

Baptist Churches till 1660.

THE following county list attempts to gather together the contemporary evidence as to early Baptist Churches. The great majority came into being after the outbreak of the Civil War, but any earlier evidence is referred to here. Many churches claim early dates, but have nothing except tradition on which to substantiate their claims. Yet it is probable that more evidence can really be produced, and it is with the hope of eliciting this that the following provisional summary is compiled, and that a few probable traditions are referred to.

At this time the appropriation of a building for worship was most excessively rare, cities like Bristol being obvious exceptions. Hence a church is often known by the name of several villages, the cases of Rutland, Leicester, and Northampton giving great variety of names.

The General Baptists, marked here*, began in England as early as 1612; the Particulars not before 1633. Yet by the close of the Commonwealth, the former seem to have had only about 115 churches, as against 131 of the Particulars. The errors which certainly occur in these lists are as likely to affect one section as the other; and we may infer that Calvinism had already shown its ability to attract and to organize.

BEDFORD.

Bedford, open membership. 1650 John Gifford. Early records published in Brown's "Life of Bunyan."

Eversholt. 1653 at Berks Association.

*Luton and Kimpton. 1655 Gritton met George Fox, whose journal see.

*Potton and Dunton. 1653 members of Fenstanton lived here. Stevington. 1655 Stephen Hawthorne.

*Sundon. 1651 Thomas Partridge and Samual Tide signed the Midland G.B. confession.

BERKS.

- Abingdon. 1652 original member of the Berks Association. See Salt, "Gleanings from Forgotten Fields." John Pendarvis, B.A., 1655 represented at Bridgwater and signing letter to Ireland.
- Faringdon. 1657.
- Henley. 1652.
- Longworth. 1656.
- Reading. 1652.
- Wallingford, see Pyrton in Oxford 1653.
- Wantage. 1653 joined the Association. Pendarvis is *said* to have lectured here in 1642. Church book says, not contemporary, that it began about 1648. In 1653, June, the Church of Christ at Wantage and Grove petitioned Cromwell that the Steward and M.P. for Abingdon had locked them out of the Town Hall, contrary to recent usage. Robert Keate and fourteen others sign.

BUCKINGHAM.

- *Aylesbury. Stephen Dagnall at Assembly 1654.
- Haddenham. At Berks Association 1653.
- Newport Pagnell. John Gibbs.
- *Soulbury. Joseph Keach at Assembly 1660.
- *Stony Stratford. John Emerson of Cosgrove and William Fortnell of Paulerspury leased and built in 1657.
- *Winslow. 1654 and 1656, John Hartnoll at Assembly as Messenger.
- *Wycombe.

CAMBRIDGE. See the Fenstanton correspondence, especially page 105.

- *Cambridge. 1654.
- *Ely, Littleport and Stretham. 1654.
- *Melbourn, Royston, Hawson and Thexfield. 1654. Grey of Thexfield.
- *Soham and Burwell and Wicken. 1654.
- *Stretham. 1656. John Tabram.
- *Warboys and Chatteris. 1647 William Dunn. 1655 and Thomas Chapman.
- *Wilbraham and Balsham. 1654.
- *Wisbech. 1655. Edmond Smith, Israel Cave.
- *Wood Ditton. 1654.

CHESHIRE.

Hill Cliffe. See the Hexham correspondence, pages 291, 323, 357, showing that a church existed in Cheshire

before April 1653, and that in 1654 it dated from Warrington in Lancashire. There is no contemporary evidence that it existed before this era, and it only acquired a foothold at Hill Cliffe about 1660, by the instrumentality of William Morris from the church at Manchester.

*Nantwich. In 1653 the Baptists of Shrewsbury were wont to come here for baptism.

Warford became the centre for a group who met in the east from as far back as 1652, according to tradition written at a much later date in the church book.

CUMBERLAND.

Carlisle. 1653. Elder and most of his people become Friends. See George Fox, Journal, I. 166, 179.

Great Broughton. 1652 agreed with the Independent church at Cockermouth to differ on the question of baptism. 1654 John Wilkinson the pastor turned Quaker.

CORNWALL.

Trelevah near Penryn, Thomas Tregoss? The Falmouth church book assigns the beginning of the cause to the daughter of George Kekewich, governor of St. Maurs castle, being baptized in the sea about 1650; but acknowledges that in 1658 no minister went to the Association at Dorchester. Tregoss was at St. Ives 1657, at Mylor 1659, retired to Budock near Penryn 1662.

DERBY.

*Parwich, near Dovedale. In 1652 a letter to Cromwell was signed by John Row and John Tomlinson on behalf of a church here.

