

Chapter 13 Colonial and Early American Sabbatarians

In 1664, twenty-five year old Stephen Mumford (1639-1707) and his thirty year old wife Ann (Taylor) Mumford (1634–1697/98), members at the Natton-Tewksbury Sabbatarian Church in the far west of England left for the New World and settled in Newport, Rhode Island. Prompting their move were the severe restrictions of the Conventicle Act of 1664 significantly restricting religious freedom in England as well as their seeking economic opportunities in the American colonies.

The Conventicle Act forbade any religious assembly of more than five persons and the family of the house, except in accordance with the official *Book of Common Prayer*. The Act provided severe penalties, including the death penalty for repeated violations. The colony of Rhode Island offered some degree of religious freedom for nonconformists due to the vision and idealism of its founder Roger Williams (c. 1603–1683/84).

Roger Williams

In 1630, ten years after the English Separatists who embarked on the Mayflower for America anchored at Provincetown Harbor on November 11, 1620, twenty-eight year old Roger Williams, educated at Charterhouse⁷⁴ and also at Pembroke College, Cambridge (B.A., 1627) where he became a Puritan, arrived with his wife Mary (Barnard) Williams at Boston in the Massachusetts Bay Colony on February 5, 1631. Their passage was aboard the ship *Lion* (Lion). Although Williams had been “unanimously chosen teacher at Boston” by the First Church congregation he “conscientiously refused” the appointment because First Church was an unseparated congregation. First Church continued to hold communion with the Church of England, an institution which Williams had come to despise (Williams R., 1671).

⁷⁴ An English independent school for boys founded by Thomas Sutton in London in 1611, the year of his death, on the site of the old Carthusian monastery in Charterhouse Square. Sutton made provision for the establishment of a hospital for pensioners and the school for boys.

A few months later, the First Church in Salem, Massachusetts, pastored by Samuel Skelton⁷⁵ invited Williams to be their Teacher. The congregation quickly withdrew the offer when colonial leaders in Boston vigorously protested the appointment.

Late in the summer of 1631, Williams moved to Plymouth Colony where he informally assisted Ralph Smith⁷⁶ the minister of First Church in Plymouth and regularly preached. During that time according to Governor Bradford "his teachings were well approved" (Gaustad, 1999, p. 28). John Cuckson, in his *Brief History of the First Church in Plymouth 1606 to 1901*, was not so generous. Of Williams he wrote:

In matters ecclesiastical, Boston and Salem were too closely identified, and after a few months, he removed to Plymouth, where he remained for nearly three years. He appears to have been an eccentric genius, able, scholarly, but of unsound judgment. Here, as elsewhere his pronounced views, and personal idiosyncrasies led him into trouble with the Puritan section, and not being able to smother his convictions at the behest of his worldly interests, the Plymouth church reluctantly parted with him. His principal contentions were, that the King had no right to grant the Colony's charter, that even casual attendance at the services of the Church of England was a sin, and that any interference whatever with the right of private judgment was an injustice to the individual and the community. These, and some minor extravagances of his, were intolerable to the Puritan faction, and finally ended in his banishment from the Bay Colony. (Cuckson, 1902, pp. 38-39).

On invitation of First Church in Salem, Samuel Skelton their pastor then being sick, Williams returned to Salem (Memoir of Mr. Roger Williams, 1817, p. 8). By the fall of 1633 he served as an unofficial assistant to Skelton.

⁷⁵ Samuel Skelton died in Salem, Massachusetts on August 2, 1634, at age 41. He was the first pastor of the First Church in Salem. Skelton graduated from the University of Cambridge in 1611 and earned a master's degree there in 1615. Skelton and his family arrived in Salem on June 23, 1629. Skelton had been ordained in England, and had served for some years as a priest of the established Church of England in Lincolnshire. His wife Susanna Travis, daughter of William Travis, was born in Horbling, Lincolnshire, England, on September 11, 1597. They were married on April 27, 1619, in Sempringham, England. Susanna died in the year following their arrival, on March 15, 1630/1, in Salem. She was only 33 years old. On Samuel's death in 1634 he left four orphaned children ages from 4-12.

⁷⁶ Upon his ordination in 1629, Ralph Smith became the first pastor of the Plymouth Church. He served the congregation for seven years (1629-1636), but a note in the Plymouth Church Records indicates that "he proved but a poor help to them in that, being of very weak parts" (Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1920, p. 64); (Bradford, 2002, p. 223).

In October 1633, twenty-three year old Samuel Hubbard (1610-1689) arrived at Salem from England, and soon became acquainted with Williams “which ripened into a life long friendship of the closest kind” and Hubbard remained in Salem until Williams’ ouster in 1635 (Barber, 1883, p. 98); (Huling, n.d., pp. 6-7, 11-12).⁷⁷

The Salem First Church congregation had formed August 6, 1629, when thirty newly arrived Puritan settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony gathered together to form the first Puritan church actually founded in North America. The congregation functioned as one of the established English churches until January 1, 1630 when, on abandoning of the use of the *Book of Common Prayer*, it became the second independent Congregational church in New England.⁷⁸

On Skelton’s death, Williams became acting pastor when the congregation elected him their elder in October 1634. At First Church in Salem he found a forum for advocating his militant ideas.



Roger Williams (1603-1683) statue by Franklin Simmons in the National Statuary Hall Collection in the U.S. Capitol Building. Williams was an English clergyman and colonist expelled from Massachusetts for criticizing Puritanism. He founded Providence in 1636 and obtained a royal charter for Rhode Island in 1663. Photo courtesy of the Architect of the Capitol via Wikimedia Commons.

⁷⁷ On January 4, 1636 (probably 1636/7) Samuel Hubbard married Tase Cooper at Windson by Roger Ludlow. Tase came to Dorchester June 9, 1634.

⁷⁸ The first independent Congregational church in North America was the congregation at Plymouth, Massachusetts. Originally English Separatists founded the congregation in the English community of Scrooby in 1606. The congregation then removed to Holland to avoid persecution and in 1620 emigrated from Holland to Plymouth and later became a parish congregation of Massachusetts' Congregationalist state church.

He argued that religious groups should be supported by voluntary tithes, not taxes as demanded by Massachusetts Bay Colony leaders. He said it was sinful to confiscate Indian land without fairly compensating the Indians as the English king had no right to claim native lands. His opinions, however, were too radical for the Puritan oligarchy. The crowning blow was Williams speaking out against the right of Puritan civil authorities to punish religious dissension. He held that civil magistrates should have no voice in spiritual matters.

Williams soon learned that the Puritan preoccupation of “godly rule” was religious freedom for the Puritan leadership and their loyal minions but for no one else. They opposed toleration and any dissent was unwelcome. Under these circumstances Samuel Hubbard “in company with about one hundred men, women and children started for the Connecticut River” on October 15, 1635 (Barber, 1883, p. 98). In that month, the General Court of Massachusetts tried Williams and convicted him of sedition and heresy.

The Court declared that he spread “diverse, new, and dangerous opinions” and banished him from the Massachusetts Bay Colony as a dangerous radical (Williams R. , 1988) and (Williams R. , 2008, p. 13). The court ordered him from the colony within six weeks. If he returned he risked execution. To avoid arrest, Williams fled fifty-five miles from Salem to present day Raynham, Massachusetts, through the deep snow of a hard winter.

The local Wampanoag⁷⁹ offered him shelter at their winter camp where Massasoit, their *sachem*, or leader, hosted Williams for the three months until spring. Massasoit had allied with the English at Plymouth as a way to protect the Wampanoag from Narragansett attacks.

In the spring of 1636, Williams and a number of his followers from Salem began a new settlement on land that Williams bought from Massasoit in present-day Rumford, Rhode Island. Learning that Williams had settled there, Massachusetts Bay Colony authorities quickly asserted that he was

⁷⁹ Wampanoag, also called Massasoit, means eastern people or easterners. They lived in what is now known as Massachusetts and Rhode Island in the early part of the 17th century. In 1600 the Wampanoag probably were as many as 12,000 with 40 villages divided roughly between 8,000 on the mainland and another 4,000 on the off-shore islands of Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Among the more famous Wampanoag chiefs were Squanto, Samoset, Metacomet (sometimes known as King Philip), and Massasoit.

within their land grant and threatened him with arrest. Williams, with his crops already planted; wisely decided to cross the Seekonk River by canoe.

