

## John Bunyan and Andrew Gifford.

(Second article. For the first see *Baptist Quarterly*, July, 1940.)

IN following on the research in connection with John Bunyan and Andrew Gifford, a possible link in the story presents itself in the well-known Warrant issued for the arrest of Bunyan in 1674-5. This, until it was found in 1887 among papers and documents left by Ichabod Chauncy, had lain in obscurity for nearly two centuries. There seems here to be a field worth exploring, and one which might eventually lead to a solution of the mystery enshrouding the silver tankard given by Nathaniel Ponder in 1671 to Elizabeth, wife of John Bunyan, who, at her husband's death in 1688, presented it to Andrew Gifford, as was recorded in the previous article.

The warrant, now in the Pierpont Morgan Collection at New York, inspired the late Dr. John Brown's theory that Bunyan served his last imprisonment on Bedford bridge, although for an alleged offence committed beyond the boundary of the town. The irreparable loss of the Sessions Registers for the period under consideration makes it impossible to affirm or to deny the speculative assertions of Dr. Brown. It is, however, improbable that Bunyan was incarcerated for six months in the small local clink on a warrant bearing the signatures (and in several cases their own seals) of thirteen county justices.

The *persona grata* of this present investigation is Ichabod Chauncy, a son of Charles Chauncy, who, as vicar of Ware, Hertfordshire, was imprisoned for refusing to rail off his communion table. The persecution which followed drove him to New England, where he became—and remained until his decease in 1671—president of Harvard College. Charles Chauncy bestowed upon his children scriptural names, of which perhaps Ichabod was the least enviable, although at that time by no means uncommon. This son's birth date is not known, but his education began as one of the early students at Harvard.

At one time Ichabod Chauncy had acted as a chaplain to Sir Edward Harley's regiment at Dunkirk—where Harley reluctantly took command—but his Church of England ordination ended through the enforcement of the Bartholomew Act, when he received "a letter of dismission" from his living at Coggeshall, Essex, in 1662. Thus ejected, Chauncy for eighteen years practised as a doctor at Bristol, holding as he did a licentiatehip of the London College of Physicians, for he and his five brothers all "had a skill in medicine". Ichabod Chauncy was received



into the Church in the Castle at Bristol, in March, 1670; but in 1682, and again in 1684, he was prosecuted under the statute 35 Eliz., c.i., for not attending a parish church, despite his plea of worshipping "as nearly as he could to that of the primitive church." He suffered imprisonment, and was ordered to leave the country from the port of Bristol only—to be banished the realm. So he sought refuge in Holland, but nevertheless sailing from the port of London! Yet, the record adds, "Y<sup>e</sup> Doctor was very chearful under all," in spite of his landed properties being forfeited; although, as the Boston (U.S.A.) *Evening Times* for July 2nd, 1913, said, "his books and manuscripts remained in the possession of the family for two hundred years later." Chauncy subsequently returned to Bristol in 1686, and continued his medical practice until his death in 1691. His age at that time is unknown, but in 1684 he referred to having been a Master in Arts for thirty years. Apparently he wrote only one book, "*Innocence vindicated* by a Narrative of the Proceedings of the Court of Sessions in Bristol against I. C., Physician, to his Conviction on the Statute of the 35th Elizabeth, 1684."

These brief details of Chauncy are given to introduce him into the religious life of Bristol, where he became a member of John Thompson's congregation. Thompson (who went to the town in 1670) was himself sent to prison, and succumbed to gaol fever in 1674-5, in spite of Dr. Chauncy's efforts to save him.

The names of John Bunyan, Andrew Gifford and Ichabod Chauncy, in this way allied, can be no mere coincidence; so it is hoped that further information may accrue from the fact that the Bunyan Warrant came into the hands of Ichabod Chauncy as mysteriously as the Bunyan tankard reached the hands of Andrew Gifford.

