

16164

Warren Association of Baptists, 1778.

Minutes of the Warren Association ... at Leicester.

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( The only known copy is defective. )

JCB copy has 1-4, 17-20 pp.

MINUTES of the WARREN ASSOCIATION,  
in their Meeting at Leicester, September 8th and 9th, 1778.

THE elders and brethren from our respective churches being met according to appointment, at Leicester, September 8, 1778, President Manning preached a suitable sermon, from Eph. iii. 8. After which the Moderator and Clerk were chosen, and the letters from the churches were read, from whence the following list was taken. The ordained ministers names are in capitals: Such as were not present have this [†] mark: The churches with this [\*] mark, we had no account from.

		Add	im.	died	sup	No.
1	Boston,	† S. SKILLMAN,	8		1	44
2	Boston,	† SKILLMAN,				42
	Bellingham,	NOAH ALDEN,	2			42
		Silas Wheelock,				
		Isaiah Blood,				
	Haverhill,	† HEZEL SMITH,	18		1	157
*	Warren,	† C. HOMPSON,				84
1	Middleboro'	L. BACKUS,		1	2	59
2	Middleboro'	† EBEN HONDS,				75
3	Middleboro'	† ASA HUNT,				90
	Charlton,	NATH. GREEN,	3	4	1	50
		Daniel Bacon,				
		Ebenezer Davis,				
	Wilbraham,	SETH CHARK,	43			82
		Ephraim Wright				
		Jonathan Walden,				
*	Enfield,	† J. MECHAM,				30
*	Weare,					35
	Asbjfield,	EBEN SMITH,			2	58
		Chilob Smith, 2d.				
	Monteque,	Rishi Monteque,	2		1	30
	Sutton,	Arron Elliot,				45
		Daniel Harwood,				
	Royalston,	W. JACOBS,	9		1	78
		Isaac Esty,				
		Solo. Goodale,				
*	Richmond,	† M. FELLEAU,				79
	Wrentham,	W. WILLIAMS,	4		2	22

Attleboro'

		Ad	dis.	End	(P)	N.
<i>Attleboro</i>	<b>I. SEAMANS,</b> Samuel Bloss,	2		1		61
<i>S. Brimfield,</i>	<b>E. CODDING,</b> Jehiel Munger, Fred. Plympton,	1		1		23
<i>Sturbridge,</i> <i>Woodstock,</i>	<b>B. LEDOYT,</b> Jacob Wilson,	4				24 50
<i>Coburnsford,</i>	Mark White, Samuel Fletcher,	21		2	7	78
<i>Barnstable,</i> <i>New-Salem,</i>	Jonathan Jeffers, † <b>S. BIGELOW,</b> W. IRVING,	1		1		20 23
<i>Grafton,</i> <i>Leicester,</i>	Joseph Rice, <b>BENJ. FOSTER,</b> Samuel Green,	15	2		1	27 43
<i>Freetown,</i> <i>Medfield,</i>	† <b>ABNER LEWIS,</b> † <b>THO. GAIR,</b> Oliver Hastings,	31		1		39 7
<i>Harwich,</i> <i>Killing'ey,</i> <i>Dudley,</i>	† <b>G. ROBINSON,</b> Elisha Ransom, Joseph Amedown,	2		1		44 39 22
<i>Framingham,</i>	† <b>J. MERRIMAN,</b> Eben. Merriman					18
		166	7	28		

The two last of these churches, upon satisfaction obtained, were received at this meeting.

Sept. 9. Met in the morning, and, 1. Received and read a letter from the association of Charlestown, South-Carolina, with the printed minutes of their meeting in February last; and elder Backus is appointed to write an answer to them in our names. 2. The thanks of this association is returned to our agent and committee, for their services in the year past; and they are re-chosen for the year ensuing. 3. As our agent has been at considerable expences in pleading the cause of our religious liberty, our several churches are requested to make a collection to defray the same, and send it to our next association. 4. As a proposal was made of dividing this association, upon

upon consideration of the case, we are unanimously of the opinion, that on account of the calamities of the present day, and the need of the collective wisdom of the churches, in our struggle for religious liberty, it is best to suspend the affair of dividing for the present. 5. A most pressing application being made, in behalf of a vast extent of country to the Northward, almost entirely destitute of ministerial helps, we have recommended it to our elders, Jacobs, Ledoyt, Seamans, and our brother Ransom, to visit and labour in those parts, and they have undertaken to go; and as the expence of their journeys must be considerable, the churches are earnestly requested to contribute to their support therein, and to send it to our next association. 6. Agreed upon the following supplies for destitute societies, viz.