There he struck a shrewd bargain with the Narragansett⁸⁰ *sachems*, Canonicus and Miantonomi, to purchase the land west of the river from its aboriginal proprietors. He named his settlement Providence (“God as beneficent caretaker”), in thanks to God.

Anne Hutchinson

At about the time Williams had become elder at Salem, Anne Marbury Hutchinson (1591-1643), a Puritan woman from Alford, near Boston, Lincolnshire, arrived with her husband, William, and their children, aboard the *Griffin* at Boston, Massachusetts on September 18, 1634. The crossing included about one hundred passengers and livestock.

On the voyage to Boston, Anne freely criticized the sermons she heard by Puritan minister Zechariah Symmes (1599-1670) and shared her “free grace” ideas and disparaging opinions with various passengers. When pressed about the efficacy and orthodoxy of her opinions, she angrily challenged Symmes to tell her when the *Griffin* would land at Boston. When he could not, she claimed to receive revelations or visions from God and



Aquidneck Island is an island in Narragansett Bay. The island is home to three towns, from north to south geographically: Portsmouth, Middletown and Newport. The first English settlers arrived on Aquidneck Island in 1636 following a charismatic woman named Anne Hutchinson. A key participant in the Antinomian Controversy that disturbed the Massachusetts Bay Colony from 1636 to 1638. After consulting with Roger Williams, her group purchased Aquidneck Island (later named Rhode Island) from the native Americans.

⁸⁰ The Narragansett were an Algonquian Native American tribe from Rhode Island. Between 1616 and 1619, pandemics originating from infectious diseases carried by European fishermen killed thousands of New England Algonquians in coastal areas south of present-day Rhode Island. At the time the English started colonizing New England in 1620, the Narragansett were the most powerful native nation in the southern area of the region as they had not been affected by the epidemics.

offered as proof her declaration that the arrival for the *Griffin* at Boston would be within three weeks which occurred just as she prophesied.

In England, Anne Hutchinson had been so taken by John Cotton's preaching that she talked her husband into following Cotton to Boston when he became Teacher at First Church of Boston pastored by John Wilson. After settling in Boston and being a true believer in Cotton's theology of grace over works, Hutchinson embarked on promulgating her "free grace" understanding of the Bible.

Although originally credited to Thomas Welde of Roxbury, John Winthrop referred to Anne Hutchinson as the "American Jezebel" and pithily described her as,

...a woman of a haughty and fierce carriage, of a nimble wit and active spirit, and a very voluble tongue, more bold than a man, though in understanding and judgement inferior to many women. (Winthrop, 1908, p. 31).

Winthrop described William Hutchinson as "a man of a very mild temper and weak parts, and wholly guided by his wife, who had been the beginner of all the former troubles in the country, and still continued to breed disturbance" (Winthrop, 1908, p. 299). In modern parlance, Winthrop saw him as a henpecked wimp.

Anne certainly stirred up a commotion in the Bay Colony. Historian Dennis Bustin explains what happened:

... Hutchinson had begun to host meetings of women in her home for the purpose of discussing the sermons of the ministers of the Colony. While such a practice was not uncommon for the men of the Colony, to have nearly one hundred females involved many of the matrons of the town, was highly irregular. (Bustin, 2006).

By meddling in the religious affairs of the colony and espousing her unorthodox radical convictions she sparked the heated 1636-1638 Antinomian Controversy⁸¹ in the fledging Massachusetts Bay Colony. To her credit, Anne Hutchinson functioned as a midwife to many young mothers and served as a domestic physician and nurse for the sick. For the Bay Colony oligarchy the down side was her infectious evangelical

⁸¹ The Antinomian Controversy—also known as the Free Grace Controversy—was a religious and political conflict in the Massachusetts Bay Colony from 1636 to 1638, centered on a theological debate concerning the "covenant of grace" and "covenant of works."

evangelism wherein she vocally criticized and opposed Puritan legalism which she held was a “Covenant of Works” taught by the legalists, i.e., the “legall preachers” (Bicknell, 1915, p. 59); (Hall, 1990).

At her weekly Thursday afternoon meetings she challenged the authority of the clergy and emphasized John Cotton's “Covenant of Free Grace” advocated by her brother-in-law⁸² John Wheelwright as well. Fairly soon, the oligarchy grew weary of her constant assaults and sedition wherein:

...she declared the clergy of The Bay Colony to be “cold formalists,” “dead, without a name to live,” “whited sepulchres,” “hypocrites,” “false teachers,” etc., etc., they felt, that, unless this new sectarian was silenced, their holy craft was in great danger of an ignominious overthrow, and that downfall would be due to a woman! (Bicknell, 1915, p. 61).

Matters did not improve when John Wheelwright arrived in the Colony from England in May 1636 as his activist radical views and reputation were well known by the Puritan leadership who had heard enough of his free grace ideas. When a majority of the First Church of Boston members invited Wheelwright to serve in the ministry with Wilson and Cotton, Winthrop, an ally of Wilson, successfully blocked the appointment.

Wheelwright joined Anne in her radicalizing colonists, especially women, and in criticizing Bay Colony leaders for their theology of works in preparation for salvation and her advocacy of free grace theology. To stamp out the heresy, John Winthrop and the colony leadership moved against them.

The oligarchy first fired William Hutchinson from his job, and then in November 1637 the court banished Wheelwright, and lastly turned to Anne



John Winthrop presided over Hutchinson's examination and trial in 1637 as both accuser and judge.

⁸² John Wheelwright's wife was Anne's younger sister Mary.

Hutchinson. Her accusers used her record of incessant criticism and disparagement as evidence of her religious radicalization of colonists, undermining of the unity of the Colony, and endangering its Puritan civil and religious order. This led to her November 1637 examination at the Court of Newton, at age forty-six while pregnant with her sixteenth child. There a sentence of banishment from the Colony issued (Hall, 1990, pp. 311-348). When John Cotton came to understand that Massachusetts Bay Colony leaders were willing to prosecute those who advocated heterodox theological positions he quickly disavowed Hutchinson and her followers claiming they took his views too far.

Following her examination Hutchinson remained under house arrest in the Roxbury home of Joseph Welde, brother of Thomas Welde, until her March 15, 1638 church trial before the Boston Church leading to her excommunication as a heretic (Hall, 1990, pp. 349-388). John Winthrop presided over her examination and trial as both accuser and judge.

In later years a number of American feminists fastened on to Anne Hutchinson as an American heroine taking on the male Puritan establishment and fostering women's rights.⁸³ This is a mischaracterization. Anne Hutchinson was not a seventeenth century heroin or a feminist but a female activist member of a larger grace rather than works Protestant movement underlying evolving seventeenth century Particular Baptist churches and emerging evangelical Christianity.

In retrospect, Thomas Bicknell summarizes her life in the following way:

In matters of religion and theology Anne Hutchinson was a seer, a prophetess, "a Daniel, come to judgment [sic]." Three great spiritual concepts possessed her. She believed that the human soul could and did hold close communication with the Divine Over-Soul. She believed in direct and special revelations from the divine to the human, from God to her own soul. She also believed in a spiritual justification of the soul of man, with God, through faith. (Bicknell, 1915, p. 59).

⁸³ An example is *Let Freedom Ring Anne Hutchinson Religious Reformer* by Melina Méngal (Mangal, 2004) which gives a convoluted view of Anne Hutchinson and the seventeenth century religious and political issues in colonial Massachusetts.

In addition to the hostile religious environment for Anne, her family, friends and supporters, the unusually cold and harsh winter of 1637-1638 led eighteen of her supporters including her husband William Hutchinson (1586-1641) and Boston merchant William Coddington (1601-1678), to prepare to leave the Bay Colony and resettle elsewhere. One member of the group was John Clarke⁸⁴ (1609-1696), a physician who had arrived from London in November 1637.

Clarke, encountering the grace versus works issues dividing the Colony wrote:

In the year 1637 I left my native land, and in the ninth month of the same, I (through mercy) arrived in Boston. I was no sooner on shore, but there appeared to me differences among them touching the covenants, and in points of evidencing a man's good, estate, some prest hard for the Covenant of works, and for sanctification to be the first and chief evidences; others prest as hard for the Covenant of grace that was established upon better promises, and for the evidence of the spirit, as that which is a more certain, constant and satisfactory witness. (Bicknell, 1915, p. 77).