Bedford and Bristol are somewhat wide apart. But London would be the place where most likely the three men at sundry times met: together, probably, with John Owen, Vavasour Powell, and others also to whom Bunyan was known. And yet his acquaintance with Andrew Gifford remains obscure. To the names already mentioned should be added that of Thomas Hardcastle, an ejected clergyman and Andrew Gifford's immediate predecessor at Broadmead, and brother-in-law to Vavasour Powell. Hardcastle, it is stated, wrote a preface for Powell's *Concordance*, a work to which Bunyan undoubtedly added some thousands of references for its second edition (1673), prefaced by John Owen, and issued by Francis Smith, one of Bunyan's publishers. The first edition of the *Concordance* (1671) was "begun by Vavasour Powell [then deceased] and finished by

N. P. and J. F." Thus was it registered and announced to be published by Francis Smith and Richard Clarke. It is reasonable to conjecture that the initials "N. P." are those of Nathaniel Ponder (who sent forth *The Pilgrim's Progress* in 1678); and if this be so, the Bunyan-Ponder-Owen connection is established at an earlier date than Dr. Brown surmises, and well within the 1671 period of the tankard episode, for it is generally accepted that Owen brought together Bunyan the author and Ponder the publisher.

Nathaniel Ponder was of the Northamptonshire family which had branches in Suffolk and Essex. This might link him up perhaps with "J. F." (the co-editor of the *Concordance*), who is identified by Professor Arber in the *Term Catalogues* as John Fairfax, a member of the Suffolk Fairfaxes. Fairfax was an ordained graduate of Cambridge, and one of the ejected of 1662. He suffered imprisonments from which he was released in 1672. John Fairfax died in his native county at Barking in 1700. He issued from London a sermon in 1679, to which he attached only his initials, as sometimes used by him in correspondence.

The above-mentioned Thomas Hardcastle, who had been a member of "the learned" Henry Jessey's church—and Jessey (who was immersed by Hanserd Knollys) supported Bunyan's doctrine of communion—was ordained at Bristol in 1676 by Kiffin and (presumably, Nehemiah) Cox, both of whom, being at Bradford or Trowbridge, were invited to perform the ceremony. Dr. Cox was characterised as "that great divine, eminent for all manner of learning": a deserved eulogy—despite the trouble he caused at Bedford Meeting in 1679—for tradition says that he was able to converse in Hebrew, Latin and Greek. Among the aforementioned group was also, of course, Hanserd Knollys. All the men were linked up with Andrew Gifford and Bristol; and Owen, who had commended Hardcastle for the position at Broadmead, was claimed by Hardcastle as being among his "most loving friends." But even John Owen laboured in vain "to convince Cromwell's son-in-law, Lord Charles Fleetwood, and Lady Fleetwood of the expediency of the appointment," for Hardcastle in a letter to them expresses his regret that they "seemed to be under very great disturbance and dissatisfaction upon my going to Bristol, and would lay me under blame." The reason for their obstruction is not apparent. Another connection is traced through the list of members (including Lord Charles Fleetwood and Sir John Hartop, a close friend of Owen's) of the church in White's Alley, Moorfields, ministered to by Dr. John Owen, and at times by John Bunyan—according to Dr. Brown.

The vexed question of admitting unbaptized persons to the Lord's Table—an opposition dating back to 1662—was, in 1670-1 causing consternation and hindrance to fellowship in the churches; and led William Kiffin, "as in some way connected with the agitation of it in Bristol," to publish *A Sober Discourse* [*A Sober Answer*, 1675] in further reply to John Bunyan's *A Confession of my Faith* (1672), in which Bunyan had insisted on the lawfulness to communicate with "saints as saints": a work that had already been severely dealt with by T. P[aul] and W. K[iffin], and duly responded to by Bunyan in his *Differences about Baptism* (1673).

