

1820

# MINUTES

1820

OF THE

KENTUCKY BAPTIST  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

## SALEM ASSOCIATION

OF

# BAPTISTS,

HELD AT COXE'S CREEK MEETING HOUSE, NELSON COUNTY, ON  
THE FOURTH FRIDAY AND SATURDAY IN SEPTEMBER,  
1820, BEING THE 22d AND 23d  
OF SAID MONTH.

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REPOSITORY OFFICE,

Bardstown, Ky. 1820.



# MINUTES, &C.



1st. THE Introductory Sermon was preached by brother *David Thurman*, from the 5th chapter of Romans, 1st verse: "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

2nd. Received letters and messengers from the following churches, to wit: (those in *Italics*, are ordained Ministers.)

CHURCHES	MESSENGERS.	Baptised.	Dismissed by Let.	Recd by Letter.	Excommunicated.	Restored.	Recd by Relation Dead.	Total
Cedar Creek	<i>J. Morris</i> , W. Abel, J. Rogers,	0	5	1	1	1	0	69
Coxe's Creek,	<i>Moses Pierson</i> , Isaac Taylor, W. King Wm May,	1	10	5	4	0	0	189
Simpson's Creek,	<i>Walter Stallard</i> , Wm. Davis D. Lewis, P. Tichenor,	10	11	4	2	1	2	259
Mill creek, N. C.	<i>T. Linthecum</i> , T. Hubbard, T. Lewis, R. Batsel,	0	9	1	1	1	0	37
Mount Moriah,	<i>J. Hamilton</i> , B. Harned,	0	2	1	0	0	0	39
Wilson's Creek,	<i>D. Walker</i> , W. Chenowith, Jas. Caldwell,	0	4	0	3	0	0	30
Rolling Fork,	<i>S. Miller</i> , J. Edelin, M. Marshall	0	1	0	0	0	0	29
Severus' Valley,	<i>Anthony Vernon</i> , J. Rogers,	2	3	1	0	0	1	45
Noiin,	<i>A. McDugal</i> , D. Thurman, C. Lucas, C. Carman, W. Edwards,	12	18	2	2	0	0	146
Bethel,	<i>W. Cash</i> , R. Tabb, J. Gray,	2	4	1	2	0	0	56
Mill Creek, H. C.	<i>J. J. Shelton</i> W. Hawkins J. Nall	5	7	3	0	0	0	73
Union,	<i>Thomas Duval</i> ,	0	6	4	0	0	0	59
Little Union,	<i>A. M'Donnall</i> , Geo. Wells, A. Bridges,	2	4	1	2	1	0	117
Otter Creek,	<i>S. Brown</i> , Tho. Robinson, J. Vanmeter,	24	2	3	0	0	1	31
Salem,	<i>J. Lewis</i> , W. Kendall,	0	2	0	0	0	0	26
Mount Zion,	<i>David Greenewalt</i> ,	0	0	3	5	0	2	39
Rudes' Creek,	<i>John C. Hicks</i> , N. English, G. Helm, J. Bland,	20	0	2	0	0	0	47
Newhope,	<i>M. Nall</i> , W. Kendrick, jr.	3	1	2	0	0	0	30
		81	84	38	21	4	3	1640

3d. Brother Thomas Hubbard chosen Moderator, Jo. Lewis clerk.

4th. Received letters and messengers from the following corresponding associations, to wit:—From Elkhorn, no letter sent but brother Edmund Waller received as her Messenger—from Long Run, by Brethren Benjamin Allen, Geo. Waller, Francis Davis & Wm. Stout—from South District, W. Stirman, & Wm. Thurman—from Green River, by Ralph Petty & A. Nicholds—from Bussels Creek, by Standley Walker, Horatio Chandler, & Samuel Owens—from Goshen, Samuel Anderson & Isaac Whitaker.

5th. A letter from Blue River association, state of Indiana, requesting a correspondence with us, which was agreed to, and her Messengers, Brethren James Case and Jacob Fowler, took their seats accordingly.



CIRCULAR LETTER.