Clarke, who aligned himself with the free grace advocates, chose to join others in moving elsewhere to live peaceably rather than in conflict said:

I was requested with some others to seek out a place which I was ready to do; and thereupon by reason of the suffocating heat of the Summer before, I went to the North to be somewhat cooler, but the Winter following proved so cold, that we were forced in the Spring to make towards the South;... (Bicknell, 1915, pp. 77-78).

Before leaving Boston, the group drew up a binding agreement, which later became known as The Portsmouth Compact, subscribing to a formal organization for their proposed colony including a chosen leader or governor. Signatories included William Coddington, John Clarke, and

⁸⁴ The question is when and by whom was Dr. John Clark baptized? Robert N. Lackey holds that "He was also baptized (one source says by an Elder Stillwell) and ordained probably by either John Spillsbury's or William Kiffin's Church because his only published work was addressed to those churches" (Lackey, 1992). Spillsbury's church is considered to be the first Calvinistic Baptist church, Graves held that the descent of the baptizing churches of America of which Clark's congregation at Newport was the first, was from the baptizing churches of Wales and Piedmont. He said Clarke "received his baptism in Elder Stillwell's Church in London, and that Church received hers from the Dutch Baptists of Holland, sending over a minister to be baptized by them. These Baptists descended from the Waldenses, whose historical line reaches far back and connects with the Donatists, and theirs to the Apostolical Churches" (Graves, 1861, pp. 121-124); (Ray, 1870, pp. 60-62).

William Hutchinson.⁸⁵ The group then went to New Hampshire where they recoiled at the severe winter. They then sailed southward for a more hospitable climate in the early spring of 1638. According to Clarke:

...so, having sought the Lord for direction, we all agreed that while our vessel was passing about a large and dangerous Cape, we would cross over by land, having *Long Iland* and *Delaware Bay* in our eye for the place of our residence; so to a town called *Providence* we came, which was begun by one *M. Roger Williams* ... by whom we were courteously and lovingly received, and with whom we advised about our design; he readily presented two places before us in the same *Narragansett Bay*, the one upon the main called *Sowwames*, the other called then *Acquedneck*, now *Rode-Iland*;... (Bicknell, 1915, p. 78).

At the urging of Williams, Coddington and his companions purchased Aquidneck Island⁸⁶ in the Narragansett Bay, from the native Narragansett. Coddington was one of the wealthiest men in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. There in 1638, Anne's followers settled at Pocasset (soon renamed Portsmouth).

At her trial the court delivered a sentence of banishment but it postponed execution of its order until spring (Rothbard, 1975, p. 22). On March 22, 1638, the execution of the sentence issued. Six days later she left the Bay Colony. Anne Hutchinson joined her husband,



Anne Hutchinson, born in 1591 in England, immigrated with her husband to the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1634, but banished in 1637. She and her husband had 15 children. After relocating in New Netherland, she died in a Siwanoy Indian raid in 1643. Only one daughter survived.

⁸⁵ Signed by: William Coddington; John Clarke; William Hutchinson, Jr.; John Coggeshall; William Aspinwall; Samuel Wilbore; John Porter; John Sanford; Edward Hutchinson, Jr., Esq.; Thomas Savage; William Dyre; William Freeborne; Phillip Shearman; John Walker; Richard Carder; William Baulston; Edward Hutchinson, Sr.; Henry Bull--X his mark; Randall Holden; Thomas Clarke; John Johnson; William Hall; and John Brightman (Bicknell, 1915, p. 97).

⁸⁶ Aquidneck Island is an island located in the U.S. state of Rhode Island, in Narragansett Bay. The island is home to three towns, from north to south geographically: Portsmouth, Middletown and Newport.

friends and family at Pocasset where many of her supporters followed and settled on the island.

Anne's husband died at Pocasset in late June 1641 after which Anne and many of her younger children moved north to New Netherland to a site now part of the Bronx in New York City. There she and six of her children died in a Siwaney Indian attack. Only eight year old Susanna survived the massacre. She was out picking blueberries when the attack occurred. Taken captive, Susanna remained a hostage until ransomed by members of her family residing in Boston several years later.⁸⁷

At Pocasset the new settlers from Boston held their first general meeting of record on May 13, 1638, where one measure called for the construction of a congregational meetinghouse. The record reads: "the Meeting House shall be set on the neck of land that goes to the Maine of the Island where Mr. John Coggeshall and Mr. John Sanford shall lay it out" (Bicknell, 1915, p. 113).

Meanwhile, Hanserd Knollys, another free grace advocate, fleeing the Laudian persecution of English nonconformists in 1638, sought passage to the Massachusetts Bay Colony to avoid arrest on an issued warrant.

Hansard Knollys

Knollys found it difficult to find passage for his family due to a lack of openings as a result of the massive migration of the time. The Knollys family nearly exhausted their funds while in London awaiting passage. The Knollys finally acquired a place on a ship to New England and set sail from Gravesend on April 26, 1638, but it became a difficult twelve-week journey. On the voyage the Knollys lost a young daughter with seizures or convulsion fits. Hanserd wrote:

By the way my little Child dyed with Convulfion fits, our Beer and our Water ftank, our Bisket was green, yellow and blew, moulded and rotten, and our Cheefe alfo, so that we fuffered much hardfhip, being 12 weeks in our paffage;... (Knollys, 1692, p. 17).

As the Antinomian controversy drew to a close, the Knollys landed at Boston in mid-July. They arrived insolvent but a local family who it would

⁸⁷ The *Christian Science Monitor* named the biography of Anne Hutchinson entitled *American Jezebel* by Eve LaPlante, a descendant, one of the best books of 2004.

seem fled the colony for Rhode Island over the antinomianism controversy had provided a place for them to stay. Rather than finding respite from their trials and tribulations the Knollys encountered hostility and harassment due to Hansard's free grace advocacy and associations including the one with his friend John Wheelwright. Hansard Knollys left the Bay Colony with his wife and son Cheney when invited to travel north to Northam, now Dover, New Hampshire, to serve the settlement as its pastor.

The meetinghouse at Dover had no minister as George Burdett, a self-appointed spy for despotic William Laud, who wrote letters to the intolerant archbishop about what he saw in New England, had moved on (Moore, 2008, p. 61). Knollys life turned quite traumatic in 1640 when Thomas Larkham, a minister from Northam a small town in Devon, England, left the Massachusetts Bay Colony with his family for Dover and became minister, ousting Knollys and instigating considerable conflict and controversy. The dispute appears to have been "over issues of theology, mostly centered on church polity" regarding baptism and membership (Bustin, 2006, p. 63); (Taylor, 1858, pp. 443-444).

When Knollys' aged father sought his return to the mother country, he and his wife Anne with their son Cheney returned to London. On December 24, 1641, they arrived in England destitute after three difficult years in colonial New England. There in 1642 he became a member of Henry Jessey's Paedobaptist⁸⁸ Church which he then left in 1644 to begin his own congregation based on Believers' Baptism by full immersion. Jessey remained unconvinced of the practice until a year later. Knollys then baptized Jessey in June 1645. Larkham, who remained at Dover until the end of 1642, suddenly left for England on November 14 after a salacious sex scandal involving "a handsome widow" left quite pregnant.

Providence Plantations

Meanwhile at Pocasset, on April 28, 1639, a group of settlers agreed in writing to create a Plantation bringing about the founding of Newport at

⁸⁸ The practice of infant baptism is the custom of baptizing infants or young children referred to in theological parlance as paedobaptism or pedobaptism from the Greek *pais* meaning "child."

the south end of the island. In June or July, 1643, rather clandestinely “Roger Williams of Providence embarked from New York for England on some unknown errand without instructions from the Rhode Island Colony as to a Patent...” (Bicknell, 1915, p. 146). On March 13, 1644, the inhabitants of Aquidneck Island assembled in General Court at Newport and named their island colony the Isle of Rhodes or Rhode Island.

Returning from England on September 17, 1644, Williams arrived in Boston with a paper styled *A Charter of Incorporation for Providence Plantations in the Narragansett Bay in New England* which Williams presumptuously had drafted and obtained approval by himself. In this controversial charter he incorporated his own grand plan and worldview for the Colony absent any involvement of the islanders. An acknowledged redeeming inclusion was the Charter’s explicit language assuring freedom of religion and separation of church and state. This enabled the Colony to become a haven for seventh-day Sabbatarians, Baptists, Quakers, Jews and other religious minorities. The residents of Providence received the Charter with rejoicing but many the settlers of Aquidneck repudiated it (Bicknell, 1915, pp. 147-148). The Charter obtained by Williams in 1644 lasted until 1663 when Charles II granted a new one due to the efforts of Dr. John Clarke.