Derby. On 1.1.54 Robert Holpe and William Tomblinson wrote to Cromwell on behalf of the Derby and Burton church. In June 1655, Henry Davis and Will Tomlison signed the agreement of certain churches at Moreton in the Marsh, which originated the Midland Association.

DEVON.

Dalwood. 1655 at Bridgwater meeting.

Dartmouth. 1655 was visited by Henry Jessey; at Bridgwater meeting.

Exeter. 1655 was visited by Henry Jessey.

Honiton. 1655 was visited by George Fox. I. 261, and by Jessey.

- Loughwood near Kilmington. 1653-4 meeting-house erected; list of 219 members and resideners in the church book. George Allome prominent.
- Luppitt. 1655 at Bridgwater meeting. Thos. Collier ordained General Superintendent. 1656, Edmund Burford and Samuel Ham signed Confession.
- Plymouth. 1648. Abraham Cheare.
- *Tiverton. 1626. Corresponded with Amsterdam, see Evans II. 26-51. In 1628 the following were fined as Anabaptists: Richard and Charity Berry, Israel Cockram, John Gibbons, James and Isabel Tappe, John Tucker, Webbe of Cove.
- Totnes. 1655 at Bridgwater meeting.

DORSET.

- Dorchester. 1655 visited by George Fox. I. 261. Visited by Henry Jessey. 1658 Association held here; 300 people presided over by Collins [sic. but query Thomas Collier, who in 1655 was ordained General Superintendent in the West.] A report by three spies is in the Thurloe papers.
- Lyme. 1655 visited by Henry Jessey and at Bridgwater meeting. 1656 Abraham Podger signed Confession.
- *Mintern. 1656 John Miller at Assembly.
- Poole. 1645? founded by Thomas Collier gathering fourteen members. 1655 W. Baily seceded to the Friends. Fox I. 261. Association of 1659 to be held here.
- Weymouth. 1655 visited by Henry Jessey.

DURHAM.

The appointment of Thomas Tillam, a member of Knowles' church in Coleman Street, to be lecturer at the abbey church in Hexham, resulted by July 1652 in the formation of a Baptist Church including members from Durham, which by 1660 styled itself the church of Eadsbridge on Derwent, and is represented now by the two churches, Hamsterley and Wolsingham, Rowley and Blackhill. The early records were printed in 1854 by Dr. Underhill. On 28 April 1653, John Jopling [the jailer], B [not P in the printed edition] Hobson and others wrote from Durham to congratulate Cromwell on the declaration of the officers. See Nickolls, Original Letters. On 11 Jan 1654-5 a letter to Cromwell was signed by Tillam, and by Richard Orde, John Ward, elders.

ESSEX.

Henry Jessey in 1653 visited more than thirty churches in Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk: but he did not say they were Baptist, and we well know his width of sympathy. The context shows that they were Fifth Monarchy churches, and not all of these became Baptist. Only one of these can be identified, by Tillam taking his suggestion and removing here.

Colchester. 1656. On 29 May the Mayor and Aldermen obtained leave from the Council (lord president Lawrence a Baptist) to appropriate a convenient place for Tillam and his church to meet in.

Harlow and Matching appear in 1662, so there must have been a movement here before.

GLOUCESTER.

Bourton on the Water. In June 1655, Henry Collins, John Michell and Anthony Collett signed the Articles which formed the Western Association. A few months earlier, Anthony Palmer [rector], Richard Buzzell, William Minchine, Richard Lawrence, and John Hanman wrote to Cromwell on behalf of a church here. It seems a different body, and it is unlikely that it and its associates at Oddington, Stow and Winchcombe, were Baptist.

Bristol, Broadmead. 1640. Early records published in full.

Bristol, Pithay. 1652 represented at the Bridgwater meeting. 1653 received Thomas Munday and James Teague. Henry Hynam teacher.

*Bristol General Baptist. Pithay expelled Jane Williams and Mary Prosser "for owning and practising corrupt principles." See Broadmead 41 note.

Chipping Sodbury. 1655 at Bridgwater. 1656 James Nobs signed the Somerset Confession.

Cirencester. 1655 visited by Jessey. Letter to Cromwell signed by William Daves, Giles Watkins, Giles Griffiths.

Forest of Dean. 1653 wrote to Hexham, William Skinne, John Mills.

Gloucester. 1658 joined the Midland Association.

Hanham. 1658 Pithay began work here.

Kingstanley.

Moretton in the Marsh. 1651 Daniel King dedicated a book to the friends here. 1655 John Mayo and John Man signed at the Midland Association.