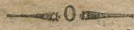
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DEAR BRETHREN—It is customary with us at our annual meeting; to address you by letter—what we have done our minutes will shew. The subject of this address will be the antiquity of our faith. All sects trace their origin to the Apostles: or at least to the early ages of christianity; but many have taken much pains and labored hard to cut off the baptists from this common retreat; they have often asserted, and tried to prove, that the people, now called baptists, originated with the mad-men of Munster, about the year 1522. We have only to say to this statement, that it is not true: and notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, we still date the origin of our sentiments and the beginning of our denomination, about the year of our Lord 29 or 30; for at that time, John, the baptist, began to immerse *professed believers* in Jordan and Enon. The first christians, we believe, under the gospel dispensation, were all baptists, and we think they will all be baptists again, when they are all brought to keep the ordinances of Christ as they were first “delivered to the saints.” For almost three centuries baptism was, in the main, rightly administered by all parties; for they required a profession of faith, and all immersed. We do not pretend that the primitive saints were called baptists—all went under the general name of christians; and when they began to file off into parties, they took the names of the men by whom they were led: it is not the history of a name, but the prevalence of a principle, of which we are in search. No denomination of protestants can trace the origin of its name farther back than about the time of the reformation; and most of them have originated since that period. We suppose, it was about this time that our brethren began to be called baptists instead of *ana-baptists*. But that all the primitive christians would have been called baptists, if sentimental names had then been in use; and that there always has been a people on earth, from the introduction of christianity, who have held the leading sentiments that the baptists now hold, and always have been peculiarly distinguished, is a point which we most firmly believe, and which we shall now attempt to prove. We know that all denominations take this ground, & attempt to prove that their sentiments have existed from the Apostles through every age. We are not about to dispute the pretensions or proof of any one sect in christendom. It is not our object to shew what is not true respecting them; but what is true respecting ourselves. With most dissenting denominations, the baptists find something with which they agree; but in the article of baptism they differ from all. While their brethren all around admit infants to baptism, they have always confined the right to *professed believers*; and, a baptism *without immersion*, is, in their opinion, *no baptism*. The baptists have been distinguished from other sects, not only in the views of the subjects and mode of baptism, but they have always held to other sentiments, peculiar to themselves, and which they consider important truths. The supporters of *believers baptism*, have, under every form of government, been the advocates for liberty, & for this reason, they have never flourished much, except in those governments where some degree of freedom has been maintained. Arbitrary states have always oppressed them, and driven them for refuge to milder regions. They cannot live in tyrannical states, and free countries are the only places to seek for them; and all the favor they, as christians, have asked of civil governments, has been to give them their bibles and let them alone. The absolute independence of churches they have maintained. Learning they have esteemed in its proper place; but they have also uniformly maintained that the servants of God, may preach his gospel without it. The distinction between their ministers and brethren, is less than in almost any other denomination of christians, we have attempted to give a brief description of some of the leading principles of the baptists, and wherein they differ from other sects of christians. We will now endeavor to give some few sketches



3 Thomas Hubbard

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as of the history of that class of christians, whom, we consider, held the same faith, in the primitive ages, that the baptists now do;—and here we have to embrace a period of about fifteen hundred years, most of which time the church was in the wilderness and for that reason we cannot expect to learn much respecting her. No human pen has recorded her history with any degree of correctness. In travelling down the records of a worldly sanctuary, we get a glimpse, now and then of the friends of godliness, and we generally behold them destitute, afflicted and tormented. Antichrist sent his archers into the wilderness, to hunt the disciples of Christ, and by them some reports have been communicated of their character and situation; but, after all, we know very little of the real church of Christ for the long lapse of many hundred years. From the New Testament account of the primitive christians, we are led to think they were baptists; but we will quote the account given of them by a few authors, and then the reader may judge for himself. Mosheim was no friend to the baptists, and yet he has made many important concessions in their favor. In relating the history of the primitive church, he gives a description which will not certainly apply to any sect in christendom, except the baptists. "Baptism," he observes, "was administered in the first century, without the public assemblies, in places appointed for that purpose, and was performed by immersion of the whole body in water." Respecting of church discipline, the same author observes, "the churches in those early times, were entirely independent, none of them subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each one governed by its own rules and laws. A bishop or preacher, during the first and second century, was a person who had the care of one christian assembly; in this assembly he acted not so much with the authority of a master as with the zeal and diligence of a faithful servant."—[Mosheim, vol. 1, page 103, 104, 105, and 126.

