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Baptists . Massachusetts . Sturbridge Association, 1808.

Minutes . . . at Licester, September 28 & 29, 1808.

Palme Terry, [ 1808 ]. 8 pp.

MWA copy.

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# MINUTES

OF THE

STURBRIDGE ASSOCIATION,

HOLDEN AT

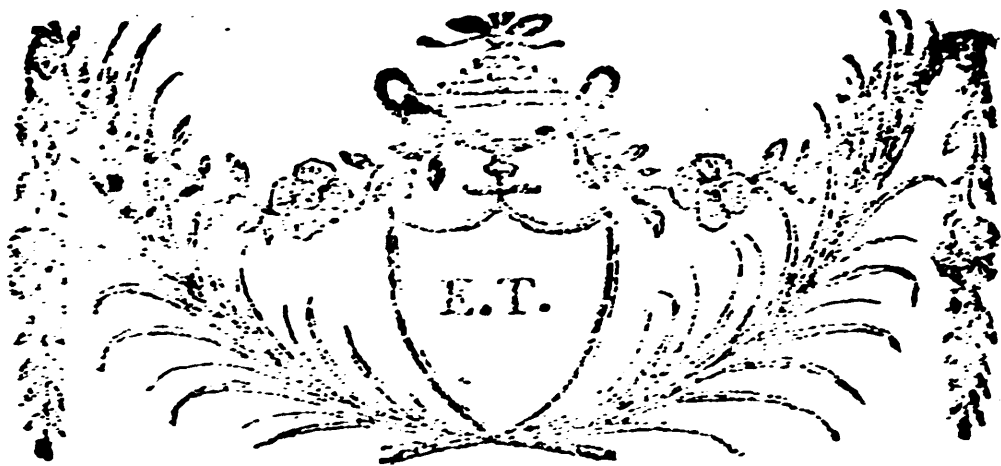
L I E C E S T E R,

SEPTEMBER 28, & 29, 1808.

Roland D. Grant,  
Worcester, Mass.

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PRINTED AT PALMER,  
BY EZEKIEL TERRY.



MINUTES, &c.

WEDNESDAY, September 28.

At two o'clock brother Atwell preached from Job xvii,  
*Lord what is man!*

2. Chose brother Waters moderator, and brother Leonard scribe.

3. Read the letters from the churches and took the following minutes.

N. B. The names of ordained ministers in small capitals: licenced preachers in italics: ministers with this mark \* not present: and vacant churches with a dash——

Churches.	Minst. & Mess.	Added	Dissm.	Excl.	Died.	Num.
Sutton.	SAMUEL WATERS, Solomon Marble, Jonathan Holman, Jonah Golding, David Gleason.	1	0	2	1	0

Liecester,	PETER ROGERS, Samuel Greene, Samuel Dana.	0	0	2	0	49
Charlton,	JAMES BOOMER, Daniel Bacon, Daniel Streeter, David Dunbar.	0	1	0	0	93
1. Woodstock,	BIAL LEDOYT, Samuel Crawford, John Clark.	0	0	0	0	83
2. Woodstock,	AMOS WELLS, Robert Baxter, Wm. H. Manning, Henry Wells.	1	2	2	3	135
S. Brimfield	*ELIJAH CODING, John Munger.	1	0	0	0	123
Belchertown,	————— Reuben Barton, Wm. Clark, Steph. Chamberlain.	19	0	0	4	50
Sturbridge,	ZENAS L. LEONARD, John Phillips, David Fisk, Chester Belknap.	0	1	0	1	92
2. Ashford,	————— Wm. Snell jr. Steph. Chapman.	2	0	0	1	73
3. Ashford,	————— Eph. Hayward, David Corbin.	1	2	0	1	29
Shutesbury,	JOSEPH SMALLIDGE, Ebenezer Lyscom, Lyscom Brigham, Joseph Haskins.	2	0	0	0	97
Wilbraham,	————— Nathan Knowlton, Daniel Hungerford, James Calkins.	40	3	1	1	107
Hardwick,	EBENEZER BURTT, Seth Willis, Seth Pierce, John Raymond.	2	0	0	1	54
Thompson,	PARSON CROSBY,	2	0	1	1	117