- Natton Seventh-day. John Cowell in 1677 described his experiences here from 1661 for ten years.
- Netherton near Fairford. 1653. Richard Harrison, Paul Frewen, William Drew. These same people with Robert Currier, Thomas Beard, Francis Smith, Francis Manning, wrote to Cromwell on behalf of the church at Dymock.
- ?Oddington. 1654 wrote to Cromwell. William Tracy [rector] and William Butler are unknown in Baptist circles. Thomas Paxford in 1672 took out a licence for Baptist worship at Finstock.
- ?Stow on the Wold. 1654 wrote to Cromwell. William Beale [rector], Thomas Tidmarsh, Timothy James.
- Tewkesbury. 1655. John Bryan, Samuel Toney.
- ?Winchcombe. 1654 Cromwell. Cornshaw Helme [incumbent], John Yeates, William Trap, Timothy Jordan.

HEREFORD.

The churches in this county seem to have been dispersed as curiously as in other parts, but also show traces of two, if not three, types of teaching which kept apart people in the same vicinity, although the whole number of Baptists seems to have been trifling.

Bredwardine, branch of Hay in Brecon. 1656 at Welsh Association.

Hereford. 1653 wrote to Hexham. R. London, Charles Powell, Steven Chamberlin. 1656 sent to Welsh Association at Brecknock, Richard Harrison [of Netherton in Gloucester 1653] signing "An Antidote &c."

Leominster. Two churches are discernible here, both sending a letter to Cromwell in concert with others in this county and in Gloucester.

- (1). John Tombes, John Patshall, John Wancklin, Francis Hay, Richard Burke junior. This church dated from "Leomington" to Cromwell, and from "Lintile" to Hexham in 1653. But Joshua Thomas copied from the church book that the formal constitution was only on 25 September 1656 in Patshall's house; so perhaps Linton, a village eastwards, was the previous meeting place of the semi-organised people.
- (2). A second church at "Leomington" with sixteen members wrote to Cromwell at the same time. On 17 September 1657 it applied successfully to the Midland Association at Alcester for admission. This is probably the society

with which Edward Price was afterwards connected, having members also in Hereford.

- *(3). Rowland Head of Nether Marsh was prominent in another group which stickled for the laying on of hands. As William Pardoe afterwards preached to it, it was probably General.

Weston under Penyard. 1653. John Skinner, John Street, John Skinner, Thomas Rudge.

Wormbridge. 1653. John Bell.

HERTFORD.

*Barnet. 1660 John Wells at Assembly.

*Berkhamstead. 1654 and 1656. Thomas Monk at Assembly as Messenger.

Hemel Hempstead in 1653 and 1654 sent messengers to the meetings of the Berkshire Association. George Kendall, M.A. the vicar, had been imprisoned in 1644 for admitting men to his pulpit to preach against infant baptism, and for declining to baptize the infants of his parishioners.

Kensworth also sent to that Association in 1653. The vicar Edward Harrison was head of the Baptist church, and became Elder of Petty France afterwards.

Watford separated from Wapping about this time, the local men being Richard Coleman, George Eve, John Crawley, John Reeve.

HUNTINGDON.

Fenstanton. 1645. Henry Denne, Edmund Male, John Denne, James Disbrowe, and Thomas Coxe the chief and first members. Many members lived in Cambridgeshire, and after the separation of those at Warboys from this church, they united with others at Chatteris in that county.

KENT.

On 25 May 1653, nineteen churches wrote to nominate a member to the Nominated Parliament; most were Baptist, all are given here.

Adisham. 1653. Charles Nicholls, David Austin.

Ashford. 1653. Ralph Fremly, M. Savory.

*Ashford. 1654. Samuel Fisher, M.A. at Assembly.

*Benenden. 1653. George Hamond, William Wickham, 1654 and 1656 George Hamon at Assembly.

Bethersden. 1653. John Fitneyes, William Spicer.

Biddenden. 1653. John Henden, William Greene.