Seeking to distance themselves from Williams and his Providence settlement, William Coddington in April 1651, on behalf of those islanders who opposed the terms of the 1644 Charter, sought and obtained an independent one from Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell and his council with Coddington as governor for Aquidneck and Conanicut islands. The Coddington Charter separated the government of the island towns from the government of the mainland settlement thereby undermining a unified administration.⁸⁹ Coddington and his supporters sought to keep the island independent of Williams and his mainlanders desiring to form their own government, pass their own laws, and manage their own affairs unimpeded.

⁸⁹ On March 6, 1650, William Coddington presented a petition for an independent colonial government on Aquidneck Island, free from the claims of Plymouth, and free from union with Providence. A year later, in April 1651, the Council of State of England gave Coddington the commission of a separate government for the island of Aquidneck and for the smaller neighboring island of Conanicut (later Jamestown, Rhode Island), with him as governor.

In reaction to this “usurpation” as mainlanders saw it, weary of Coddington and his administration, the Rhode Island Colony on October 15, 1651 commissioned John Clarke and William Dyer, who openly opposed Coddington and his Charter, as the island's agents to England to seek its repeal. Clarke and Dyer left for England in November 1651. At the same time the mainland towns of Providence and Warwick sent Roger Williams on a similar errand. The three men sailed together. In England the Council of State on New England revoked Coddington’s commission for the island government in October 1652 which returned the colony to the Williams' Patent of 1644.

Estimated Population for Newport, Providence, and Rhode Island—Seventeenth Century

Year	Rhode Island	Newport	Providence	% Increase/Yr.
1640	300	96	60	
1650	785	251	157	16.2
1660	1,539	492	308	9.6
1670	2,155	690	431	4.0
1680	3,017	965	603	4.0
1690	4,224	1,352	845	4.0
1700	5,894	1,886	1,179	4.0
				4.7 (R.I.)
				2.1 Newport
				2.8 Providence
1708*	7,181	2,208	1,446	

Sources: *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1957* (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1960, p. 756); *Urban Growth in Colonial Rhode Island: Newport and Providence in the Eighteenth Century* (Withey, 1984, p. 114).

*Actual census.

Clarke, who had agreed to serve as Rhode Island's official agent in England, and his wife remained in London for twelve years, from 1652-1664. He continued as a member of Jessy’s congregation and practiced as a physician. Thomas Tillam writes that by 1658, John Clarke served as a minister at Worcester House in London (Tillam, 1658, p. 2).⁹⁰ “In April

⁹⁰ According to Wheatley, during the Commonwealth, Worcester House in the Strand was used for committees of all kinds, and furnished by Parliament for the Scotch commissioners. Subsequently, according to Whitelocke, it was sold by Parliament to the Earl of Salisbury, "at the rate of Bishop's Lands." But on May 2, 1657, there was brought into Parliament a "Bill for settling of Worcester House in the Strand upon Margaret Countess of Worcester, during the life of Edward Earl of Worcester"; and on April 14, 1659, it was resolved that "Margaret Countess of Worcester, shall have the actual possession of Worcester House delivered up to her on March 25 next; and in the mean time the rent of £300 be paid her for the said house for this year; and that the sum of £400 be paid in recompense of all demands for detaining

1658 the authorities arrested several people at Knollys' Coleman Street meeting, including...John Clarke, John Belcher" and others. Clarke's trial was at the Old Bailey where convicted on some counts and sentenced (*The Baptist Quarterly*, p. 370). This shows that Knollys, Clarke, Tillam and Belcher knew each other.

By 1660 the settlement of Newport, Rhode Island had an estimated population of 492 and by 1670 no more than 690. Providence was also a small village of a few hundred people with an estimated population of 308 in 1660 and 431 by 1670 (Withey, 1984, p. 114).

Within three days of Thomas Venner's January 6, 1661, insurrection in London, John Clarke conveniently published a pamphlet *The plotters unmasked, murderers no saints, or, A word in season to all those that were concerned in the late rebellion against the peace of their King and country, on the sixth of January last at night, and the ninth of January*, thereby distancing him and his Rhode Island cause from the Fifth Monarchy movement.⁹¹

On January 20, 1661, Clarke petitioned for a royal charter to be granted to Rhode Island Colony which King Charles II granted on July 8, 1663. Clarke spent twelve years in London to obtain it. Having insufficient funds to acquire passage to Rhode Island, Clark entrusted the charter to Captain George Baxter who carried it to Rhode Island and delivered it to the colonial government on November 24, 1663. Clarke and his wife sailed for Newport aboard *The Sisters* of London in 1664.

The Churches of Newport

When Stephen and Ann Mumford arrived at Newport in 1664, the established churches were John Clarke's First Church in Newport, William Vaughan's Six Principle Church, and the Society of Friends (the Quakers).

John Clarke⁹² was one of the original settlers of Aquidneck Island.⁹³ He originally made his home and began holding worship services in the

of Worcester House from her since her title thereunto by the late Acts of Parliament." (Wheatley, 2011, p. 533).

⁹¹ Clarke had signed a Fifth Monarchy petition during Cromwell's protectorate.

⁹² The brothers Joseph (1618-1694), Carew, Thomas and John (1609-1676) Clarke or Clark, sons of Thomas Clarke, were among the early settlers of Newport, Rhode Island. Joseph was the only one who left issue. His son Joseph Clarke, Jr. (1642-1726) married Bethiah Hubbard (1646-1707) a daughter of Samuel and Tacy Hubbard.

newly formed town of Pocasset (Portsmouth)⁹⁴ in the Congregational Meetinghouse built for congregational worship in 1638. There Clarke conducted public worship for both the Congregational and Baptist elements from 1638-1644 in two separate services except for the four months when Robert Lenthal served the Congregationalists.

Lenthal, a clergyman of the Church of England, became pastor over the little town of Weymouth, Massachusetts in 1637. When he fell into disagreement with Puritan authorities, as happened to others of his faith, out of necessity he vacated his parish (Civic League of Newport, 1909, p. 3). At Newport he taught the free school from 1640 to 1642 (Bicknell, 1915, p. 144).

The religious beliefs held in Clarke's early Baptist congregation were little different than those of the Congregationalists (Puritans) other than the fact that they rejected paedobaptism. Thomas Bicknell writes:

It was no ordinary Puritan congregation to which Dr. Clarke ministered, for, at the double Sunday services, there sat in the pews, William Coddington, Anne Hutchinson, reformer, Deacons Coggeshall and Aspinwall, and the Brentons, Bulls, Eastons, and, not least, his own brothers, Joseph and Thomas Clarke, who joined him in organizing a Baptist Church at Newport. (Bicknell, 1915, pp. 124-125).

By 1644, Clarke's group had moved to Newport in the southern part of the island where he founded First Church consisting of a mixed fellowship or communion of baptizers sharing authority with their congregational elders. In these years there appear to have been simply three propositions which held this diverse but somewhat moderate fellowship together—adult believers' baptism by full immersion, congregationalism with shared authority between elected clergy and the general membership, and closed "members only" communion. The Church constructed its own

⁹³ John Clark was a Particular (or Calvinist) Baptist. Successor to Mr. Clark was Obadiah Holmes. Clark had Joseph Tory as his assistant, "a preacher and one of the three who went from hence to Boston in 1668, to stand by their brethren who were there called before rulers for the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Stone, 1867, p. 430). The three sent by Clark and his church were William Hiscox, Joseph Tory and Samuel Hubbard (Backus, A History of the Baptists in the New England from 1602 to 1804, 1843, p. 121).

⁹⁴ The earliest settlement within the present limits of Portsmouth was made in 1623, and the first services held here were those of the Church of England, for which a chapel and parsonage was erected prior to 1638, located on Pleasant St., on the site of the former South Church parsonage. Richard Gibson was the first minister. He remained until 1644.

meetinghouse at Green's End in 1644.⁹⁵ On November 3, 1648, John Clarke baptized Samuel Hubbard and his wife Tacy Hubbard (Hubbard, 1940, pp. 7-8).