	Thos. Day, James Brown, Elijah Bates.				
1. W. Springfield,	*JESSE WIGHTMAN, John Porter.	4	0	2	1 55
2. W. Springfield,	THOS. RAND, David Pease.	7	0	0	0 47
Westfield,	AZARIAH HANKS, Benjamin Hastings.	23	0	1	1 68
Pomfret,	JAMES GROW, Smith Johnson, Thos. Bowen, Wm. Weatherly.	23	0	0	0 59
Enfield and Longmead- ow, Killingly,	} GEORGE ATWELL, Alvin Bennett, Chandler Pease. CALVIN COOPER, Jonathan, Harrington, Oliver Power.	25	0	1	1 99
		7	0	0	1 104

4. Adjourned till to morrow morning at 9 o'clock.  
Brother Wells preached in the evening from Prov. xiii,  
7.

Thursday, September 29.

Met according to adjournment.

1. With great pleasure we received our brethren from corresponding associations, viz. brother Grafton from the Warren with their minutes; minutes from the Leyden, also brother Bowles providentially present; brethren Webb, and Palmer with their minutes from the Stonington; and brother Root from the Danbury.

2. The circular letter prepared by brother Rand, and the corresponding letter by brother Atwell, were read and accepted.

3. The committee appointed last year to enquire into the external walk of South Brimfield church, reported that they had attended to the business, and found that this church had communed transiently with unbaptized persons: whereupon the association appointed Waters, Ledoyt, Leonard, Wells and Burtt, a committee to wait on that church once more, and strive for an accommodation or adjustment of all matters of trial, and report to the association the next year.

4. Chose brethren Wells, Leonard and Rand messen-

gers to the Warren association : Smallidge, Rand and Pease to the Leyden : Crosby, Grow and Cooper to the Stonington : Wightman, Atwell and Hanks to the Danbury : and Wells to the Shaftsbury.

5. Chose brother Hastings to write the circular letter, and brother Hanks the corresponding the next year.

6. Voted to continue the former committee for missionary purposes.

7. Voted that our association meet next year at elder Wightman's meeting-house in West Springfield, on the last wednesday of september at 2 o'clock P. M. brother Wells to preach the introductory sermon, and in case of failure, brother Leonard.

8. Voted that brethren Rand & Atwell superintend the printing of the minutes.

9. Voted to continue the appointment of the meetings for prayer, quarterly, beginning on the first tuesday of october at 2 o'clock P. M.

The business being closed at 11 o'clock, brother Grafton preached an affecting discourse : and brother Lealand lectured at 3 P. M.

## CIRCULAR LETTER.

*The Ministers and Messengers of the Sturbridge Baptist Association, to the several Churches they represent.*

Beloved Brethren,

The glory of God, and the welfare of the Redeemer's kingdom demand our warmest zeal, and most assiduous exertions. That we may exert ourselves successfully for these important ends, we must have our minds enlightened by the word of God, and our hearts warmed by divine love. As we profess to be baptists, and firmly believe that baptism holds a distinguished place among the positive commands and institutions of the Redeemer's kingdom, we ask your attention to a few thoughts on a quere which was postponed last year for further consideration : viz. Is baptism a door into the visible church : If by the visible church is intended all believers in all ages since the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who have had any out-

ward mark of distinction Jews, Heathen or Mahomettans. We answer in the affirmative. Baptism is the only scriptural door into the visible church: Gal. iii, 27. Acts ii, 41, and xviii, 8.

But if by visible church is designed a company of believers in covenant to attend worship & ordinances together. We must say baptism is a door, but fellowship is also essentially necessary. Fellowship and baptism may be considered as two folding leaves of the same door. A person is not a member in a visible church until he has regularly passed through both. When circumstances admit they should be together: but an administrator may administer baptism to a person professing faith, when there is no church present to manifest fellowship. Witness Philip and the eunuch. And the church may manifest fellowship when the person has not been baptized, supposing he declares his intention to embrace the first opportunity for baptism. In either case we cannot consider the person as having entered the visible church; but when both have been properly attended, the person has entered that visible church by the door, and is under obligation to worship and commune with them and submit to their discipline; though there may have been no other formula of covenanting. The practice of reading a covenant, and giving the right hand of fellowship &c. are not essential; but may be useful to quicken in our minds a realizing sense, that the vows of God are upon us.