To return to the theme, Dr. Brown, in *John Bunyan: His Life, Times and Work*, rightly supposed that the Warrant was not only prepared by order of Lawyer Foster of Bedford, but also that it was written by one of his clerks. This surmise is confirmed in an article by Mr. F. G. Emmison, F.R.Hist.S., in the Records of The Bedfordshire Historical Society for 1928. Mr. Emmison identifies the writer as William Johnson, Notary Public and Deputy Registrar. Dr. Foster was, in his capacity of Commissary and Official, the judge of the Archdeacon's Court, as well as one of the signatories of the Warrant which was thus "drawn up under ecclesiastical, as opposed to lay direction."

In a pamphlet reprinted from *The Gentleman's Magazine* for 1890, Mr. W. G. Thorpe, F.S.A., of the Middle Temple, tells the story of how he acquired the Warrant, and suggests that friends of Bunyan must have sent the document to Ichabod Chauncy at Bristol, who was regarded as the "general legal adviser" of Nonconformists, in the hope that Chauncy might be able, in the time that elapsed between the proclamation date and that of the Warrant, during which period there could be no legal offence, to see what he could do in the matter. Upon Bunyan's release in six months' time, Mr. Thorpe opines that the Warrant was set aside and more or less lost sight of by Chauncy; and there it remained with other papers until it reached a London sale-room in 1790. When it again came under the hammer in 1887, it was bought by Mr. Thorpe for a nominal sum; and after "reposing in Nightingale-lane" for a number of years it was once more put up for sale in 1904, and very rightly catalogued as "A document of the greatest interest and value." It was then secured for Mr. Pierpont Morgan for £305.

In a letter to *The Times* in 1887 Mr. Thorpe wrote: "The document is so little thumbed or soiled that it cannot have been long in a constable's horny hand." Facsimiles of the Warrant (in which Bunyan is described as a "Tynker" were fortunately made, and Queen Victoria accepted a copy. The reproduction by Van der Wayde is so remarkably good that it might well be

—as indeed it has been—taken for the original. Of this a fine impression (as here illustrated) is to be seen in the Bunyan Collection at Bedford Public Library.

The Broadmead Records, from which much that is now given is culled (and gratefully acknowledged), were elegantly penned by Edward Terrill, an instructor of handwriting. Terrill, who had been apprenticed to a schoolmaster, became a "ruling elder" of the Church. His marriage brought him considerable property, of which, in 1679, he "consecrated a large part . . . to the education of young men for the ministry." For some years Baptists had desired an educated ministry, and in 1675, a number of ministers invited others to Town to "plea for an orderly standing ministry." William Kiffin and Daniel Dyke (formerly one of Cromwell's chaplains) were among them, and by 1689 the General Assembly had formally established a fund for the object. Towards this Andrew Gifford's church contributed the sum of thirty pounds. It has been already related that "old" Andrew gave his son, Dr. Andrew Gifford, a liberal education: an education that he himself had never received. The religious feeling of the period is also apparent from a further statement that Gifford's people paid half the cost of a place in Bristol in which "to bury our dead without the ceremonies of the parish parsons in their yards"—a prejudice causing that division in death which unhappily still persists.

Thus have the Broadmead Records helped; but missing links must needs be welded into the chain of evidence to confirm the actual connection between Bunyan the Tinker of Bedford and Gifford the Cooper of Bristol. It is confidently hoped, however, that the scraps of circumstantial or suggestive evidence hitherto and now offered may lead other researchers to follow up the clues.

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"The heroic age of the Broadmead Church expired A.D. 1688" says the unidentified Continuator of its records.

"1688"—that memorable year: the year of John Bunyan's death and of the landing on English soil of William of Orange.

And it was Andrew Gifford's brother, Samuel, who had assisted the Prince to come!

FRANK MOTT HARRISON.

[Authorities: *The Broadmead Records* (1847 and 1865 editions); *The Dictionary of National Biography*; *Wilson's Dissenting Churches*; Dr. W. T. Whitley, in *The Ejection of 1662 and the Free Churches*, 1912, etc.]