Soon the fellowship's discretionary practice of "laying on of hands" became an issue which ultimately divided the Newport First Church congregation. When some wanted the practice to be mandatory others protested not willing to have additional religious restrictions placed on the congregation. The disagreement prompted William Vaughan and twenty-one others⁹⁶ to break away from First Church in 1656 to

form their own first-day "Six Principle" Church in Newport (given to General Baptist doctrine) leaving those at First Church more inclined toward Particular Baptist (Calvinist) leanings in opposition to the Arminian General Baptists (Bicknell, 1915, p. 74).⁹⁷

The twelve years Clarke spent in England (1652-1664) under the tutelage and influence of Henry Jessey and Hanserd Knollys hardened his Particular Baptist ideas and by the time he returned to Newport in 1664 he

Early Members of First Church in Newport

List of 15 original members
in 1644*

John Clark & Wife
Mark Luker (Lukas)
Nathan West & Wife
William Vaughan
Thomas Clark
Joseph Clark
John Peckham
John Thorndon
William Weeden
Samuel Weeden

List of Men in 1648**

John Clarke
Joseph Clark
Mark Luther (Lukas)
Nathaniel West
Wm. Vaughan
Thomas Clark
John Peckham
John Thornton
Wm. Weeden
Samuel Hubbard

*Source: *A General History of the Baptist Denomination in America, and Other Parts of the World*, Volume 1 (Benedict, 1813, p. 495).

**Sources: *Narragansett Historical Register* (Barber, 1883, p. 100) and *Story of Dr. John Clarke* (Bicknell, 1915, p. 82).

⁹⁵ Green's End is a historic village in Middletown lying in the southern part of Aquidneck Island northeast of Newport, Rhode Island. Around 1650, a local tavern owner who operated Green's Inn developed the Rhode Island Greening in Green's End. Green would grow and gave away shoots of his apple tree to visitors. They were originally called "Green's Inn" apples.

⁹⁶ Those leaving with William Vaughan in 1656 were Thomas Baker, James Clarke, Jeremiah Clarke, Daniel Wrightman, John Odlin, Jeremiah Weeden, Joseph Caro, Henry Clarke, Peleg Peckham, James Baker, Stephen Hookey, Tim Peckham, Joseph Weeden, John Rhodes, James Brown, John Hammett, William Rhodes, Daniel Sabear, William Greeman, and Helen (name unknown).

⁹⁷ The six principles were taken from Hebrews 6:3 as follows: (1) repentance, (2) faith, (3) instructions about washings (baptism), (4) laying on of hands, (5) resurrection of the dead and (6) eternal judgment.

had become an ardent Particular Baptist. Clarke resumed the leadership of the congregation assisted by Mark Lukar (a ruling elder),⁹⁸ elders Obadiah Holmes and Joseph Torrey who had relocated from Seekonk, Massachusetts⁹⁹ and deacon William Weeden.

Another church in the town was that of the Religious Society of Friends (the Quakers). Sometime in the early 1660s, William Coddington joined Governor Nicholas Easton and many other prominent citizens in becoming Quakers (Arnold, 1859, p. 320); (Rust, 2004, p. 107). Before 1672 it seems certain that the Friends had their own meetinghouse, for it was in their meetinghouse that a famous four day Great Quaker Debate¹⁰⁰ of 1672 between Roger Williams and the Friends took place (Buffum, 1922, p. 8). By 1700, the Quakers comprised half the population of Newport, and the Yearly Meeting which occurred annually in the spring grew each year in size and importance.

Stephen and Ann Mumford

As there was no seventh-day Sabbatarian church in Newport, the Mumfords began to fellowship with Clarke's small First Church Sunday congregation without joining the church and observed the Sabbath on Saturday privately at home. The Mumfords were more comfortable fellowshipping with the First Church congregation as they were too independent for the rigidity of the Six Principle church and the Quakers of that time were charismatics.

Outsiders referred to the Society of Friends as Quakers as they were holiness-oriented. They would quake, cry out, and engage in ecstatic speech under the influence of "the Spirit" in their meetings, as well as in their

⁹⁸ Mark Lukar, an ardent Particular Baptist, was a charter member of Spilsbury's church in London, baptized with fifty-two others in 1641 at the Particular's inaugural baptismal service.

⁹⁹ Obadiah Holmes led the Baptizer cause at Seekonk supported and fostered by Clarke who had visited the community for preaching and the administration of baptism. After the authorities suppressed the Holmes group most removed to Newport joining Clarke's congregation.

¹⁰⁰ In 1672, Roger Williams crafted fourteen propositions attacking the principles and practices of the Society of Friends and challenged visiting Quaker leader George Fox to a public debate. Fox ignored Williams and quietly left the colony. Three of Fox's followers, John Stubbs, John Burnyeat and William Edmundson, took up the challenge. The public debate began August 9, 1672, at the Quaker meetinghouse, and continued four days.

evangelism, as they were like modern charismatics. See Ephraim Pagitt's *Heresiography* (Pagitt, Heresiography, 1661, pp. 136-143).

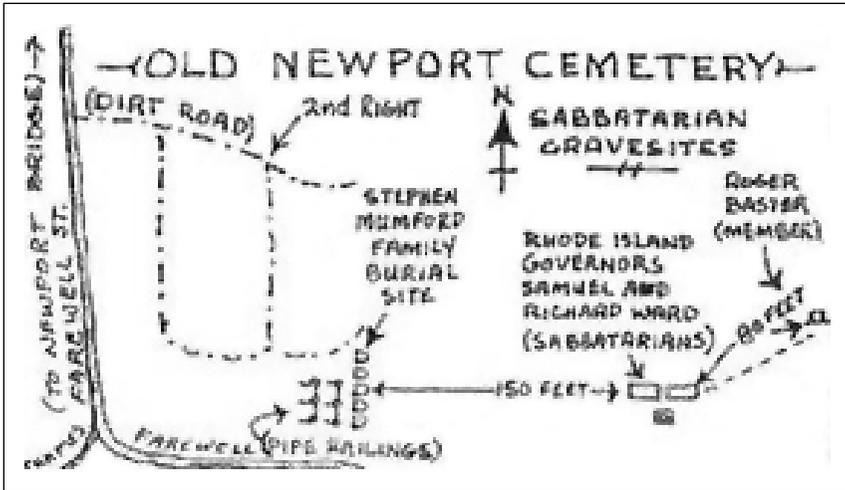


The oldest surviving house in Newport, the Wanton-Lyman-Hazard House was built for Stephen Mumford ca.1697. Mumford was a merchant and a founding member of Newport's seventh-day Sabbatarian congregation. The house passed to Mumford's son, Stephen Mumford, Jr., and then was sold to Richard Ward, a lawyer who became governor of the colony of Rhode Island in 1741. During the Revolution, Ward's son Samuel also served in that office.

When Stephen Mumford shared his ideas about the seventh-day Sabbath with members of the Newport First Church congregation, a few joined him and his wife in observing it, which soon led to significant dissension in the first-day congregation. In the *Narragansett Historical Record*, Ray Huling writes:

In the beginning of 1665, or possibly in the previous year, there had come from London to Newport, Mr. Stephen Mumford. Through his teachings, in March 1665, Tase Hubbard was convinced of her obligation to observe the seventh day, instead of the first, as the weekly sabbath. The next month her husband was also convinced, and a little later four more of their household and some others joined with them in the observance of Saturday. Not even then did these worshippers break off their connection with Mr. Clarke's church, but for six years longer they were members of that body, and some of

them were prominent representatives of the Church upon important occasions (Huling, n.d., p. 23).



It is important to recognize that other than adopting Saturday as their day of worship, these people remained committed early Particular Baptists sometimes referred to as Anabaptists, Baptizers and proto-Baptists. Clarke's First Church of first-day Baptizers was simply built around congregationalism and the sacraments¹⁰¹ of Believers' Baptism by immersion and Closed Communion (the Lord's Supper taken weekly by baptized believers only). The whole episode should also inform you of the depth of Stephen Mumford's biblical and theological understanding at that point of his life. He had only been a seventh-day Sabbath keeper for four years before arriving at Newport and he demonstrated no aversion to naively subjecting himself and his wife to the doctrinal error embedded in first-day Baptist beliefs, worship and preaching. His home congregation of Natton-Tewksbury church had only become a seventh-day congregation in 1661. Moreover, there is no evidence that Belcher's Bel Lane congregation knew anything about Stephen Mumford at that time let alone having sent him to New England as a Messenger as Knollys' Coleman Street (London) congregation sent Thomas Tillam to Hexham (Belcher J. , 1852, p. 24).