- Brenchley. 1653. Matthew Person, Humphrey Milles.
- *Canterbury. 1653. Richard Beacham, Thomas Jarman.
Wrote to Fenstanton November 1654.
- Cranbrook. 1653. John Rabson, John Weller.
- *Cranbrook. 1653. Nathanael Rowe, Robert Tompson.
Rowe at Assembly 1654 as Messenger.
- Dartford. 1653. Nicholas Lockyer, Robert Joseph.
- *Dover. 1660. Richard Hobbs, Edward Prescott. This church had members all along the coast; Sandwich and Deal, Hythe and Folkestone soon hived from it.
- *Eythorne. William Giles, minister here 1792-1827, told Ivimey that there was proof of their existence as a church in 1624.
- *Feversham. 1654. John Parsons at Assembly.
[?Frittenden] near Cranbrook 1653. Richard Rabson, William Stead.
- *Maidstone. 1656. Joseph Wright at Assembly.
- Marden. Francis Cornwell M.A., the vicar, won over in 1644.
- Orpington. 1653. John Browne, Henry Whittacar.
- Rolvenden. 1653. Robert Miller, William Kinge.
- Romney. 1653. William Barworth, Jeffrey Neve.
- *St. Mary Cray. 1650. First entry in the Bessels Green book. John Reeve attended Assembly 1660, perhaps in 1654.
- *Sevenoaks. 1653. William Jeffery, John Cox. Jeffery at Assembly 1654 and 1656 as messenger.
- *Smarden. 1644 first entry. Richard Kingsnoth.
- *Speldhurst. 1653. John Car, William Jeffery.
- *Spillshill. 1663. Richard Kingsnorth, Andrew Hilles, Kingsnorth at Assembly 1654 as Messenger. He and Christopher Blackwood were supposed to be first ministers in 1645, by a deacon who in 1726 took much pains with the early history.
- *Staplehurst. 1653. Robert Joy, William Jowles.
- Westerham. 1653. Samuel Dawlin, M. Thorpe.

LANCASHIRE.

- Manchester. 1649 John Wigan housed the church in the Gate-house of the Earl of Derby's mansion [Chetham Hospital] opposite the Collegiate Church. J. Jones another minister. First church in the north.
- Warrington. 1653 heard of as already existing; see Cheshire, Hill Cliffe.

LEICESTER.

- *Bitteswell. 1651. Thomas Morris, Thomas Townsend.
This is the cause known now as Sutton in the Elms;
see article in Transactions I., 181.
- *Broughton. 1647 George Fox was present at Baptist
preaching.
- *Earl Shilton. 1651. Thomas Webster, Nathan Jones.
- *Gumley. 1652. William Burditt, John Coles. Compare
Theddingworth.
- *Leicester. 1651 and 1652. Coniers Congrave, Thomas
Rogers. 1656; William Inge and Thomas Christian
engaged at Stamford for the church.
- *Markfield. 1656. Association at Stamford sends visitors.
- *Mountsorrel. 1651. Robert Fielding, William Kendal. 1652
Edward Smith.
- *Normanton. 1651. William Parker, William Wilde.
- *Sileby. 1655. George Fox met Baptist here.
- *Theddingworth. 1651. William Poole, William Burdett.
See Gumley.
- *Twyford. 1665. John Bull and twelve others wrote to
Fenstanton.
- *Waltham. 1651. John Parker, Henry Redgate.
- *Whitwicke. 1651. George Moore, Robert Hebb.
- *Wymeswold. 1651. Richard Ley, William Francke.

LINCOLN.

- *Alford in South Marsh. 1651 by tradition.
- *Blankney. 1651. George Allen, John Lucas.
- *Boston. 1651. Richard Crawford, Edward Cock.
- *Bourn. 1657 received a letter from Samuel Loveday, given
in the Fenstanton records, page 224.
- *Bytham, 1656. Association at Stamford sent visitors.
- *Coningsby and Tattershall. 1651. John Lupton, William
Codlyn. 1654 Lupton at Assembly as Messenger.
- *Epworth and Butterwick. 1660. John Norfolk signed an
Apology to Charles II.
- *Goulceby. 1651. Thomas and Richard Drewry.
- *Killingholm. 1656 and 1660. John Wood at Assembly.
- *Kirton-in-Lindsey. 1663. John Kelsey in prison at
Nottingham.
- *Langtoft and Thurlby. 1651. Robert Pecke, John Beaver,
Robert Dyer. 1656. Division as to laying on of hands
(Fenstanton 203).
- *Leasingham. 1651. Robert Thompson, Richard Machyn.
1654 Thompson at Assembly.

- *Lincoln. 1651. Valentine James, John Johnjohns. 1660 William Paine at Assembly. This church wrote to Amsterdam on 5 September, 1630; Evans II., 44. It probably sprang from the influence of John Smyth.
- *North Willingham. 1651. Ralph James, Daniel Chesman.
- *Scotter.
- *Spalding. 1646. Henry Denne preached here.
- *Stamford. 1656. Association met here.
- *Surfleet. 1651. John Lacy, Robert Massey.
- *Swineshead. 1651. William Barnes, William Hart.
- *Welby. 1651. Thomas Everard senior, Robert Angleshaw.
- *Westby. 1651. John Allen, Robert Cock.

LONDON.

Before 1653 the movements of members and of churches were rather kaleidoscopic, and it is quite possible that some of the earlier groups are really the same as some later groups, meeting elsewhere.

Within the Walls.

