

22138

Baptists. Vermont. Shaftsbury Association, 1789.
Minutes ... in Hillsdale, M, DCC, LXXXIX.
Bennington, Haswell & Russell, 1789. 12 pp.
ABHS copy.

M I N U T E S

OF THE

Shaftsbury Association ;

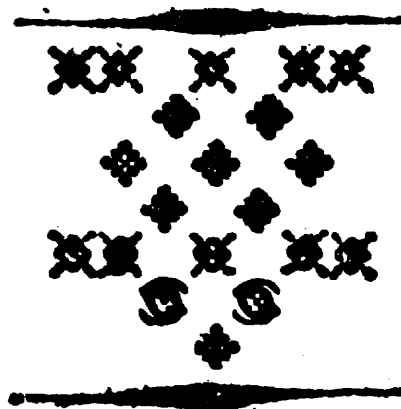
AT THEIR

ANNUAL CONVENTION,

HELD IN

H I L L S D A L E,

M, D C C, L X X I X.



**PRINTED by HASWELL & RUSSELL in BENNING-
TON (VERMONT) 1789.**

MINUTES, &c.

WEDNESDAY, June 3d, 1789.

1. **A**T two o'clock p. m. elder **PETER WERDEN** preached the introductory sermon, from 2 *Tim.* ii. 15.

2. **PROCEEDED** to the choice of a moderator and clerk.

3. **LETTERS** were read from the several churches, and the following list taken of the number of members who have been added, dismissed, excluded, or died the year past.

N. B. **MINISTERS** names in italics. --- Those marked thus § not present. From the churches marked thus *, we received no letters. Dashes denote no ministers.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers & messengers.</i>	Added.	Dism.	Exc.	Died.	No.
<i>Pittsfield,</i>	{ <i>Valentine Rathbun,</i> <i>Daniel Rathbun.</i>					24
<i>Stillwater,</i>	{ <i>Lemuel Powers,</i> <i>Samuel Rogers.</i>	33		5		89
<i>W. Shaftsbury,</i>	<i>Gidson S. y.</i>	3	1			48
<i>E. Shaftsbury,</i>	<i>Eben. Willoughby.</i>	1	1		1	37
<i>Adams,</i>	{ <i>Peter Warden,</i> <i>Stephen Carpenter.</i>	21	1	4	1	158
<i>Newbethlehem,</i>	{ <i>Ebenezer Smith,</i> <i>Jacob Harrington</i>	3	6	4		27
						<i>Churches.</i>

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Ministers & messengers.</i>	<i>Added.</i>	<i>Dism.</i>	<i>Exc.</i>	<i>Red.</i>	<i>No.</i>
<i>Saxfield,</i>	<i>Josua Morse,</i>	9				59
<i>Washington,</i>	<i>{ John Nichols,</i> <i>John Lefure,</i> <i>James Richards.</i>	5	5	8	2	105
<i>Battskill,</i>	<i>{ Nathan Tanner*.</i>					106
<i>Littleboeck,</i>	<i>{ Rufus Hull,</i> <i>Joseph Bates,</i> <i>Abner Missett,</i> <i>Joseph Cate.</i>	14		1	1	74
<i>Halifax,*</i>	-----					37
<i>Hillsdale,</i>	<i>{ Stephen Gano,</i> <i>Ambrose Letting.</i>	25	2	2		53
<i>Parkington,</i>	<i>{ Samuel Waldo,</i> <i>Edw. Southworth,</i> <i>Timothy Badcock.</i>					65
<i>Greatneighbours,</i>	<i>Peter Garnsey.</i>					36
<i>Newbritain,</i>	<i>Isaac Beeman.</i>					22
<i>2d. church</i>	<i>{ James Mason,</i>					
<i>Lanesborough,</i>	<i>{ David Mason.</i>					44
<i>4th church</i>	<i>{ Caleb Blood,</i>					
<i>Schoftbury,</i>	<i>{ Abiathar Waldo.</i>					124
Total.		174	16	16	5	1118

N. B. THE five last named churches were cordially received into our fellowship the present year.

4 RECEIVED letters and minutes from the several associations. From the Philadelphian, elder Thomas Montange; from the Stonington, Jesse Whitman; from the Warren, we received a letter and minutes, but no messenger; but from those of Vermont and Woodstock, we received no official

official information. Each of these messengers from our sister associations, we receive to sit and act in our deliberations.

5. APPOINTED elders Blood, Gano and Montange, and brethren Samuel Whelply and Ebenezer Willoughby, to write to the several sister associations.

6. ADJOURNED till half after eight to-morrow morning.

THURSDAY, *June 4.*

MET pursuant to adjournment.

7. ELDER Blood delivered a discourse from Heb. v. xiii. 14.

8. READ and approved of the letters to the sister associations.

9. APPOINTED brethren Lemuel Powers, Ebenezer Smith and Stephen Carpenter, our messengers to the Warren association, to be holden at Sturbridge, the Tuesday after the first Wednesday in September; also Justus Hull and Samuel Whelply, to that of Stonington, to meet at Exeter, on the third Tuesday of October; and Lemuel Powers and Stephen Gano, to that of Philadelphia, to meet at Philadelphia, on the first Tuesday of October; who are also desired to proceed to Virginia, and there acquaint themselves (as time and opportunity may serve) with the order and standing of the several associations in these parts; who have solicited our fellowship,

lowship, when the door thereunto may open : also Obed Warren and Ebenezer Willoughby, to that of Woodstock, to meet at Marlow, on the last Wednesday of September ; and Caleb Blood and Ebenezer Willoughby, to that of Vermont, to meet at Ira on the first Wednesday of October next.