¹⁰¹ In the context of the seventeenth century, the sacraments refer to a religious ceremony or act regarded as an "outward and visible sign of inward and spiritual divine grace" in particular the rites of Baptism and Communion.

Mumford Headstones in Old Newport Cemetary



HERE LIETH BURIED THE BODY OF
STEPHEN MUMFORD AGED 68 YEARS &
DEPARTED THIS LIFE JULY 1707



HERE LIETH BURIED THE BODY OF ANN
MUMFORD YE WIFE OF STEPHEN
MUMFORD DEC'D FEBRUARY YE 22ND
1697/8

Stephen Mumford became a prosperous local merchant in Newport where he built a home, currently known as the Wanton-Lyman-Hazard house, in what is now downtown Newport. There is some dispute as to the date of its building, but there is no dispute to it as the Mumford home and the oldest surviving house in Newport. The date most often given for its building is 1697, but some research suggests an earlier date for its construction possibly even the 1670s (Doherty, 2005, p. 78).

Deeds and the will of Stephen Mumford, Jr. (Stephen Mumford's son) establish the original owner of the house as his father. The house was quite large for that time which would indicate ownership by a family of some means. No doubt this is where the Mumfords and their friends met for fellowship on the Sabbath. Stephen Mumford, Jr. later transferred the house to Richard Ward (Stevens, 1920, p. 27). Today the house has been refurbished and turned into a museum operated by the Newport Historical Society.

Establishing the Sabbath in Rhode Island

Stephen Mumford remained in contact with his former pastor John Cowell¹⁰² of the Naton-Tewksbury Sabbatarian Church. Mumford penned

¹⁰² John Cowell began keeping the Sabbath 1661. He pastored a mixed congregation at Naton-Tewksbury. After thirteen years of promoting the Sabbath, Cowell abandoned it stating his reasons for doing so in a book entitled *The Snare Broken* written in 1677 (Cowell,

several letters to Cowell informing him of their situation at Newport. Cowell apprised London's Bell Lane Church pastor John Belcher of the circumstances at Newport and urged him to advise Mumford although Belcher and the brethren at Bell Lane did not know Mumford personally.

Chronological Highlights

1664	Stephen Mumford and his wife Ann, members of the Natton-Tewksbury Sabbatarian Church in western England settle in Newport, Rhode Island, where they began fellowshipping Dr. Clarke's first-day congregation of First Church in Newport.
1664-1667	Mumford wrote several letters to his former pastor John Cowell of the Natton-Tewksbury Sabbatarian Church apprising him of the situation at Newport
1668	Eleven members of John Belcher's Bell Lane congregation, including John Belcher, William Gibson, and Edward Foxe joined in writing a letter to the Newport Sabbath keepers.
1668	Edward Stennett of the Wallingford Church responded to a letter from the Sabbath-keepers of Newport.
1671	Hiscox, the Hubbards, Langworthy, and Baster severed their membership in Dr. Clarke's First Church to join the Mumfords in their own independent seventh-day Sabbatarian fellowship.
1675	Mumford went to London, and on October 16, and returned with a new assistant elder, William Gibson of the Bell Lane Church.
1676	Francis Bampfield organized a congregation at Pinner's Hall on March 5.
1677	In England, Natton-Tewksbury Pastor Cowell rejected the Sabbath.
1677	Samuel Hubbard removed from preaching at Newport Sabbatarian Church.
1678	Samuel Hubbard reported that there were a total of 37 known Sabbatarians in America.
1679/80	Samuel Hubbard having lost control still smarting over no longer having power in the Newport Sabbatarian Church.
1696	Beginning of a yearly conference of Rhode Island Sabbatarian Churches.
1704	Hiscox died.
1707	Stephen Mumford died.
1708	Newport Sabbatarian congregation officially breaks into two congregations. The "Westerly" or "Hopkinton" congregation retained the original church records as it became the leading or headquarters location.
1753	The Newport church wrote to Mill Yard of "a great deadness" (Seventh-day Baptist Memorial vol. 2, p. 37).
1754	Joseph Davis charged the Westerly church: "I believe that this church, as to externals, is a church of Christ; but that the members are cold branches" (Seventh-Day Baptist Publishing Society, 1854, p. 126).

Mumford and his group also wrote to Dr. Edward Stennett a physician and Particular Baptist (Calvinist) elder then in charge of a seventh-day Sabbatarian congregation at Wallingford, Berkshire (the town is now in

1677). The book caused considerable disturbances in the seventh-day churches. After Cowell, the Natton-Tewksbury church continued under the ministry of John Purser.

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Oxfordshire).¹⁰³ Stennett responded by letter on February 2, 1668, reporting that there were only nine or ten seventh-day Sabbath-keeping churches left in England, plus many scattered disciples “in this tottering day, when many eminent churches have been shattered to pieces” (Clarke, 1811, pp. 10-11).

This of course was the result of the repression of English Nonconformists by the government of Charles II. Stennett’s advice to the Sabbath-keepers in Rhode Island was to carry the seventh-day Sabbath truth “with all meekness and tenderness to our brethren who . . . differ from us” (Stennett, 1852, pp. 26-27); (Hubbard, 1940). See the Appendix for the full text of this letter.

On March 26, 1668, eleven members of Belcher’s Bell Lane congregation, including John Belcher and William Gibson, joined in writing a letter to the Newport sabbath-keepers. The letter encouraged the Newport brethren to show tolerance to the Sunday-keepers and not use harsh words against them. See the Appendix for the text of the full letter.

It began,

The church of Christ, meeting in Bell Lane, London, upon the Lord’s holy Sabbath . . . to a remnant of the Lord’s Sabbath-keepers in or about Newport in New England . . . Although unkown to you by face, yet, through grace, we trust we can call you so; being affected by hearing from you, by our beloved brother John Cowel, and the more, when we perceive the grace of God that is in you, by those choice and savory letters you sent him, which, with his desire, hath encouraged us to write unto you at this time; observing that you may be steadfast, and immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.. (Belcher J. , 1852, p. 24).

Fairly soon thereafter, the withdrawal of four members from Mumford’s fledgling Sabbatarian group, Nicholas Wild, John Solomon, and their wives, presented a new problem. These four apostatized by openly rejecting the Sabbath. It was one matter for Sabbatarians to fellowship with first-day Baptists who were never called to God’s Sabbath truth, but for the First Church Sabbatarians who continued to keep the Sabbath to meet and take table communion (the Lord’s Supper) with those who knew the Truth and then rejected it was a wholly different matter (Seventh-Day Baptist

¹⁰³ The organization of the Pinner’s Hall Church was not until March 5, 1676, and pastored by Bampfield from 1676-1684.

Publishing Society, 1852, pp. 28-29). In dealing with the issue, Mumford and his friends wrote to the Sabbatarian churches of England for advice.

Hubbard explains in a July 3, 1669 letter to the church in Bell Lane, where he recounts:

Some of us, and such as was none of the least among us, as Brother Wyld, a old disciple, and his wife, a knowing woman and much spake for this holy truth, and Brother John Salmon and his wife, have forsaken this truth and us, and turned back to full communion with this church; and not only so, but prate against this holy truth and Brother Wyld have writ against it, I judge a foolish nonsense paper (or pamphlet) in a high esteem of himself and some others. It is a very hard exercise to us, poor weak ones, to lose four so suddenly out of 11 of us here. Again, upon these falling off, the brethren have in public preached and make it their work so to deal most every day; to my trouble I sometimes indeed object in a weak measure and bear a testimony against them, and in every deed in my conscience I cannot safely communicate with such as preach, yt all the 10 commands are nailed to the cross and done away, but renewed again some of them. I am sure that can't be; if nailed to the cross, no renewing again. Many such things to my grief, and to us all, and I have not full communion as in the ordinance of breaking of bread with them, though prest hard to it. Oh! Methinks I could for many reasons leave them quite, only owning such as have not nor dare speak against God's law; but others do not so judge as yet; its very hard to me and to them. One that is fallen off calls those good books of the bretherin Stennett,¹⁰⁴ Cowell,¹⁰⁵ and B. Setlers,¹⁰⁶ a rabble of lyes; one saith, also, that your letter and Bro. Stennett's, Bro. Cowell sent us, legal (sic), which was very sweet to us and very profitable. Alas, I am so weak, poor, feeble creature, not able to bear these small things. What will become of me if fiery tryals should come! But this is my comfort, my God is all-sufficient and mighty to save, and will deliver, I trust. (Tilley, 1892, pp. 59-60).¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ In 1658 Edward Stennett published *The Royal Law Contended For or, Some Brief Grounds serving to prove that the Ten Commandments are yet in full force, and shall so remain till Heaven and Earth pass away* and "*The Seventh-day Sabbath proved from the Beginning, from the Law, from the Prophets, from Christ and his Apostles, to be a duty yet incumbent upon Saints and Sinners.*" In 1664, Stennett published *The Seventh-day is the Sabbath of the Lord*: in answer to William Russel's 1663 book, *No Seventh-day-Sabbath commanded by Jesus Christ in the New Testament*. (Russel, 1663) The first work was reprinted by the American (Seventh-day) Sabbath Tract Society in 1848, included in their volume of *Tracts on the Sabbath* published in 1853. An extract from his book, *Penalty for Sabbath-breaking*, written in 1664, may be found in the *Sabbath Recorder* for April 25, 1845.