- *Bell Alley, Coleman Street. 1647. Edward Barber, Thomas Lamb, &c. This was recognised by opponents as the chief church, and Denne under its auspices did evangelise many counties. It is probably due to the work of Thomas Helwys, who lived in Spitalfields in 1612; the earliest trace of this group is in Lamb's house at the Spital, though Barber is known in 1641. Later on it went to White's Alley. It died out at Peckham about 1900.

Broad Street, Glaziers' Hall. 1644. This home was not certainly occupied till 1649, when the church took the lead among the Particular Baptists, sending members out to Wales, Ireland, and Scotland, carrying on a vigorous correspondence, and in 1653 undertaking a general enquiry into the state of all sister churches. Edward Roberts was then chief. Thomas Gunne and Thomas Mabbatt were leaders at first.

Coleman Street. 1646. Hanserd Knowles and Thomas Holms. The place of meeting is uncertain before 1652. The church may be the same as that of Phelps and Heath in 1644. It entertained the great Assembly of 1689 on the Broken Wharf.

- *Coleman Street (? but place not really known). 1652. John More head of a church, succeeded at Christmas by Dr. Chamberlen. Probably parent of "Mill Yard" Seventh-day.

Convocation House, south-west of Pauls. 1657. John Simpson obtained an order from the Council to have this site granted for the use of his church.

Gracechurch Street. John Child had a church here, but the date is uncertain; probably he was at Newport Pagnell in 1669, and the existence of this church before is problematical unless it be connected with Paul Hobson. Child's conforming nearly wrecked it, but it may have joined the Chequer church.

Great Allhallows, Blackfriars. 1653. John Simpson, with Jessey, Knowles, Samuel Highland, Vavasor Powell, Christopher Feake. This was a constant centre of the Fifth Monarchy party.

Lothbury. Thomas Lamb and William Allen, Calvinists, had a church here till Baxter persuaded them to break it up. The tracts on the matter indicate about 1650-1663 as the period of its existence, roughly.

*Old Jewry. Jeremiah Ives, who in 1647 had been committed to prison by the House of Commons for an "Independent" plot, in 1655 published against infant baptism. The cause disappeared with his death in 1675.

*Stone Chapel, west end of Pauls. 1653. Here Captain Edmund Chillenden gathered a church in June, and here in 1658-9 took place the debate as to the Sabbath between Jeremy Ives on the one hand, Tillam, Chamberlen, and Coppinger on the other.

Swan Alley, Coleman Street. In 1645 Henry Jessey, who had been pastor of a church for eight years, was baptized, and the church thenceforward settled to Mixed Communion. In 1652 this is disclosed as the place of meeting by a letter to Hexham. The church disappeared after 1678.

Without the Walls.

Bishopsgate Without, Devonshire Square. This church was founded in 1633, but only adopted Baptist principles at a later date, Samuel Eaton who died in 1639 being one of the first baptized. In 1644 William Kiffin joined this church, and was soon its leader, as he remained till his death. As early as 1638 the church was worshipping here, and a building was erected wholly for its use about 1653: on or near the same site it met till the move to Stoke Newington in 1871.

- *Bull Stake Alley, Whitechapel. The circumstances under which this Seventh-day church arose are obscure. It obtained notoriety when its pastor, John James, was executed for preaching treason, and one of his quarters was stuck up opposite the meeting-house. It probably is the church of John More and Peter Chamberlen, mentioned in 1652; and is almost certainly the church which in 1691 bought the premises in Mill Yard, and now worships at Canonbury every Saturday.
- *Chequer without Aldgate. The letters of congratulation to Cromwell include one from this church signed by 14 men, including Samuel Oates and Edmund Chillenden. Under Charles II, Henry Danvers seems to have carried over to Calvinism. It dissolved in 1760.
- Cold Harbour, Wapping. 1633. John Spilsbury was the first Calvinist to adopt "re-baptizing" on confession of faith. The Watford records show this was the place of meeting about 1643. In 1644 George Tipping and Samuel Richardson were helping Spilsbury. The church in 1909 was displaced from Commercial Street.
- *Dean Street. 1660. William Russell at Assembly. This place first known about 1697, when it was given up for High Hall.
- *Dunning's Alley, Bishopsgate. When John Griffith died in 1700, his funeral sermon said he had been pastor for 54 years. He attended the Assembly in 1654 and 1656 as Elder. The church was declared dead by 1730.
- Paul's Alley, Barbican. John Gosnold, M.A., Master of the Charterhouse, gathered a Baptist church. It probably met in the Charterhouse during the Commonwealth, and then took a lease of a building erected for a play-house or music-house, which never obtained a licence. The church dissolved 1768.
- Petty France. 1642. The leaders in 1644 were Kilcop and Webb; Benjamin Cox came by 1646, and Edward Harrison of Kensworth probably after 1657 when he resigned that vicarage. By 1662 the church was meeting in a house in Petty France, adjoining Moorfields. To-day it and the Devonshire Square church meet at Stoke Newington.
- *Shad Thames. 1646 is given as the date when John Clayton gathered his people here; but as Daniel Featley in 1645 declared that Anabaptists had met near him for twenty years, and as we know that Elias Tookey did

Early Baptist Churches

in 1624 secede with eighteen others from the church of Helwys, this church is probably entitled to claim continuity back so far. It meets to-day in Deptford, Church Lane, the oldest existing Baptist church in England; Unitarian.