Christ is the only door into the mystical church. He says, John x, 9, I am the door: by me if any man enter in he shall be saved. They and they only who enter by this door have a right to gospel privileges. By neglecting this principle the flood-gates of error were opened on the church, the man of sin has reared his menacing aspect and mystery babylon has been drunken with the blood of martyrs. Any church will degenerate if this principle is neglected. Let all take warning. And may a gracious God for the glory of his great name, give all his churches a spirit of discernment, that each member may be a faithful door-keeper; and so be instrumental of advancing the Apostolic purity of doctrine, ordinances and discipline; that He who walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks may comfort and establish his churches, and hold the stars in his right hand. Amen.

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## CORRESPONDING LETTER.

*The Sturbridge Association assembled at Liecester Sept. 28, and 29, 1808, to the sister Associations with whom we correspond, sendeth Christian Salutation :*

Dear Brethren,

Considering the gospel church on earth one of the greatest mysteries, permit us to remind you of the same. In Christ Jesus we behold the foundation : power, and wisdom of God, Isa. xxviii, 16, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation &c. Let us behold its excellencies and magnitude ! let us admire its beauties ! First, we behold it boundless as eternity in extent ; yet present to the eye of faith. Faith is a primary requisite qualification, for all those who are parts of this glorious edifice, and would enjoy this vast and beautiful prospect. Secondly, we behold it solid as a rock---yet how soft a resting place ! how kindly it invites us to repose thereon and become parts of the spiritual edifice : Mat. xi, 28, Come all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Rom. viii, 17, And if children then heirs : heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

Brethren, we think it unnecessary to spend further time on this part of our subject : we think you are solicitous to repeat with us the following---That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth, and that our daughters may be as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace. We view the church in its progress, which we ascribe only to the Divine influence of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as preached by Him and those who have faithfully followed him. Next we shall consider the admission of human souls under the character of lively stones, which when cemented by the blood of Christ, become a spiritual house : but as it would not come within the scope of our present undertaking to give a particular account of the gospel church up to the present day, we shall content ourselves with mentioning some of the most important effects which have heretofore been produced by it. Under this view the innumerable difficulties, surmounted by the first builders, next present themselves. The Apostles are commanded to go forth and gather in materials for this mighty work ; but behold the kingdom of satan is erected !



The prince of the air beguiled the hearts of men, and perverted their ways. The faithful laborers are opposed and obstructed. Unbelief, pride, malice, idolatry, superstition and persecution were as an evil host arrayed against them. These, like an adamantine wall, are to be scaled; like Jericho's walls, to be leveled with the ground. We admire the fidelity of the inspired men. On the ladder of perseverance they ascend with the sword of the spirit, they level the walls and enter as conquerors. Their success was great and their prospects of future conquests good, the building grows large and promises to illumine the world; when, lo! the man of sin takes the alarm, he says what shall I do, that the work spread no farther: Every evil passion is now combined, as if by one great effort, to destroy the work begun. Soon antichrist ascends and reigns: the nations are deceived, and millions of innocent saints are racked and put to torture.

Now the mighty contest between good and evil portends (to us short-sighted mortals) an unhappy issue. But ere long we discover more clearly than ever the wisdom and power of God. His faithful workmen are encouraged and supported by the holy Spirit. The building grows larger and beautiful, while daily additions are making to it, blessed be God. Behold the beauties before us, the strength, the greatness, the infinite wisdom, the attracting power.

We think you are ready to say with us, Who but the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity could devise this plan! Who else can support the work! God's word assures us the building will hereafter be complete. Dear brethren, seeing the building is not yet completed, and many workmen are employed on the same and more laborers wanted, let us earnestly pray the Lord to send more to the glorious work. May God of his infinite mercy make us faithful and successful in gathering in materials for this glorious building.

We received your letters and messengers with pleasing satisfaction, and we solicit a continuance of correspondence with you.

The Lord has granted us an agreeable interview, some refreshing showers have descended to gladden our hearts.

SAMUEL WATERS, Moderator.

ZENAS L. LEONARD, Scribe.

power will ever be wanting. We return you our sincere thanks for the pleasing intelligence severally given in your last; and are happy, in return, to inform you that a good work is going on in many of the Churches of this Association. The Lord has truly appeared in his glory to build up his Zion in this part of the world, as you will see by our minutes. We cannot say, however, that this is universally the case; some Churches are in a languid state, and some are under darkness and trials. Whilst the Lord is dealing thus with his people, he seems to be dashing the hostile nations of the earth together like potters' vessels. The plains of the Eastern Continent are yet stained with human gore; and events now threaten to draw America into the same destructive vortex of carnage and bloodshed.

