *Howe*. "I am a yong man and doe not know what this oath is." *King's Advocate*. "The King desires your service in obeying his lawes." . . .

Abigail Delamar, a Frenchman's wife, was brought from the New prison to the Court, and required to take the oath. . . . *London*. "Her husband is the Queene's servant, and a stiffe Romanie Catholique, and she a deepe Familiste and Brownist, and one of the Conventiclars taken at Black Fryers, the last weeke there was a generall fast held in the prison, that they might be delivered out of prison. I gave order that all that came to them that day should be stayed. This woman came. . . . *Ab. Delemar*. "You persecute us without a cause: you have sent 26 of us to the prison, but since we were imprisoned what course have you taken to informe us? Which of you have sent anie man to us, or taken any paines to informe us? *London*. There was a day sett for them to answere at the Consistorie in Paules: but they have the last Sunday petitioned his Ma^{tie} shewing that it is not out of obstinacie, but they decline the Ecclesiasticall jurisdiction altogether." *King's Advocate*. "Woman, take your oath." *Ab. Delamar*. "Noe, this oath is condempned by the law of the land, and I refuse it as an accursed oath, and appeale to the Kinge." . . .

Rawlinson manuscript A 128, Bodleian, Oxford.

JOHN WHARTON, BEFORE THE HIGH
COMMISSION.

DEC. 14. 1635. OFFICIUM DNORUM CONT JOHEM
WHARTON DE BOW LANE LONDON CLOATHPRESSER

This day, & place the said John Wharton appeared personally, and being charged with receavinge & dispersing sundry seditions & schismaticall pamphletts & writings some abstracts whereof were lately found in his house, and being asked from whome he had them & to whome he had dispersed and delivered any of them, he refused to give any direct aunswere thereunto, and being demaunded whether he would give any sufficient bond for his apparance the next tearme to aunswere these premises, he absolutely refused to put in any, whereuppon he was for such his contempt committed to the prison of Newgate, and was ordered there to remaine untill he shall give bond with sufficient suretyes in one Hundred Marks to his Ma^{ties} vse for his forthcoming to aunswere Ar[ti]cles touching these premises.

State Papers Domestic, Charles I, 1635. Vol. 261, folio 307.

FRANCIS JONES RE-BAPTISED.

JAN 11-1635-6. OFFICIUM DNORU CONT FFRANCISCUS
JONES DE RATCLIFFE IN YE COM^t MIDDLE BASKET
MAKER

This day appeared personally Francis Jones of ye parish of Ratcliffe in the County of Middle Basket-maker, and being charged that he is a Scismatick Recusant and that hee hath long forborne to come to his Parish Church to heare divine Service said and to receive the holy communion asby the lawes of this realme is required, and hath & doth use to keepe private Conventicles and exercises of Religion by the lawes of this Realme prohibited, and that he is an

Annabaptist and being required to take his oath to make trew aunsweres to such Articles touching the premises only as are or shallbe obted against him so farr forth as hee knoweth & beleeveth & is bound by lawe according to ye tenour of his Ma^{ties} Comission under the great seale of England, he expressly refused to take his oath or to aunswere the said Arles, for which his contempt & for that he confeseth he had beene rebaptized was committed to Newgate

S.P.D. 261, 307*b*.

II FEBY 1635-6 OFFICIUM DNORU CONT JOHEM
WHARTON ET FFRANSICU JONES RAPTINOS
IN NEWGATE

They are to appeare under custody of the keep. Wharton appeared this day psonally and was comanded [back] because he refused to aunswere Articles

His wife desires her petitō to bee read. This day ye petitō of the said Wharton's wife was publicly read in Court declaring the great age & weake estate of the said Wharton. Upon consideration had whereof it was thought meete & so ordered by the Court, that in case the sd Wharton shall give sufficient bond for his apparance before his Ma^{ties} Comissioners the first Court day of Easter Tearme next & soe from time to time untill he shalbe licensed to departed that then paying his fees he should bee enlarged forth of prison.

S.P.D. 324, folios 3*b* and 8.

SEARCH FOR CONVENTICLES.