"There was," says Robinson, "among primitive christians, an uniform belief that Jesus was the Christ, and a perfect harmony of affection. When congregations multiplied, so that they became too numerous to assemble in one place, they parted into separate companies; and so, again and again; but there was no schism, on the contrary, all held a common union, and a member of one company was a member of all; if any person removed from one place to reside at another, he received a letter of attestation which was given and taken as proof. One church never pretended to inspect the affairs of another, nor was there any dominion over the conscience of any individual. Overt acts were the only objects of censure, and censure was nothing but voting a man out of the community." We think if any candid man will compare the different denominations of christians of the present day, with these descriptions of the primitive church, he will not be at a loss to determine which comes the nearest to it. But Mr. Robinson goes farther & determines the matter, just as a baptist believes. He says, "during the three first centuries, christian congregations, all over the east, subsisted in separate and independent bodies, unsupported by government, and consequently without any secular power over one another, and though all the fathers of the four first ages down to Jerome, were of Greece, Syria, and Africa, and though they give great numbers of histories of the baptism of adults, yet there is not one record of the baptism of a child, till the year 370, when Galatis, the dying son of the Emperor Valens, was baptised by order of a monarch who swore he would not be contradicted. The age of the prince is uncertain, and the assigning of his illness as the cause of his baptism, indicates clearly, that infant baptism was not in practice. The first council of Nice took notice of two sort of dissenters. The cathari or puritans, and paulianists; the first baptised all that joined them, by trine immersion, (i. e. to dip three times) on their own profession of faith. The latter baptised by dipping 'once.'" Benedict says, in his History of the Baptists, p. 102, "that the established Greek church held both the subject and the mode of



baptism, as the first institution prescribed for 4 or 500 years, losing the subject by degrees, but retaining the mode to this day," (1813.) And that the bulk of the dissenters, perhaps all, retained both the subject & the mode, always dipping, and never dipping any but on their own personal professions of faith. He also says, much the same may be said respecting the church of Rome. Mosheim, always disposed to be the advocate of the great body, which he calls the church, has, amidst his severe strictures on the Novatians, (a dissenting sect,) given them a character which all the evangelical christians in the main will approve. "This sect," says he, "cannot be charged with having corrupted the doctrine of christianity by their opinions; their crime was, that by the unreasonable severity of their discipline, they gave occasion to the most deplorable divisions, and made an unhappy rent in the church. They considered the christians as a society where virtue and innocence reigned universally; and none of whose members, from their entrance into it had defiled themselves with any erroneous crime, it was from hence also, that they assumed the title of the pure. And what shewed still a more extravagant degree of vanity and arrogance, [this language is perfectly understood by all advocates for believers baptism.] they oblige such as come over to them from the general body of christians, to submit to be baptised a second time, as a necessary preparation for entering into their society.—(Mosheim, vol. 2, p. 240.