But amid these national convulsions, let us rejoice brethren, that the Saviour reigns. The tumults of the earth, instead of injuring his kingdom, shall only subserve its more rapid increase. The sovereign government, not only of the church, but of the universe, is in the hands of Christ; and he will rule till all his enemies be made his footstool: "He maketh the wrath of man praise him, and the remainder of that wrath he will restrain. His church is purchased with his own blood, and founded upon the immutable promises of his eternal love: It rests upon a tried stone, a sure foundation, against which the

gates of hell shall never prevail."— The kingdom of this world may indeed arise and flourish for a time, but they must all soon come to an end. *His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.* He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Great indeed has been the opposition which the Church has had to encounter at different periods of the world, but never has he suffered the righteous to be forsaken. He has never failed to appear for their support, to carry them safely through the furnace. Instances of this from the history of past ages, as well as from experience and observation, are too numerous to mention. With such a cloud of witnesses in favor of God's care and support of his people, let us lift up our heads and rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of our salvation. *The day of our redemption draws nigh.* Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. Fear not then, dear brethren, *it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.* Let us gird up the loins of our minds. Let us watch and pray. Let us be faithful to the end. Let us patiently wait for his coming, and be faithful unto death, and soon we shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Farewell.

RUENE RUNYAN, Moderator.  
FRANCIS WAYLAND, Clerk.

# Report

OF THE

## DIRECTORS

OF THE

### *NEW-YORK BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.*

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TO THE NEW-YORK BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

*Dear Brethren and Friends,*

With pleasure we welcome the return of our Anniversary Meeting, and in pursuance of our duty, lay before you a summary account of our proceedings, and of the occurrences which have taken place since we were last convened together.

With gratitude to the great Father of Mercies, we inform you that our efforts, though feeble, have been attended with many encouraging circumstances, far exceeding our most sanguine expectations; and we trust we can add, that a divine blessing has hitherto rested on our infant institution.

In our last Report we stated, that our Brother, Elder Charles Lahatt was on a mission, under our direction, in the northern parts of this state. On this tour he was absent near seven months: From the most satisfactory information we have received from various sources, as well as from his own Journal, we have reason to believe his labours have been attended with a divine benediction.

Churches, as well as individuals, have informed us, that through his ministry many lukewarm professors have been quickened to a sense of duty, and others that were wavering have been established; but it appears, that in some places he has been made the honoured instrument of turning many to righteousness; particularly at Windham, in the county of Green, in this state. A Pædobaptist Church, of the congregational order, in that place, on this pleasing occurrence, have expressed themselves to us in the following words: "God, we hope, by his great mercy and rich grace, hath the past summer visited the Society to which we belong; upwards of fifty persons have been added to the Church, who, we trust, are the

happy subjects of divine grace. A considerable ~~part of them date their experi-~~ences from occurrences commencing under the ministry of the Rev. Charles Lahatt, your Missionary." To the above satisfactory account we have the pleasure to add, that this our brother was likewise the instrument of a considerable ingathering to a Baptist Church in the same neighbourhood. There are also other places in which we have reason to believe he laboured with success, and where it has been strongly solicited that he may be again sent. Indeed the Macedonian cry, "*Come over and help us,*" from various quarters is heard; but while such is the case with regard to many places our Brother visited, how lamentably different is that of others! In some towns and villages a Gospel Sermon had not been preached for several months, and their inhabitants were living without hope and without God in the world. In the course of Mr. Lahatt's journey, which was partly over the same ground he travelled last year, he had the satisfaction to learn that his former labours had proved useful to the awakening of several, some of whom had been baptized on a profession of their faith. Our Brother arrived at home the beginning of November, and on the 19th of December, by our desire, he set out on another mission. His labours were confined on the west of the Hudson. The inclemency of the season, together with the shortness of the time allotted him by our Board, prevented him from extending his labours agreeably to his wishes. He, notwithstanding, proceeded as far as the banks of the Susquehannah, directing his course toward the Lakes. During this journey he found several Baptist Churches in a divided and unsettled state, to whom he gave such advice as prudence dictated, and we trust it proved a word in season. In some places he found Deism prevalent; and so averse were some to the word of life, as not only to refuse to hear it, though brought to them at the expence of others, but even to discourage its being preached to their fellow men. The reverse, we with pleasure state, was the case in most other places; many flocked, with earnest desire, to hear the word; and though nothing very particular occurred on this tour, yet we are encouraged to believe that good was done. Our Brother came home the latter end of February, after travelling 780 miles.