*Southwark. 1652. In that year William Rider separated some people from an older society. His successor, Benjamin Keach became a Calvinist; those who adhered to the man built at Horsleydown; those who adhered to the old principles apparently built at the Park. The two churches are represented by the Metropolitan Tabernacle and Borough Road.

*Stepney. 1660. Stephen Tory at Assembly.

*Tower Hill. 1655. Samuel Loveday wrote to Fenstanton at this date from this place, but had probably gathered his church earlier, as he was prominent from 1641. The church to-day has just given up its premises at Commercial Road East.

Two churches are very obscure; they are only known in 1644 and 1646; there is no hint where they met, or how they developed. Hobson and Gower headed the one, and both were soon working at Newcastle; perhaps their church lost its separate identity. Sheppard, Munday, Tipping, and Waters are members of the other, Tipping being asked to supply Watford at some date unknown.

NORFOLK.

Ingham. 1653 is claimed as the date of embodiment, with John Woolstone as pastor. No documents seem to survive earlier than the licence in 1672.

Norwich. 1653. John Tofte and Daniel Bradford signed to Cromwell about this date. And a little later, Timothy Armitage and John Eyre sent another letter. The apparent inference is that not only was there the Congregational church which in 1644 had separated from the Yarmouth brethren, and in 1647 had called Armitage; but also a second church already existed before his death in 1655. Yet in 1654 Bradford was chosen deacon of Armitage's church, and in February 1655-6 he and Tofte signed a letter sent by that church and entered in its book. In June 1656 the Yarmouth church bewailed the divisions and breaches, and about March 1656-7 a conference was held at Norwich acknowledging that some had quitted on account of baptism. The Norwich

Congregational book has no entry between January 1656-7 and May 1663, when we find that Tofte was still deacon, but it is implied that Bradford had ceased to be. And in October 1667, after long abstinence from meeting, Bradford was declared no longer a member. It is not easy to interpret these notices and explain the ambiguous relation of Tofte and Bradford to their old church and to a nascent Baptist Church. The ambiguity lasted till at least 1680, when the Yarmouth church still spoke of "the Church of Norwich" as if there were but one; though beyond all question there were two meeting-places in 1669, and they were separately licenced in 1672, Bradford declaring himself Baptist. In view of this, the prima facie reading appears correct, and the Baptists had organised themselves within, yet somewhat apart from, the others as early as 1653, while yet their leaders were willing to accept office in the old church even later.

Norwich Seventh-day. 1656. The troubles of this date referred to by Yarmouth are explained by the fact that by August, Christopher Poolye had held two baptisms at Beccles. From that date till 1668 he haunted the district, being reported to the king as the grand dipper in Norfolk. Brabourne left £10 to a Seventh-day church here, to be distributed by Poolie, one of the elders.

Pulham St. Mary. 1645-6 Wildman was labouring here. By 1647 a Baptist church was fully organised. About 1654 Samuel Prentice, Thomas Benton, and Walter Reyner signed two letters to Cromwell. Benton senior held the chapelry of the parish!

Stratton is mentioned in 1647 as having a Baptist church. The rector here was Thomas Benton junior. One or other Benton afterwards became pastor of the Congregational church at Wattisfield.

Wymondham. 1653. The letter to Cromwell hence was signed by Christopher Poolye and Thomas Manfield.

Yarmouth has another obscure origin. In 1624-1626 the bishop was busy punishing several "Anabaptists" for keeping conventicles; but the name seems used loosely, for some of them subsequently joined the Congregational church, having their children baptized on account of the parents' faith. Before that time of union there was a member of the Congregational church, Thomas Tracy, who as late as 1651 had a child christened. After the

appearance of Pooly he was expelled "as one that did make divisions" on the ordinance of baptism. Thus 1657 seems to be the time when Baptist teaching was rife here. The next glimmer is when in 1672 he was licenced, with others; the presumption is that some kind of church life had been kept up. Under the influence of Grantham at Norwich, there appeared a General Baptist church here, which probably absorbed these Calvinists.

