

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](https://paypal.me/robbradshaw)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Baptist Quarterly* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bq_01.php

Lancashire Gleanings of the Seventeenth Century.

THE early stages of the Quaker Movement in Lancashire have been recently studied by Dr. Nightingale, ex-President of the Congregational Historical Society, with access to many local official records. From his interesting book we cull a few notes on Baptists.

Quakerism obtained its strength in North Lancashire, Westmorland, and Cumberland; three or four of its most ardent apostles had previously been Baptist ministers there, John Audland, Francis Howgill, Thomas Taylor, John Wilkinson. In many cases, not ministers alone, but their churches also, passed over from the Baptist position to the Quaker, so that absolutely no trace of Baptist principles remained.

Yet near to Swarthmoor there survives one Baptist church, that of Tottlebank,, and a few more glimpses of its early days are afforded. It was largely due to Colonel Roger Sawrey, once commandant at Ayr, now owner of Broughton Tower on the Duddon. County records show that in 1663 he and several friends were "presented" for not coming to the Morning Prayer, and this implies that already he was gathering them for worship in his Tower. The minister was Gabriel Camelford, into whom George Fox had run eight years earlier, in Sawrey's company. It was only after his death that a farm was bought at Tottlebank for a minister to cultivate, and not till 1696 did a Baptist settle here in the person of David Crosley, who brought the church into the Yorkshire and Lancashire Baptist Association, founded that year.

There is an interesting report from Kirkham in 1677, that besides the Papists and the Quakers there was a third conventicle of the Phanaticall or mixed multitude, led by Hartley from Yorkshire, an Antinomian weaver, who worked also at Goosnargh: it would be pleasant to know for certain that this was the John Hartley who in 1695 was deacon of the church in Rossendale.

In 1670 John Hargreaves, "pretended clerk," was pre-

sented at Burnley for habitual preaching at Holmes chapel, Goodshaw chapel, Haslingden chapel, and elsewhere. His name also appears as deacon of Barnoldswick.

In 1670 and 1680 a group of people were presented by the constable of Winwick as conventiclers; on the second occasion he was more explicit and named some as Anabaptists. They are well-known from our side as members of the church at Warrington, now centred at Hill Cliffe. In 1684 the accounts show that on 7 September, Charles Holland of Hawkley conducted worship in the house of Thomas Holland of Southworth, and had to pay £20 for the crime. This was not the first time the church had suffered; in 1670 William Booth of Warrington, maltster, conducted worship on 17 July, in the house of Ann Marsland, of Hanford, in the parish of Cheadle, and was sentenced to pay £20 as preacher, 5s. as worshipper. But the church had spirit, for on 15 October, 1684, Thomas Holland lent his house again, and the magistrates could not collect the £20.

In 1669 it was reported that several meetings and conventicles were constantly kept near Bury, in private houses, of Independents, Presbyterians, Dippers, and such like, jointly; they were of the best rank, yeomanry, and inferiors. In 1685 seven people of Todington were jailed at Lancaster, apparently for similar worship. By 1706 they were triumphant, and Roger Worthington of Salford registered his house for worship.

For in 1689 it became possible to notify houses for this purpose, and put the worship under the protection of the law. The earliest Baptist Church in the north, Manchester, did register two houses about 1693, those of John Gathorne and John Leeds.

It is much to be desired that systematic search in the Sessions Records should be undertaken in every county for this purpose. At present only in Lancashire and in Yorkshire has there been publication of Baptist research; but the rolls of Quarter Sessions everywhere hold facts as to convictions between 1660 and 1688, registrations afterwards, which may aid materially in our knowledge as to the early fortunes of our ancient churches.