Being thoroughly satisfied with Brother Lahatt's conduct hitherto, and he having signified his willingness to go out again, under our direction, we accordingly engaged him to visit the northern and western parts of this state, taking in his tour the Tuscarora village.

It remains, Brethren, for us to make a communication on a subject which, for some months past, has occupied our serious consideration: We here advert to the situation of our much esteemed friend and Brother Elder Elkanah Holmes, who for several years, has been labouring among the Tuscarora Indians; first

under the patronage of the Baptists, and afterwards in the employ of the "New-York Missionary Society," but from which body in consequence of a disunion of sentiment, he has for some time past been disengaged. The question has been, whether we were not, in the course of divine providence, called upon to engage this faithful servant of Christ under our direction. The oftener we renewed our deliberations, the more we were convinced that it was our duty to adopt this measure. At this time, moreover, we received the pleasing intelligence from our brethren of the Massachusetts Missionary Society, that they were disposed to unite with us in the support of a mission among the Indians, and who, with that liberality which has ever distinguished that body, offered to defray one half of the expence. This agreeable union is now formed: May the Great Head of the Church crown our mutual endeavours for the furtherance of his gospel with his gracious approbation!

By a Letter recently received from Elder Lahatt we learn, that agreeably to our instructions, he has visited the Tuscarora village, where he arrived on the 19th April; and that he, as also our communications forwarded by him to Elder Holmes and the Indians, were cordially received; likewise a Talk from the Indians to our Board, gives us the fullest assurance, that the utmost harmony prevails there. Indeed the uniform attachment of the Indians to Brother Holmes, and earnest desire for his continuance among them, their decided wish to put themselves under the care of the Baptists, and above all, the good which has evidently been done among that tribe, cannot fail of giving to the Society at large the greatest satisfaction.

Brethren, the Lord hath done great things for us as a Society, whereof we have reason to be glad; but let us ask ourselves, are we, as members of a Missionary Body, filling up our sphere of usefulness? Are we not content with merely having our names in the Society? Do we bear the cause of the Heathen, and others that are destitute of the word of life on our minds, as we ought at a Throne of Grace, and are we conscientious in rendering all the aid with our worldly substance that the Lord hath enabled us to render? May we at all times act in the fear of God, and as those that must give an account; and exercise a zeal in some degree resembling that which glowed in the primitive disciples of Jesus! Abounding in the work of the Lord, we are assured our labours will not be in vain.

*By order, and in behalf of the Directors,*  
**CALEB B. BOWERING,** *Secretary*

*New-York, May 17, 1808.*

The following is a **STATEMENT of RECEIPTS and EXPENDITURES**  
during the last Year :

EXPENDITURES.		Dls	C	RECEIPTS.		Dls	C
To Cash paid Mr. Tiebout for printing		15	00	By Balance brought from last year's account		372	28
To do. paid Mr. Lahatt, our Missionary		322	50	By Cash collected by Mr. Lahatt on his journey		37	62
To Balance		1161	97	By do. from Youths Missionary Assistant Society		107	00
				By do. collected at Prayer Meetings		383	16
				By do. per the hands of Mr. Duffie		34	50
				By do. a donation by Robert Stewart, Esq.		100	00
				By do. do. by Mr. S. B. Munn		50	00
				By do. do. by Mr. P. Garnsey		10	00
				By do. donations from sundry persons		68	99
				By do. amount of subscriptions		220	50
				By do. collected after Annual Sermon		115	42
						1499	47
		1499	47	By Balance in the hands of the Treasurer		1161	97

The Officers and Directors for this Year, commencing the 17th day of May, 1808, are—

**OFFICERS.**

**Rev. JOHN WILLIAMS, President.**      **Mr. JOHN CAULDWELL, Treasurer.**  
**W.M. PARKINSON, Vice-Pres't.**      **CALEB B. BOWERING, Secretary.**

**OTHER DIRECTORS.**

**Rev. DANIEL HALL,**  
**WM. PEARCE,**  
**JOHN STEVENS,**  
**Mr. JOHN BEDIANT,**  
**SAMUEL PRINCE,**  
**JACOB SMITH,**

**Mr. STEPHEN B. MUNN,**  
**LEONARD BLEECKER,**  
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**JOHN WITHINGTON,**  
**THOMAS GARNISS.**