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Warren Association of Baptists, 1784.

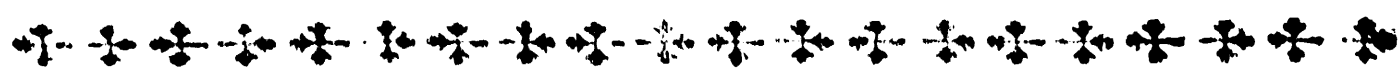
Minutes of the ... Meeting, in Middleboro; Sept. 7
and 8, 1784.

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M I N U T E S

Of the WARREN ASSOCIATION, at their Meeting, in *Middleboro'*, Sept. 7 and 8, 1784.



THE Messengers of the churches met at Mr. *Hunt's* meeting house, in *Middleborough*, Septem 7, 1784, to whom Elder *Thomson* preached a suitable sermon, from Col. ii. 5. After which, a Moderator and Clerk were chosen, and the following account was taken of the members added, dismissed, excluded, or that have died in the year past, and of the present number in each church.

Churches with this [*] mark, we had no new account from ; Ministers with this [†] mark, were not present.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	Add.	Dis.	Exc.	Died.	No.
1 Boston,	<i>Samuel Stillman,</i>	1			1	158
2 * Boston,	† <i>Isaac Skillman,</i>					43
Bellingham,	<i>Noab Alden,</i>				1	55
	<i>Aaron Thayer, jun.</i>					
Haverhill,	† <i>Hezekiab Smith,</i>	9				199
* Warren,						83
1 Middleborough,	<i>Isaac Backus,</i>			1	4	134
	<i>Daniel Lothrop,</i>					
2 Middleborough,	<i>Ebenezer Hinds,</i>				3	68
	<i>Job Peirce,</i>					
3 Middleborough,	<i>Aja Hunt,</i>				1	194
	<i>James Shaw,</i>					
	<i>George Shaw,</i>					
Charlton,	<i>Nathaniel Green,</i>	3		2	1	155
	<i>David Brown,</i>					
* Wilbraham,	† <i>Seth Clark,</i>					159
Ashfield,	† <i>Ebenezer Smith,</i>					90
* Montague,						32
* Sutton,						78
* Royalston,	† <i>Whitman Jacobs,</i>					89
* Richmond,	† <i>Matterean Bellou,</i>					122
Wrentham,	<i>William Williams,</i>				1	38
Attleborough,	<i>Job Seamans,</i>					81
	<i>George Robinson,</i>					

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>Messengers.</i>	<i>Add</i>	<i>Dis.</i>	<i>Exc</i>	<i>Died</i>	<i>No.</i>
* South Brimfield,	+ <i>Elijah Coddington,</i>					236
Woodstock,	<i>Biel Ledoyt,</i>	1			3	141
	<i>Asahel Corbin,</i>					
* Chelmsford,	+ <i>Abishai Crofman,</i>					87
Barnstable,	<i>Samuel Hallet,</i>					41
	<i>Benjamin Haller,</i>					
New Salem,	+ <i>Samuel Bigelow,</i>	7	1	3		38
Graton,	<i>Likanab Ingalls,</i>	1	1			38
* Leicester,						70
Freetown,	<i>Abner Lewis,</i>					
	<i>David Durpha,</i>	3			1	97
Medfield,	<i>Thomas Gair,</i>	1		1	2	70
	<i>Afa Mason,</i>					
Harwich,	<i>Jonathan Jeffers,</i>	2				47
	<i>Abner Chale,</i>					
* Killingly,						60
Dudley.						33
* Southington,						18
Rehoboth,	<i>John Hicks.</i>	1			1	100
* Harvard,	+ <i>Isaiah Parker,</i>					110
Newton,	<i>Caleb Blood,</i>	4		6		77
	<i>Nathan Dana,</i>					
* Salem, (N. Ham.)	+ <i>Samuel Fletcher,</i>					60
* Colerain,						26
Northbridge,		2				27
Cambridge,	<i>Thomas Green,</i>	3				27
* Ashford,	+ <i>John Rathban,</i>					47
* Ashburnham,						37
Providence,	<i>James Manning,</i>	3	2		2	126
Gloucester,	<i>Joseph Winsor,</i>	3			1	81
	<i>Jonathan Eddy,</i>					
Sturbridge,	<i>Jordan Dodge,</i>					53
Templeton,	<i>John Sellon,</i>					
	<i>Joel Fletcher,</i>					
	<i>Silas Cutler,</i>	13				36
		58	4	13	22	3561

Adjourned to eight in the morning.