- Montague,* Elder Smith, the 2d Lord's-day in *October.*  
Elder Green, the 2d in *November.*  
Elder Jacobs, the last in *January.*
- Grafton,* Elder Ustick, the last in *September.*  
Elder Foster, the last in *October.*  
Elder Ledoyt, the 2d in *January.*  
Elder Alden, the 2d in *May.*
- Framingham,* Elder Alden, the 3d in *October.*  
Mr. Jeffers, the 1st in *November.*  
Elder Seamans, the 3d in *December.*
- Farmington,* Elder Lamson, the last in *October.*  
Mr. Ransom, the 1st and 2d in *January.*  
Elder Ledoyt, the 2d and 3d in *February.*  
Elder Alden, the 2d in *April.*
- Barnstable,* Elder Seamans, the 3d in *November.*
- Harwich,* Elder Seamans, the 4th in *November.*
- Sturbridge,* Elder Coddington, the 2d in *May.*
- Sutton,* Elder Ustick, the 3d in *September.*  
Elder Alden, the 3d in *October.*  
Mr. Fletcher, the first in *November.*
- Weston,* Elder Seamans, the 3d in *October.*  
Mr. Fletcher, the 2d in *November.*  
Elder Alden, the 3d in *December.*  
Elder Williams, the 1st in *May.*

As those churches who have not sent to our meetings for these several years, have therein acted contrary to their former agreement with us; they are desired to let us know the reasons of their so doing at our next meeting. Our next association is to be held at Attleborough, the Tuesday after the first Wednesday in September next, at two o'clock, P. M. Elder Leddy to preach the sermon, or in case of failure Elder Codding.

JOSEPH SAMAN, Moderator.  
ELIJAH CODDING, Clerk.

sermon, just as Lieut. Col. Henry Woods, Capt. Nathaniel Ten, Cornet Simon Gilson, Lieut. Jonas Varnum, Captain Jeremiah Shattuck, the before-named Mr. Hubbard, and a great number of their followers, came up; some of whom were armed with clubs and poles, and forbid our friends either to preach or baptize, any where within the limits of Pepperell. Upon this breach of the peace, Mrs. Waight spoke to those disturbers, and ordered them to depart from off her house; but they refused to go. Mr. Parker desired, that they would act like men, if they would not like Christians; and reminded them of the liberty of conscience, which all protestants, and even the King of Britain allowed; and mentioned sundry scriptures to prove the divine warrant for such liberty: But Cornet Gilson said; Don't quote scripture here! These men have newly approved of the constitution of government, which was framed for us last winter, which, Mr. Parker told them, they had now broken. All this could not silence their clamour; but in open contempt of our religious sentiments, some of them took a dog into the river and plunged him. And in order to incense the populace, the odious name Tory, was cast upon Mr. Davis; and when he attempted to answer to that order, Capt. Lakin, (a church member, and one of their committee of safety) said, Hold your tongue; or I will beat you down your throat!

Hereupon Dr. Lawrence invited our injured friends to his house; and in an inclosure by his door, Mr. Fletcher finished his sermon, though not without much noise and disturbance from the opposite party. And while Mr. Parker was at prayer, after sermon, John Green, junior, and Joshua Blood, who stood near him, made open disturbance; though Mr. Parker says, that from a sense of their safety under the divine protection he blessed God, that there were none to make them afraid; upon which (as others testify) one of them said aloud in prayer time, that is a damned lie! After which, some of those officers, with a couple of liquor, hired Abraham Boynton, and Jeremiah Lawrence, to go into a river that was near, where Boynton dipped Lawrence, and then asked him if he believed? And upon saying he did not, he plunged him again, if not a third time. And if all this was not enough, two more were carried into the water, in the presence of the aforementioned leaders of the town, and

and as they were put under water, Mr. Hubbard said aloud, There is one dipt! There is another! &c. with laughter and insult among the multitude.