SEARCH-WARRANT GIVEN TO JOHN WRAGG
20 FEBY 1635-6

Whereas credible information hath bin given vnto vs of his Ma^{ties} Commissioners for causes ecclesiasticall, that there are at this present remaining in or neere the Cittie of London or suburbs thereof, and in manie

other parts within this kingdome of England, sundrie sorts of Separatists and sectaries, as namely Brownists, Anabaptists, Arrians, Thraskists, Familists, Sensualists, Antinomians, and some other sorts of sectaries & schismatiques, who refuse upon Sondaies and other festivall daies to come vnto their parish churches, there to joyne and participate with the parochiall congregation in diuine Service Sacraments and hearing of God's word preached, but have and doe ordinarily vse to meete together, in great numbers, on such daies and at other times in priuat houses and places, and there keepe and maintaine priuat Conuenticles and exercises of Religion by the lawes of this Realme prohibited, to the corrupting and peruerting of sundrie his Ma^{ties} good subjects and the manifest contempt of his Highnes lawes, and the disturbance of the peace of the Church. For reformation whereof; These are to will and require you in his Ma^{ties} name by vertue of his Highness Commission for causes ecclesiasticall under the great seale of England, to vs and others directed; that taking with you, a high or pettie Constable, and such other conuenient assistance as you shall think meet, you doe enter into anie house or place where you shall have intelligence, or probably suspect that any such priuat Conuenticles or meetings are held, kept, and frequented by anie such sectaries or schismatiques, and therein and euerie roome thereof you doe make diligent search for them as also for all vnlawfull and vnlicensed bookes, and seditions and vnlawfull writings and papers. And all and euerie such persons writings papers and bookes so found, to seize, apprehend and attache, or cause to be seized apprehended and attached, wheresoever they may be found, as well in places exempt as not exempt and that thereupon you deteine them in safe custodie, and bring them forthwith before vs, or others our Colleagues, his

Ma^{ties} Commissioners in that behalfe appointed, to be examined, dealt withall and disposed of, as shall be thought meet and agreeable to justice. And if it so fall out, that you cannot presently bring vnto vs the said persons, that then you committ them vnto the next Prison or common gaole of the Countie or Cittie, where anie such persons shall be found and forthwith to acquaint vs therewith, that wee maie send for them, or giue order for their enlargement as the cause in justice shall require; Vnles they shall forthwith enter good bond with sufficient sureties to his Ma^{ties} vse, to appeare before vs or other our Colleagues, at a certaine daie to be by you limited according to the distance of their abode; all which bonds, with your particular informations against the seuerall parties, you shall in convenient time att or before the daies of their appearances retorne into the office of our Register.

And for the better performance of this service, wee doe in his Ma^{ties} name, by authoritie aforesaid, straitly charge require and commaund all Justices of the peace, Maiors, Sheriffs, Bayliffs, high and pettie Constables, and all other his highnes officers ministers and subjects whatsoever, to yelde you their best aide, help, and assistance herein, as often and in such manner and forme as you shall see cause to require and direct the same; And also all Gaolers and keepers of Prisons, to receiue and safely to keepe all such persons as shalbe by you committed and brought or sent vnto them, according to your direction aforesaid. And these presents shall be a sufficient warrant, as well vnto you, as all those that shall aide and assist you herein; and also vnto euerie such Gaoler and keeper of prisons in that behalfe.

Giuen at Lambith this twentithe of
February Anno Domini, ju

W^m Cant W^m London Mathew Norvic John

Lambe Charles Cesar Na Brent Wat (or Nat)
 Balcanquall Tho Goade Bas Wood Ro Aylett
 To John Wragge gent, one of the
 sworne Messengers of his Ma^{ties}
 Chamber

S.P.D 314, manuscript 34.

[The above is followed in the volume of MSS by the rough draft on paper of the warrant which is on parchment: this draft or copy is identical in terms with the parchment warrant save for a few abbreviations and differences in spelling. But the copy is complete accordingly, the date is given as twentieth of February, 1635-6 and the signatures are as above. The draft has four notes on the back:—

1635

A Copie of a warr^t do^{cnt} made by ye Aepiscop of Cant & ye high Com^{rs} by folowing w^{nt} M^r Burtons bookes were taken

Nota

S^r John Lambe affirmed^d yt they vsed once in 2 or 3 yeres to make such lyke warr^t as yis

Nota that ye high Com made a warr^t to Crosse for taking M^r Prinn's bookes & for ye () to enter into search in any house or place whatever with a command^d of assistance in ye king's name to all Justices of ye peace Maiors & all ye kings subjects & by ye s^d warr^t M^r Prinns bookes weare taken

Nota. Y^t W Aepisc in his () epistle to ye king before his speech in ye starre chamber made at M^r Prinn's sentence sayde to ye king that it is not fitt to have always one rule for govement or words to yat effect
 vide libru