September 8, met according to adjournment, and

1st. Received a letter and minutes from the *Philadelphia* Association, by the hands of Elder *William Van Horne*, who was received to act with us. Their next meeting is to be at *New York*, *October 5th*, at three P. M. and Elder *Manning* is appointed our Messenger to them.

2d. Received a letter and minutes from *Sbafisbury* Association, which contain very agreeable news from that quarter; and especially of a powerful work of divine grace in and near *Washington*, in *Berkshire*, whereby sixty two members have been added to our sister church in that town in the year past. Their next Association is to be at *Stevantown*, the second *Wednesday* in *June* next, at ten o'clock, A. M. The Elders *Ledoyt* and *Blood* are appointed our Messengers to them.

3. Received a letter from *Woodstock* Association, who met at *Croydan* the third *Wednesday* in *August*, containing some good news from thence: The Elders *Lewis* and *Dodge* are appointed our Messengers to them.

4. A letter was received from the Association of *New-Hampshire*, consisting of six churches, containing near four hundred members, by the hand of Elder *William Hooper*, who gave a clear and satisfactory account of their faith and order; they were received into a brotherly connection with us; and Elder *Eamund Pillsbury* from thence was also received to act with us. Their next meeting is to be at *Northwood*, the second *Wednesday* in *June* next; and the Elders *Hazekiab Smith* and *Thomas Gair* are appointed our Messengers to them.

5. Our Elders *Backus* and *Seamans*, are appointed our Messengers to the *Stonington* Association.

6. Elder *Thompson* of *Swanzey*, was received to act with us.

7. As it is a time of the prevalence of errors of every kind, and of the apostacy of many from the faith of the gospel, it is recommended to the churches, that they express in their annual letters to the Association, their particular adherence to the doctrines of grace.

8. Elder Gair was appointed to draw a form of a letter to our sister Associations.

9. Accounts were received from various parts of our country, that distress has lately been made upon a number of our brethren and friends, for the support of a way of worship which we conscientiously dissent from ; which is not only a violation of the law of God, but also directly against the fundamental principles of the late revolution in *America* : therefore this Association are resolved to unite in the most prudent and vigorous measures, for putting a stop to these oppressions, and to maintain the just rights of our brethren and friends ; and for that end do make choice of the following committee of grievances, to act in this cause according to their best discretion ; and we will recommend it to our several societies to communicate their proportion of the necessary expence hereof. The committee chosen for this purpose are our beloved Elders, *Stillman, Skillman, Smith of Haverhill, Backus, and Blood.*

10. Agreed upon the following supplies for destitute churches, viz.

Barnstable, Elder *Lewis*, the 4th Lord's day in *November* ; Elder *Robinson*, the 2d in *December* ; Elder *Alden*, the 2d in *June* ; Elder *Thompson*, the 3d in *June*.

Harwich, Elder *Lewis*, the 3d in *November* ; Elder *Alden*, the 3d in *June*.

11. Mr. *Howe* was requested last year in conjunction with our Elders *Stillman* and *Skillman*, to prepare a Spelling Book and Grammar ; which the two latter thought

not proper to do : but as Mr. *Howe* has prepared such a Book if he can get men of skill to examine it, and so shall proceed to publish it : This Association will endeavour to promote the sale thereof among their several societies.

12. The draught of a letter to our sister Associations, drawn by Elder *Gair*, was brought in and approved of ; and he is desired to draw a circular letter to the churches, against our next meeting ; which is to be at Elder *Williams's* in *Wrentham*, the Tuesday after the first Wednesday in September next, at two o'clock, P.M. Elder *Hezekiah Smith* to preach the sermon, or in case of failure, Elder *Blood*.