Robinson, in his ecclesiastical researches, page 240, says, "while dissenters were permitted to reside in Spain, they were in general called ana-baptists; they baptised converts from pagans and Jews, and re-baptised all catholics, who came over to their communion, and they baptised none without a personal confession of faith." We will next turn our attention to the great body of the Waldensian christians who appear to have kept "the faith as it was once delivered to the saints," in the dark ages of popery. The Waldensian heresy was by the catholics counted the eldest in the world, and the most formidable to the church of Rome. This people, for a number of centuries had their chief residence in the vallies of Piedmont, and from thence, in process of time they spread over most of the countries in Europe. Doctor Allix, in his history of the churches of Piedmont, gives this account of the origin of the Waldenses, that for 300 years or more, the bishop of Rome attempted to subjugate the church of Milan under his jurisdiction, and at last the interest of Rome grew too potent for the church of Milan, planted by one of Christs disciples, insomuch, that the bishop and the people, rather than own their jurisdiction, retired to the vallies of Luceni and Augrogne, and thence were called Valdens Waldenses, or the people of the vallies. President Edwards, as quoted by Mr. Merrill, in his miniature history of the baptist, has the following observation respecting these ancient witnesses for the truth: "It is supposed that these people first betook themselves to this desert, secret place, among the mountains, to hide themselves from the severity of heathen persecutions, which were before Constantine the great." And thus the woman fled into the wilderness from the face of the serpent, as related in the Revelation. Crang, in his history of the United Brethren, as quoted by Ivimey, page 57, has the following statement respecting the origin of the Waldenses: "These ancient christians who, beside the several names of reproach given them, were at length denominated Waldenses. They date their origin from the beginning of the fourth century, when one Leo, at the great revolution in religion, under Constantine the great, opposed the innovation of Sylvister Bishop of Rome, &c. Everoinus, of Steinfield, in the diocege of Cologne, wrote to Bernard a little before the year 1140, concerning certain heretics (as he called them) in his neighborhood, he was perplexed in his mind concerning them, and wrote for a resolution of his doubts to the renowned abbot. Some extracts of this letter are quoted by Benedict, in his his history of the baptists, p. 113 and 114, and is as follows: "There have been some heretics discovered among us, near Cologne. One of their bishops and his companions, openly opposed us in the assembly of the



the clergy, and laity, in the presence of the arch-bishop of Cologne and of many of the nobility, defending their heresies by the words of Christ and the Apostles. They do not believe infant baptism to be a duty, alleging that passage of the gospel, whosoever shall believe and be baptised shall be saved."— Chessanian, in his history of the Albigenes, has given the following very candid account of those people. "Some writers," says he, "affirm the Albigenes approved not the baptism of infants; others, that they entirely slighted this holy sacrament, as it were of no use to either great or small, the same may be said of the Waldenses, though some affirm that they have always baptized their children, this difference of authors kept me sometime in suspense, before I could come to be resolved on which side the truth lay, at last considering what St. Bernard saith of this matter in his 66<sup>th</sup> Homily on the second chapter of the Song of Songs, and the reason he brings to refute this error, and also what he wrote, I cannot deny but the Albigenes, for the greater part, were of this opinion, and that which confirms me yet more in this belief is, that in the history of the city of Treves there were some who denied that the sacrament of baptism was available to the salvation of infants, and one Catharine Saube who was burnt at Mountpelier for being of the same mind of the Albigenes in not believing the traditions of the Romish church was of the same mind, respecting infant baptism as it is recorded in the Register of the town house of the said city of Mountpelier, the truth is (continues Chessanian) they did not reject the sacrament and say, it was useless, but only counted it unnecessary to infants, because they are not of age to believe, nor capable of giving evidence of their faith. The above statement in part is corroborated by doctor Wall in his history of infant baptism, and as he was desirous of establishing the contrary opinion, his concessions in our favour are certainly of weight. Speaking of the Petrobrussians whom he calls a sect of the Waldenses, he says withdrawing themselves from the church of Rome, which was then very corrupt they did reckon infant baptism as one of the corruptions and accordingly renounced it, & practised only adult baptism (part 2d, chapter 7th sections 5, 6, 7) Mosheim in his ecclesiastical history speaking of Peter de Bruis who was a celebrated itinerant preacher and who was burnt to death by an enraged populace at St. Giles, in the year 1130, says it is certain, that one of his tenets was that no person whatever was to be baptized before they were come to the full use of reason. The testimony of Mr. Brandt respecting the antiquity of the churches and of their sentiments respecting the baptism of infants is of importance to our argument, he says that the errors and crafty inventions of popery had never been able to find a passage to these people since being shut up in their vallies separate from the rest of the world, and conversing chiefly among themselves— they had retained a great deal of the simplicity and purity of the apostolic doctrine, that this antiquity of the doctrine of the waldenses is acknowledged even by their greatest enemies, some of them likewise rejected infant baptism.—To corroborate this last clause, many things are produced by Doctor Allix in his remarks on the ancient churches of Piedmont, and he comes to the following conclusion: let things have been as they might, it is plain they were utterly against infant baptism. About the year 1100 lived the noted Arnold of Brescia, who eminently opposed the Romish corruptions and amongst some notions imputed to him, it is observed there was yet a more heinous thing laid to his charge which was this, that he was unsound in his judgment about infant baptism, there also is a letter of Everenus to St. Bernard wrote a little before the year 1146 wherein he speaks clearly of a sect which approved of adult baptism; the words of the letter are these: "They make void the priesthood of the church, and condemn the sacrament, besides baptism, only, and this only in those who were come to age, who they say are baptized by Christ himself, whosoever be the ministers of the sacrament. They do not believe infant baptism alledging that place of the Gospel whosoever shall believe & be baptuzed shall be saved."