NORTHAMPTON.

- *Newton, [near Kettering] to be stirred up in 1656 by messengers from Stamford. See Fenstanton Records, page 196.
- *Peterborough. 1653 called in by Langtoft and Thurlby. 1656 John Dargen, Isaac Spence and Christopher Bell sign the circular letter from the Association at Stamford.
- *Ravensthorpe. 1651 Benjamin Morley and Francis Stanley sign the Confession. 1652 Stanley and Robert Teaslow write to Cromwell. 1656 Morley and Stanley appointed at Stamford.
- *Wakerley, with Thorpe in Rutland. 1651 James Tentoft and Anthony Snell junior sign the Confession. 1656 Snell and others invoke Fenstanton, as Thorpe casts off laying on of hands.

NORTHUMBERLAND.

- Hexham. 1652 church founded by Tillam. Early records printed by the Hanserd Knollys Society. John Ward and Richard Orde first elders. In 1655 the members toward Derwent hived off under John Ward.
- Newcastle. Owned by Hexham as the only church in those parts at all earlier. Thomas Gower (of London 1644), Paul Hobson (witnessing a marriage at Hexham 1653), Captain Simpson, Captain Mason, and Robert Blenkinsop some of the chief members, of whom Gower seems the most permanent.

NOTTINGHAM.

- *Nottingham. 1650. George Fox met a Baptist soldier hence; 1654 Rice Jones turned from Baptists to Ranters and opposed him; 1656 John Kirby at Stamford engaged for the church. Colonel and Mrs. Hutchinson won by a cannonier.

*Rempstone. 1656 to be stirred up by Kirby. 1654 a Reeve attended the Assembly; it may be William Reeve of this place.

Wingford.

OXFORD.

Coate and Longworth. 1656, December 12; ninety-six members separated amicably from the church at Abingdon: John Coombe, John and Thomas Jones heading the list.

Hook Norton. 1655 James Wilmot and Matthew Taylor signed at the formation of the Midland Association.

*Horley. 1651. John Danvers, John Numan sign the Confession of the Midland General Baptists.

Oxford. 1653 joined the Berkshire Association.

Pyrton. 1653 joined the Berkshire Association.

Tetsworth. 1653 entertained the Berkshire Association in March.

Watlington. 1653 joined the Berkshire Association.

Wormsley. 1652 October 8, Berkshire Association formed here.

RUTLAND.

*Burley. 1651 John Freeman and W. Dalby signed the Midland Confession. 1653, called in to assist Langtoft and Thirlby.

*Thorp. 1651 James Tontoft and Anthony Snell sign for Thorp and Wakerley. In 1656 Robert Ward and James Tiptaft here oppose laying on of hands, and trouble ensues (Fenstanton 206).

*Tixover. 1651. Abraham Day and Matthew Lay sign.

*Twyford. 1656 to be stirred up.

*Uppingham. 1656 invited to subscribe to expense of messengers (Fenstanton 196).

*Whitwell. 1656 George More engages to subscribe.

SALOP.

*Bridgnorth. 1652 James Brown and Thomas Jefferyes write to Cromwell.

*Shrewsbury. 1653, August 13. Timothy Seymour baptized at Nantwich and added to the church—here?

SOMERSET.

Bridgwater. 1655 scene of important meeting. 1656 Alexander Atkins and Tobias Wells sign the Confession drawn up by Collier.

Chard. 1655 at Bridgwater; visited by Jessey. 1656 Robert Channon and John Sprake.

* Hatch. 1655 at Bridgwater. 1656 George Parsons. Montacute. 1656 Thomas Bud.

Paulton. Robert Hell is named at the beginning of the church book as having gathered the church in the latter part of Oliver's times.

"Ryden." 1656 Robert Adridge.

Somerton. 1655 at Bridgwater; visited by Jessey. 1656 William Scriven and William Anger.

Stogumber. 1655 at Bridgwater. 1656 William Hare.

Taunton. 1655 at Bridgwater; visited by Jessey. 1656 Thomas Mercer.

Wedmore. 1655 at Bridgwater. 1656 Thomas Urch and Richard Coals.

Wells. 1655 at Bridgwater; visited by Jessey. 1656 David Barret and Thomas Savery.

Wincanton. 1656. Blaze Allen and Ambrose Brook.

STAFFORD.

"Berryhill." 1652 to Cromwell; Thomas Hamersly, John Slacke.

*Burton on Trent. 1652, Robert Clarke, Thomas Wright. 1655, Robert Holfe and William Tomblinson for the Derby and Burton church.

*Litchfield. 1652, Robert Prittie, Francis Silvester.

*Shugborough. 1652, Edward Hill, William Sherbrooke.