13. The prevalence of error and iniquity in our land is so great, that we earnestly recommend it to all the churches to keep days of Fasting and Prayer to Almighty God for the removal thereof, and that he would return and rain righteousness upon us ; and the last Thursdays before the first Lord's days in *December* and *June*, have been particularly proposed for that purpose.

A circular letter to our Churches being prepared by Elder *Stillman*, was unanimously approved of, and is now addressed to them, as follows :

Dearlly Beloved,

THE plan of divine government is as ancient as eternity, and as immutable as the nature of JEHOVAH. Infinite wisdom hath adjusted all its parts, and supercedes the necessity, yea, the possibility of any change in it. *His purpose shall stand and he will do all his pleasure.* Yet with respect to us, clouds and darkness are about him.— Let us, however, rejoice in this, that he sees the end from the beginning ; consequently all events, from the greatest to the least, are under his direction. The government is in the best hands, and the end shall be glorious. The Lord is now carrying on his great designs, and hath alrea-

dy brought to pass the things we looked not for. The American revolution, which hath been accomplished by many astonishing interpositions of Providence, invites our attention. This great event, doubtless, stands closely connected with many others, which will take place in their order, and unite in one glorious end, even the advancement and completion of the Redeemer's kingdom. On his shoulders the government of both the church and the world rests. It is right that he should govern both, that he may cause the events of the one to subserve the interest of the other. The church being his greatest object, all things, by his direction, tend to promote her prosperity.

The divine conduct towards America, makes a distinguished figure in the history of providence. With what a surprising progress have we stepped up to our present importance and rank amongst the nations ! The mere man of this world may confine his attention in this matter to our freedom and independence, with their consequent advantages ; while the man of real religion entertains more noble thoughts. He views it as design'd by the Lord to advance the cause of Christ in the world ; or as one important step towards bringing in the glory of the latter day. Already hath the American revolution extended its salutary influence to distant nations. It has awakened their attention to their civil interests, and made the principles of liberty better understood than ever ; therefore it ought to be considered by us as one capital blow at the kingdom of the beast. A considerable degree of light hath broke forth on the lands of superstition and ignorance. And as light or sacred knowledge shall be diffused, Antichrist will be destroyed. Thus are we taught by the inspired apostle : *Whom the Lord shall consume by the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming* : 2d. Thess ii. 8. As truth prevails error shall decrease ; and prevail it will till the whole earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and all false religion totally absorbed. It follows then, that the best way to destroy error is by propagating the truth as it is in Jesus. To this end a free intercourse

amongst the nations was necessary. The discovery of the Magnet, and the art of navigation have not only been a means of enriching the commercial world, but of spreading the glorious gospel through the earth. Nor is it at all improbable, that America is reserved in the mind of JEHOVAH, to be the grand theatre on which the divine Redeemer will accomplish glorious things. Many such things have already taken place amongst us, since these sittings of the sun saw the salvation of the LORD; all which are but as a drop of the bucket if compared with the glory of that day, when Christ Jesus will ride forth conquering and to conquer. If we observe the signs of the times, we shall find reason to think he is on his way. Let all the churches then say, *Even so come Lord Jesus, come quickly.*

Through the goodness of GOD we have met in peace; and though many of the churches complain of luke-warmness, and that there are but few instances of conversion among them, we with pleasure inform you, that there have been great revivals in some places, and considerable additions made to particular churches. Let us give glory to GOD that he hath not left himself without witnesses, and earnestly beseech him to grant us a more universal effusion of the Holy Ghost.

And now suffer the word of Exhortation :—

GUARD against the numerous and dangerous errors that are abroad in the world. Many have departed from the faith; by which we know that it is the last time. Stand fast in this evil day, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints. Be strict in your observance of the discipline of the churches; as being of the greatest consequence to their purity and glory. Maintain the christian tempers, and live daily as becomes the gospel. Let your lights shine before men, and love and union abound; so will the world take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus Christ. AMEN.

JAMES MANNING, *Moderator.*

ISAAC BACKUS, *Clerk.*