The same learned gentleman gives us an extract taken by Claudius Caisserd, out of an old manuscript wrote by Rainerus a friar against the Waldenses, wherein he has these words: they say that when first a man is baptized, then he is received into this sect. Some of them hold that Baptism is of no advantage to infants, because they cannot actually believe (Ivimey page 60, 61, 62, 63 & 64.) Dr. Wall allows, that the Lateran council, under Innocent the 2nd in the year 1139, condemned Peter Bruis, and Arnold of Brescia, who seems to have been a follower of Bruis, for rejecting infant baptism (Ivimey page 25.) Bishop Bossuet, a catholic, complaining of Calvins party, for claiming an apostolical succession through the Waldenses, observes "you adopt Henry and Peter Bruis among your predecessors, but both of them, every body knows, were ana-baptist," "the Waldenses," says Francowitz, "scent a little of ana-baptism;" "yes," replies Limborch, "to say honestly what I think of all the modern sects of christians, the Dutch baptist most resembles both the Albigenses, and the Waldenses; but particularly the latter." [Robinsons researches page 476.] To recapitulate the sum of the preceding extracts, we find that the Waldenses, by whatever name they were called, were constantly, for the space of many centuries, charged with the heinous crime of denying infant baptism; and that the reasons which they give for so doing as taken from the mouths of their enemies, were many of them verbatim and all of them in substance just such as the baptist now give; have not then the baptists good reasons for believing that the Waldenses were generally of their sentiments. Doctor Mosheim, notwithstanding all the hard names which he has bestowed on the baptist, has in the following passage, put this matter beyond all doubt or disputation; the true origin (says he) of that sect which acquired the denomination of the ana-baptist by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those who came over to their communion, is hid in the remote depth of antiquity, and is of consequence difficult to be ascertained, (this we look upon as a most important concession by one of our most powerful adversaries) this account utterly refutes the long repeated slanderous story that the baptist originated with the mad men of Munster, in the year 1522. This uncertainty, continues the doctor, will not appear surprising when it is considered, that this sect started up all of a sudden in several countries at the same point of time, under leaders of different talents, and different intentions, and at the very point of time when the first contest of the reformers with the Roman pontiff drew the attention of the world, and employed the pens of the learned in such a manner, as to render all other objects and incidents almost matters of indifference, the modern Menonists not only considered themselves as the descendants of the Waldenses, who were so grievously oppressed and persecuted by the despotic heads of the Roman church, but pretended moreover to be the purest offspring of these respectable sufferers, being equally averse to all principles of rebellion on the one hand, and all suggestions of fanaticism on the other, (in the above quotation it is acknowledged that the origin of the baptist is hid in the remote depths of antiquity) In the following passage the same subject is amplified and more fully explained, it may be observed that the Menonites (that is the baptist of Germany) are not entirely mistaken when they boast of their descent from the Waldenses and other ancient sects; who are usually considered as witnesses of the truth in the times of universal darkness and superstition, before the rise of Luther and Calvin, these lay concealed in almost all the countries of Europe; many persons who adhered to the doctrine which the Waldenses, Wickliffites and Hussites, had maintained, viz: that the kingdom of Christ or the visible church be had established upon earth, was an assembly of true and real saints, and ought therefore to be inaccessible to the wicked, and unrighteous; and also exempt from all those institutions which human precedence suggests, to oppose the progress of iniquity or to correct and reform transgressors; this maxim is the true source of all the peculiarities that are to be found in the religious doctrine and