¹⁰⁵ An apparent reference to his ca. 1661 pamphlet *A Beam of Sabbath Light*.

¹⁰⁶ There appears to be no extant information about Mr. Setlers.

¹⁰⁷ In 1658 Edward Stennett published *The Royal Law Contended For or, Some Brief Grounds serving to prove that the Ten Commandments are yet in full force, and shall so remain till Heaven and Earth pass away* and "*The Seventh-day Sabbath proved from the Beginning, from the Law, from the Prophets,*

Mumford and his group also wrote to Joseph Davis, Sr., at the time a prisoner at Oxford in Oxon Castle, incarcerated “in a cold high Tower” (Black, 1869, p. 50). On January 26, 1670, Davis responded by letter to the Newport Sabbath keepers from prison. His letter relates that many had preached and written against the Sabbath, and their teachings did great damage among seventh-day Sabbath keepers. See the Appendix for the text of the full letter.

Describing the spiritual decadence into which many Sabbatarians had fallen, Davis declares,

There were many shining lights in this nation; but many of them, I fear, have decayed, and much lost their splendor . . . Love is waxed cold, and the Christian zeal of many is very low: and there are but few who follow on to know the Lord in farther obedience . . . Woe unto us! for we have sinned, and the candlestick is threatened to be removed. (Black, 1869, pp. 55-57).

The church in Bell lane, London again wrote to the Newport Sabbatarians February 27, 1669-70, and of the four apostates, said:

We find that doth greatly add to yr trouble~ because those yt have done this, were none of the meanest among you in helping of you in the work of the Lord. (Tilley, 1892, p. 178).

Edward Stennett’s more specific answer, dated March 6, 1670, was for the Sabbatarians to withdraw from any fellowship with the backsliders. See the Appendix for the text of the full letter. He wrote:

My DEAR FRIENDS,—As for those that have drawn back from the Sabbath to profaneness, after light and establishment therein, yourselves must not take pleasure in them, but must withdraw yourselves from them as sinful and disorderly persons; and if the church will hold communion with those apostates from the truth, you ought then to desire to be fairly dismissed from the church; which, if the church refuse, you ought to withdraw yourselves, and

from Christ and his Apostles, to be a duty yet incumbent upon Saints and Sinners." In 1664, Stennett published *The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord. Or, An answer to M. William Russel his book, entitled, No seventh day Sabbath comanded by Jesus Christ in the New Testament: Wberein his arguments are weighed in a just ballance, but found wanting; and the seventh day Sabbath convincingly proved; both by the law, and testimony of Jesus, to be one of the ten lively oracles of God, which still commands all men to obedience.* The actual title of William Russell's book was *No seventh-day-Sabbath in Christs New Testament.* The first work was reprinted by the American (Seventh-day) Sabbath Tract Society in 1848, included in their volume of *Tracts on the Sabbath* published in 1853. An extract from his book, *Penalty for Sabbath-breaking*, written in 1664, may be found in the *Sabbath Recorder* for April 25, 1845.

not be partakers of other men's sins, but keep yourselves pure, with all humility, meekness, and brokenness of heart. (Stennett, Second Letter, pp. 27-28). (Seventh-Day Baptist Publishing Society, 1852, pp. 27-28).

A letter to Stennett dated September 4, 1670 from William Hiscox, Stephen Mumford, and Samuel Hubbard tells of their emotional and spiritual struggle in separating from the fellowship and communion of Clarke's hardened Baptist congregation of friends, family and business associates. It reads:

Your good counsel we have pondered well, and have taken some steps in, but we have no hopes of help from them; but they are encouraging them that are drawn back from ye Lord's holy sabbath and he is become a speaker more than ever before. And, dear brother, yr desire is to know our standing, (we that is) we of the ch'h are very loth to leave all for some; we being very few here, but 5, and weakling, also, beside brother Stephen Mumford and his wife. This is the very trouble to many of us, and having declared by one for all that we cannot have such full freedom of spirit with those yt are fallen back from ye truth once professed, most do hold yet full communion in breaking of bread, and the rest of the ordinance with them. But this by grace we are helped to do, we in our measure endeavor to sanctify God's holy day by assembling ourselves, seven of us to pray and edify each other; and no man disturbs us in any kind; blessed be God. Oh rich mercy! oh that we might find ye same effect as of old! wⁿ the ch's bad peace, were edified, and increased. Oh dear heart, O that the Lord would stir up some to come and help us poor ones! At Westerly is brother Joseph Clarke Junr. and his wife, sister Ruth Burdick, and sister Maxon. (Tilley, 1892, p. 174).

Hubbard wrote a personal note to Dr. Stennett on September 12, 1670, about a young physician Dr. John Cranston stating:

I spake also to a friend of mine who by God's help saved my life: a man of greatest fame in our colony, and most improved one Mr. John Cranston, doctor of physik, and captain of the town train band. (Tilley, 1892, p. 175).

John Crowell wrote to Stephen Mumford from Tewkesbury, dated July 14, 1671.

xxxx

Hiscox, Mumford, and Hubbard wrote to Bell Lane on September 10, 1671, informing them that they had followed their advice in withdrawing from table communion although they still met with Clarke's church but did not propose to do so too long (Tilley, 1892, p. 176).

About this time the group received a letter from Peter Chamberlin, pastor of London's Mill Yard Church, a seventh-day congregation of a General Baptist (Arminian) persuasion, to present to the governor of New England pleading for religious liberty for the Sabbath keepers. The letter cites 1 John 3:4, James 2:10-11, Exodus 20, and Revelation 22:18-19, and states,

What shall we say of those that take away of those ten words, or those that make them void, and teach men so? Nay, they dare give the lie to Jehovah, and make Jesus Christ not only a breaker of the law, but the very author of sin in others, also causing them to break them. Hath not the little horn played his part lustily in this, and worn out the saints of the Most High, so that they become little-horn men also? (Seventh-Day Baptist Publishing Society, 1852, p. 88).

In December 1671, the Newport Sabbath-keepers followed through on Stennett's advice, and withdrew from the Sunday-keeping church which led to the formation of the independent Newport Sabbatarian Church. The group was not at that time a Baptist congregation but some of its members were deeply immersed in Particular Baptist ideology including Samuel and Tacy Hubbard whose close fellowship with other Baptists remained well after their leaving First Church.¹⁰⁸

Mother Sabbatarian Church Founded

By 1672, First Church of Newport had evolved into a “free grace” orthodox Particular Baptist congregation in the Hansard Knollys mold. When in the fall 1670 the Sabbatarians had refused to take table communion with the four apostates the Baptist ministry began a free grace onslaught against them.

¹⁰⁸ In 1668 Samuel Hubbard (1610-1689) wrote that he was a convert for 60 years and that he and his wife Tacy (1608-aft. 1697) had been Baptists for 38 years which places their becoming Baptists in 1648 when they settled in Newport on October 12, 1648. They adopted Believer's Baptism in 1647 and fled Massachusetts Bay Colony to avoid Puritan persecution. The Hubbards chose to attend Dr. John Clark's First Church and became baptized members on November 3, 1648. In October 1652 the Hubbards had hands laid on them by Joseph Tory (Hubbard, 1940, pp. 8, 15, 21, 23). They had one son who died without issue, and three daughters—Bethia or Bethiah Hubbard (1646-1707) who married, Joseph Clarke, Jr. (1642-1726) on November 16, 1664, in Westerly, Rhode Island; Ruth who married Robert Burdick; and Rachel who married Andrew Langworthy). Joseph Clarke, Jr. was a nephew of Dr. John Clark.