*Stafford. 1652, J. Darnen, Edward Love.

*Walsall. 1652, Thomas Cumberlidge, Robert Stokesbury.

SURREY.

*Croydon. 1660 Francis Smith was at Assembly; whether he was yet connected with this town is uncertain.

*Elstead. 1656 John Wheeler at Assembly as Messenger. Kingston. 1653 joined the Berks Association.

SUSSEX.

*Chichester. 1654 James Sicklemore at Assembly as Messenger.

*Horsham. 1654, 1656, 1660 Matthew Caffin at Assembly as Messenger.

WARWICK.

Alcester. 1655 Thomas Arme and Stephen Wade signed at the formation of the Midland Association.

*Coventry. 1626. One of the five General Baptist Churches disclosed by the correspondence with Amsterdam.

Coventry. 1643 Benjamin Cox disputed on baptism with Baxter.

*Easenhall. 1651. John Onely and Will Perkins signed Midland Confession.

*Marston. 1651. Richard Wills and Thomas Jeffes signed Midland Confession.

Warwick. 1655 Daniel King and Henry Vincent signed at the formation of the Midland Association, the preparatory meeting having been here on 3rd May. George Fox found Baptists here the same year.

WILTS.

Calne. Western Association.

Devizes. 1649 evangelists began to meet, with Mr. and Mrs. John Freme.

Porton, Chalk, Stoford, Amesbury, Sarum, and Wallop. 1655 organised, John Rede, Henry Pen, and Edward Bundy to administer ordinances.

*Salisbury. One of five churches corresponding with Amsterdam in 1626. Evans II, 26.

Southwick or North Bradley. 1655 dismissed a member to Porton. 1656 William Crabb and Nicholas Elliott sign Somerset Confession.

Trowbridge.

WORCESTER.

Bewdley. 1653 Thomas Bolstone, Philip Mun, and Robert Goodlad wrote to Hexham. In September 1658 the church joined the Midland Association. John Eckels supposed to have been baptized here by John Tombes, who held the living for a year or two not later than 1650. At what precise time he transferred his energies to Bromsgrove is uncertain.

*Netherton near Dudley. 1654, a baptism recorded in the church book.

Pershore.

Worcester.

YORK.

Horton near Bradford. 1655 to Cromwell. David Lumbey, John Clayton.

Pontefract.

Stokesley. 1653 William Kaye the parish minister and nineteen others were baptized by Tillan of Hexham.

BRECKNOCK.

Brecknock. 1656 entertains Association, which publishes "An Antidote."

Hay. 1650. Thomas Watkins and Walter Prosser. 1654 Charles Garson also. 1656, Bredwardine in Hereford and Clydach, branches.

Llanafan. Evan Bowen and Thomas Evans.

Llangorse. 1656 John Edwards? At Association.

CARMARTHEN.

Carmarthen entertains 1651. 1654 Robert Morgan and Rhydderch Thomas. William Thomas in the county.

GLAMORGAN.

Aberavon. 1654 entertains Association.

Bridgend. Thomas Joseph, ejected from Llangeinor.

Cadoxton. Captain Jenkyn Jones was Vicar.

Gelligaer. 1649-50, David Davis the incumbent from Ilston.

Glyncorwg. Howell Thomas ejected hence.

Ilston. 1650 entertains Association. 1654. John Myles, Morgan Jones, William Thomas, Morgan Jones, Harry Griffith, John Davis, Hugh Matthews.

Laleston. Morgan Jones succeeded Theodore Price in the living; died before 1660?

Llange.

Llanharan. 1650 at Association. 1653 under the name Llantrisant sends to meeting at Abergavenny. 1654 entertains; David Davis, Thomas Joseph, Howel Thomas, Thomas Jones. [Thomas: Address to the Reader p. v. expressly rectifying.].

Llanmadock in Gower. The other Morgan Jones, "an honest ploughman," was ejected from the living.

MONMOUTH.

Abergavenny. 1653 William Pritchard, Richard Rogers and Anthony Hare wrote to Hexham. Entertains Association, has Tombes over from Leominster to dispute with Craggs and Vaughan. 1654 Pritchard, Richard Rosser, Anthony Harry, Thomas James, and Richard Jones. 1656. Abbot, the ejected vicar, was a Baptist.

Llangwm. William Milman, "a Sabbatharian Anabaptist" itinerating in the county, settled here after 1660.

Tredunnoch. 1656. Walter Prosser ejected hence.

MONTGOMERY.

Newtown. Captain Vavasor Powell, baptized about 1655.

PEMBROKE.

Rushacre. Seat of Griffith Howell, who died in 1706, early convert of William Jones of Carmarthenshire.