But lest all this should not deter our friends from their purpose, Col. Woods, Capt. Lakin, and Mr. Hubbard, came to Dr. Lawrence's house; and when Mr. Parker asked them, whether they would protect the Baptists in obeying Christ, in Baptism? Or whether they would act at the head of their molders? They refused a direct answer; but Mr. Fletcher, coming out of another room, they insisted that the ministers, then present there in behalf of the majority of the town of Pepperell, who were against having any Baptist preaching or baptizing therein; and therefore they advised said minister immediately to depart out of the town, for their own safety. Do you mean, said Mr. Parker, that our lives will be in danger if we do not thus depart? This question they would not answer, though Mr. Parker told them he should take that to be their meaning, if they did not explain it otherwise. After other discourse, Mr. Parker addressed them in this manner, viz. I appeal to your consciences, in the presence of God, before whom we must all appear hereafter, whether you have come up against us in the spirit of Christ and his disciples, or in the temper of the persecuting Jews against them! To this they made no answer; but soon left the house. Whereupon our friends privately agreed to depart, and by different ways to draw together to a distant place of water; which was effected in such manner, that those six persons were decently baptized, notwithstanding the arrival of some mockers before it was over: And as they were returning to our friend Shattuck's house, they were met by Col. Woods and his followers, who shook their whips over them, and struck some of the company. And after their entrance into our said friend's house, many surrounded it, declaring they would have those Baptist preachers out of town that night. Yet, as they prayed and sang praise to God, the mob dispersed, and they rested there quietly; and returned home safely the next day, according to their purpose.

A narrative of these transactions was laid before our association at Leicester, on the 9th instant; and upon consideration thereof, it was judged to be expedient that I should visit these injured

red friends, and collect as exact an account as I could of the state of the most material of those facts, and to lay the same before the public. For though far less glaring breaches of the peace in such respects, have heretofore been punished by authority, in the southern parts of this State; yet we had no certainty that these would meet with like treatment. For there is not only a principal part of Pepperell concerned therein, Col. Woods was one of our law-givers last year, and many of them are greatly afraid of losing their legislative power over us in religious affairs; which according to their own principles, depends entirely upon their continuing to be the majority of this State. The author of their election sermon two years ago, says, "The law of self-preservation will always justify opposing a cruel and tyrannical imposition—except where opposition is attended with greater evils than submission, which is frequently the case, where a few are oppressed by a large powerful majority. This (says he) shews the reason, why primitive christians did not oppose the cruel persecutions, which were inflicted upon them by the heathen magistrates. They, a few, compared with the heathen world; and for them to have attempted to resist their enemies by force, it would, without a miracle, have brought upon them inevitable ruin and destruction." According to which opinion, Christ would have ordered the use of force in the first erecting of his church in the world, if he had not been so unhappy, as to begin the work at a time, when the heathen idols had a more powerful party than he had. But since the Baptists worship a Saviour, who always has had the most powerful party; and since he has taught them that the reason why he forbid the use of force in religion, is because his kingdom is not of this world; they expect, according to his word, to overcome all their accusers, by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and to look it their duty to attend upon the use of those means for their end. Indeed we apprehend that we have the same right to have our persons and properties protected by authority, as our neighbours have; but party influence has denied it to us in many instances. Three Baptists in Chelmsford, were imprisoned above five years ago, for ministerial taxes; and after adding the value of above one hundred silver dollars, the

at Charlestown, gave judgment in their favour ; yet the authors who taxed them contrary to law, soon had all their expenses paid by their town ; while the Baptists have had neither pences nor damages paid them to this time, as they assured this week. Who then can blame us, for appealing to the partial public, against such oppressions ?

I have been to Pepperel, where I preached twice, and fixed two persons, without molestation. And from the light I could gain, from many witnesses, the above facts is not exaggerated in any one circumstance ; which I published to prevent the like for the future.

I S A A C B A C K U S

B O S T O N, September 19, 1778.