Discipline of the Menonites, and it is most certain that the greater part of these peculiarities were approved of by many of those who before the dawn of the reformation, entertained the notion already mentioned, relating to the visible church of Christ, (Moshelm vol. 4, pages 424 & 429,) this grand maxim (says Benedict.) "which is thus acknowledged to be the true source of all the peculiarities of the Menonitests and of all Waldenses, is most fairly stated, & when stripped of all the verbose attire, with which the learned doctor has arrayed it is by every baptist most heartily adopted, this maxim goes to exclude all the inventions and traditions of men and infant baptism amongst the rest; with this maxim in his heart and his Bible in his hand a baptist marches forward in his religious course, and leaves the world and worldly christians to dispute among themselves, about the traditions of the Fathers, and rites which God never commanded" (Benedict's history of the baptists, page 130.) We know that Irenaeus is represented as saying, "the church received a tradition from the apostles to administer baptism to little children or infants," Irenaeus lived in the second century, he is said to have been a disciple of Polycarp, and Polycarp was a disciple of John the Evangelist; this would seem to be getting within between one and two hundred years of the point. But doctor John Gill challenged the whole literary world to produce such a passage from the writings of Irenaeus; it was afterwards acknowledged that Origin, of the third century and not Irenaeus of the second, was the writer intended, (see Backus' history, volume 2 page 238.) But it is generally believed that Tertullien of Africa in the third century is the first writer who makes mention of infant baptism; "and he," says doctor Gill, "opposed it, but this opposition is considered by pedo-baptists as evidence in the case," "if" say they, "infant baptism was not then practised why did the Fathers oppose it," but others make very different reflections on the subject. The catechumen state had arisen to some degree of maturity in the third century—catechumens were those who were put into a class to be catechised and instructed into the first rudiments of christianity, and when they had acquired a certain degree of knowledge or had been in a catechumen state a certain time, they were baptized. This method of making christians is supposed to have originated at Alexandria in Egypt, and from thence in process of time spread over the christian world. Nothing of this catechumen state is found in the New Testament, and at what time it commenced we have not been able to learn—Robinson supposes it was at the close of the second or the beginning of the third century. It gained maturity in its progress, and continued a popular and prevalent establishment, so long as it was needful, catechumens were generally persons in a state of minority, sometimes however, those of mature age were enrolled among children, and when christianity became a political engine, princes were added to the list, and were catechised a while before they were baptized. The catechumen state continued as long as minors were subjects of baptism, but when it was found out by the skillful priests that infants came into the world crying for baptism, and that they would be doomed to eternal perdition, if they should die without it, the business of catechising become not only useless, but impracticable—godfathers and godmothers stood forward to answer all the questions which children used to answer for themselves, they took the whole responsibility of their faithfulness upon themselves, and promised what was never or seldom performed either by the children or sponsors. The catechumen state being thus superceded by a more expeditious method of making christians, it dwindled away and fell into disuse.

We will close this letter with a few observations. The Waldenses, like the scriptures, have been resorted to by all parties of protestants, in defence of their peculiar sentiments, this circumstance induced many learned men of different communities to investigate the history of this people with more care & attention than it is any ways likely would otherwise have been done, they doubtless had no thought of helping the cause of the baptists, who were at the time of these altercations universally despised and trodden under foot, but it has so



happened that these researches have furnished them with important evidence which was not intended for their use, and it now appears plain, that of all parties the baptists have the best claim to the ancient Waldenses, as their predecessors, but those researches which assisted the baptists in their inquiries into the character of the Waldenses have caused them much perplexity and trouble, for the researches having each one a different standard set up went in quest of a people who would conform to it—the natural consequence was, that they were all tempted to mould the character of the Waldenses to suit their views. The pious Milner is a notable example of this kind. But a number of older writers who do not seem to have thought of the baptists nor in the least suspected that they would desire any advantage from their statements, have told without reserve all that the accusers of their people said of their rejecting infant baptism, and they have also stated their arguments in favor of the baptism of believers and of them only. Little, says Robinson, did the old Waldenses think when they were held in universal abhorrence, and committed every where to the flames, that a time would come when the honour of a connexion with them would be disputed by different parties of the highest reputation, so it happened however at the reformation, and every reformed church put in its claim, uninterrupted succession was the cause of these different claims, but all attempts to prove such a succession have proved ineffectual.

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