10. As the churches of Stillwater and Hilldale have signified in their letters, &c. that their respective elders Lemuel Powers and Stephen Gano, are disposed to travel considerable part of their time, and preach the gospel, and the churches acquiescing therein, have requested us to send supplies to, and provide for them, while their elders may be absent.

We heartily rejoice to find the churches' elders engaged in the cause and spread of truth—and appoint the following supplies to vacant churches :

Stillwater, brethren Eber Mosser, last Lord's day in October. Samuel Whelply, last Lord's day in November. Caleb Blood, second Lord's day in January.

Hilldale, brethren Samuel Whelply, second Lord's day in October. Adam Hamilton, first Lord's day in November. Samuel Waldo, first Lord's day in December. Joshua Morse, first Lord's day in January. Thomas Montange, first Lord's day in February. *New Britain,*

Newbritain, Joshua Morse, third Lord's day in June. Justus Hull, second Lord's day in July.

Ninepartners, Samuel Whelply, third Lord's day in June. Samuel Waldo, third Lord's day in January.

Newbetblehem, Obed Warren, third Lord's day in August. ——— Nilis, last Lord's day in June.

11. APPOINTED brethren Caleb Blood and Ebenezer Willoughby, to superintend the printing of the minutes.

12. APPOINTED brother Justus Hull, to write the circular letter for the ensuing year.

13. HAVING received no returns (for a long time) from the churches of Step-entown, Chesterfield, and 2nd. in Hancock, therefore voted to drop them from our minutes.

14. APPOINTED brethren Caleb Blood and Ebenezer Willoughby, to draw a plan of the power, and point out the limits as well as the rules to be attended to by an association, and make return thereof at our next annual meeting.

15. OUR next association will be held in elder Warden's meetinghouse, Adams, on the first Wednesday of June next. Introductory sermon to be preached by elder Samuel Waldo; and in case of failure, by elder Lemuel Powers.

Circular

Circular Letter.

DEARLY BELOVED,

ALTHOUGH it has not been our usual custom to address you by a circular letter, yet we wish you to suffer a word of advice in this trying day; and as we are determined to stand aloof from the idea of claiming (much more exercising) any power that may in the least interfere with the independency, or government of the several churches by us represented—yet it appears to us, that there is no one thing of greater importance, (to the good of Zion in this world) than a proper exercise of that power, which, by our exalted redeemer, is given to each individual church over its own members. The power which a gospel church has over its members, is not to be exercised according to any plan, form, or custom, of any that wear the name of christian, any further than they perfectly agree with the direction, given by the great head of churches in his written word, which says, “*See that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount :*” Heb. viii. 5. All church power exercised contrary to
 this

this rule, is mere usurpation, and has not the power of Christ in it.

The design of gospel discipline is to purge the church from iniquity, and not to gratify our prejudice and hard feelings one toward another; in its nature it is calculated to succour the tempted, to deliver the captive, hurt up and bring home with rejoicing, those who are gone astray: also to cleanse the church from impatient sinners, from contention and division, from tattling and talebearing; and to keep the faith and order of the christian church in its primitive purity.

Our blessed Lord, in the 18th of Matt. clearly holds forth the nature, and strongly urges the necessity of church government and discipline. When we consider the wonderful order in which God hath fixed all nature, both rational and irrational, animate and inanimate, so that each one shall bear his portion, exhibiting his glory, we must be sensible that he never intended his peculiar people should live in this world, without strict attention to good order and government in his church. — As no machine can answer the intention of the author, unless all its parts are duly proportioned, and kept in due order, so no church can shew forth the true order of God's house, without strict attention to

the laws and ordinances given forth by the great architect and builder of Zion.

It must be acknowledged that all communities formed among men, are under certain bonds of union to their own society; the fulfilling whereof are the conditions of the compact; if one member is indulged in the breach of this combination, why not another? and so on, till the whole community becomes extinct: so, if one member of a church, be they high or low, rich or poor, bond or free, is indulged in the breach of those bonds of peace which we have entered into, to keep the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, by the same rule another may; and thus we may go on, till in reality we become a synagogue of satan, be our profession as it may. — Let us then, beloved brethren, as we regard the cause of our blessed Redeemer, hold the reins of government which the Lord Jesus hath put into our hands; and keep a strict watch over our members for good: every church must be accountable to God in the great day, how she conducts herself towards her members, and whether she is faithful to that trust reposed in her, in executing the laws of Christ. Let us also be concerned to take the utmost care,

that

that no matter of labour be admitted into the church, but such as are brought according to the rules of the gospel; and when difficulties are thus brought, attend to them in the fear of God, and love to his cause, and a hearty desire for the reconciliation of the parties at variance: for a spirit of love and meekness is absolutely necessary, for the right administration of church government.

Let great care be taken that all backbiting, whispering, tattling, and talebearing, those enemies which often prove so fatal to christian union and peace, and which have so often separated chief friends, be purged out of the churches, otherwise the fire of contention and strife will always burn. *Prov. 26. 20.*

Shall also remind you of the importance of a tender care of the weak lambs of the flock; and in your church government keep the door open for the improvement and encouragement of those gifts, that may appear beneficial to the church.— Oh! may the great head of influence, lead us all into the true order and faith of God's house, that we may understand the outgoings and incomings thereof, and ever seek the things that make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another.

12

er, which is the earnest prayer of your
brethren in gospel bonds.

Signed by order of association.

SAMUEL WELLS moderator.

JUSTUS HULL, clerk.

FINIS.