The elders of First Church became argumentative, mean and quite vicious, especially Elder Obadiah Holmes. Elder Joseph Tory declared the Law to be done a way. Elders John Clarke and Mark Luther, expounding in part on Galatians, weekly challenged the observation of the seventh day. The First Church elders labeled the seventh-day Sabbaths “beggarly elements and rudiments of the world” (Seventh-Day Baptist Publishing Society, 1852, p. 29). With this vicious vendetta the Mumfords withdrew

Colonial Churches		
<i>Church Congregation</i>	<i>Persuasion</i>	<i>Leaders</i>
First Church in Newport (Rhode Island)	Particular Baptist (Calvinist, a first-day congregation)	Founded in Newport about 1644 by John Clarke whose sentiments were with Henry Jessey and the first-day Particular Baptists. Joseph Tory assisted him at Newport. His successor as pastor was Obadiah Holmes who served from 1652 to his death in 1668. Clarke served as the leading elder until his death with the exception of 1651-1663 while absent in London on Colonial business.
First Church in Portsmouth (Rhode Island)	Congregational (a first-day congregation) in one service and first-day Baptist in a second.	Construction of the the congregational meetinghouse for Pocasset (Portsmouth) was in 1638. There John Clarke conducted public worship for both the Congregational and Baptist elements from 1638-1644 in two separate services except for four months when Robert Lenthal served.
First Church in Salem (Massachusetts Bay Colony)	Congregational (a first-day congregation)	Formed August 6, 1629, as the first Puritan church founded in America with Samuel Skelton as pastor. On January 1, 1630 it became the second independent Congregational church in New England. The congregation elected Roger Williams as acting pastor in 1634.
New London (Connecticut)	Independent (a seventh-day congregation)	Founded in 1675 with John Rogers as its leader under the Newport Church. Pastored for awhile by William Gibson. Rogers broke away creating the Rogerian sect.
Westerly, earlier Hopkinton (Rhode Island)	Independent (a seventh-day congregation)	In 1708 the church became a distinct congregation from Newport with seventy year old John Maxson, Sr. ordained and made the leading elder.
Newport Sabbatarian Church (Rhode Island)	Independent (a seventh-day congregation)	Formed December 23, 1671 by the Hubbards, Mumfords, Hiscox, Langworthy and Baster. Hiscox elected elder (Teacher).
Piscataway (New Jersey)	Independent (a seventh-day congregation)	Organized in August 19, 1705 by residents of Piscataway and Hopewell, in the province of New Jersey. Edward Dunham elected elder who was then ordained by William Gibson.
Six-Principle Church in Newport (Rhode Island)	General Baptist (Arminian, a first-day congregation, practiced doctrine of laying on of hands)	Founded by William Vaughn in 1655 when he and his followers withdrew from Clarke's congregation as Vaughn believed the "laying on of hands" was to be a mandatory rite of the church.
Society of Friends in Newport (Rhode Island)	Quakers (a first-day congregation)	A charismatic church.

from their association with the First Church Baptists.

In June of 1671, Obadiah Holmes delivered a blistering sermon about those whose “offenses are such as arise from brothers of the church, such

as deny Christ, and have turned to Moses in observing days, times, years, etc., and that it is better that a mill-stone were hanged about the neck of such, and they be cast into the sea” (Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, 1910, p. 124). The five remaining Sabbatarians (William Hiscox, Samuel Hubbard, Tacy Hubbard, Rachael Langworthy, and Roger Baster) took exception and demanded to know if Homes was speaking of them. His reply was that if his words fit them, then indeed he was!

They demanded a meeting with John Clarke and the other elders of First Church. A meeting of the full congregation was set up at the Church meeting hall for the following Thursday. William Hiscox served as the main speaker for the Sabbatarians. The group presented their case, with Hiscox vigorously opposing the elders’ views. Other meetings followed until it became obvious the first-day Baptists would not fellowship with people of such divergent views.

The Sabbatarians requested a peaceful withdrawal of their membership from the congregation with the consent of the other members as was the custom of the time, but the first-day members would have none of it seeking instead to condemn. The Baptists, who saw the Sabbatarians as enslaved by the Covenant of Works, denied them any request for a peaceful withdrawal of cooperation and consent.

There being no peaceful resolution of the conflict, the five members of Newport First Church (William Hiscox,¹⁰⁹ Samuel Hubbard, his wife Tacy (Cooper) Hubbard, and their daughter Rachel Langworthy, and Roger Baster¹¹⁰) on December 7, 1671 severed their membership in Clarke’s congregation. They joined the Mumfords in forming their own seven member independent seventh-day Sabbatarian fellowship on December 23, 1671. They elected thirty-three year-old William Hiscox, a fiery young man who became renowned in Newport for his preaching, which is likely why

¹⁰⁹ William Hiscox, born in 1638, died May 24, 1704 at age sixty-six. As late as 1684, Hiscox was not an ordained minister (Hubbard, 1940, p. 32).

¹¹⁰ Roger Baster (1621-1687) was a blockmaker and he made his own headstone. His interment was in the old Colonial Cemetery at Newport. His gravestone reads: “Here lyeth the body of Roger Easter, Bachelor, Blockmaker. Aged 66 years. He died 23 day of April 1687. He was one of the 1st beginners of a Church of Christ observing of the 7th day Sabbath of the Lord in N.E.” Baster was an illegitimate child and no doubt suffered greatly from this stigma.

they chose him as their unordained elder.¹¹¹ Mumford was age thirty-two at the time.

While the Hubbards became founding members of the Newport Sabbatarian Church in 1671, they remained of a Particular Baptist persuasion (Huling, n.d., pp. 37-38). After twenty years as leading members of First Church their sole doctrinal reason for departing the Baptist fellowship was the matter of the seventh-day as the Sabbath. Other than that, they did not doctrinally differ from Clarke's first-day Particular Baptists. Samuel and Tacy Hubbard brought their Baptist ideology with them. This detail demonstrates the mixed fellowship nature of the nascent Newport Sabbatarian Church and helps illuminate the fundamental weaknesses leading to the congregation's eventual morphing into a Seventh Day Baptist congregation and ultimately the Seventh Day Baptist denomination itself.

This was their willingness to tolerate in their own fellowship the false the ideas of John Wheelwright, Anne Hutchinson, Hanserd Knollys, John Clarke and their minions such as Obadiah Holmes, Joseph Tory and Mark Luker. Even though the congregation became the mother Sabbatarian church in America it failed to

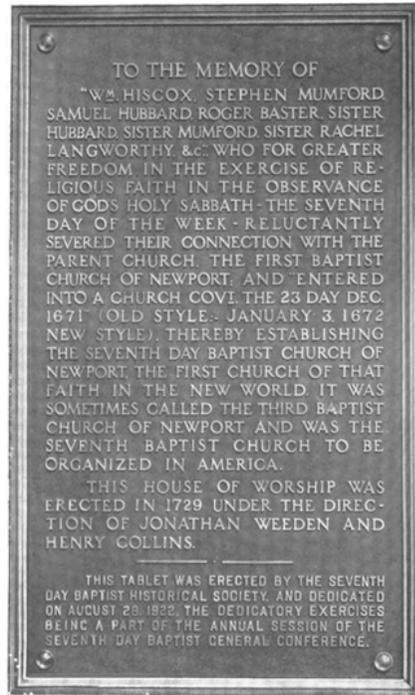


Photo of the tablet placed by the Seventh Day Baptists at the Old Sabbatarian MeetingHouse in Newport. The house does not now stand upon its original site; that the lower side of its original site was exactly fifty feet from the corner of Barney and Spring Streets; that when it was acquired by the Newport Historical Society, it was moved up the hill and across Barney Street to where it now stands; that while the Society's main building faces Touro Street, the Old Meeting House-which is at the rear of the main building, of which it is a part-opens upon Barney Street. (Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, 1922, p. 105).

¹¹¹ Pastors of the Sabbatarian churches were known as "leading elders."

jettison the false doctrines of the First Church Baptists and to earnestly seek Biblical truth. Its weakness was allowing its membership to remain in fellowship with false brethren and counterfeit churches, electing their own pastors rather than allowing Christ to select them, and congregationalism. This not only spawned the creation of the Seventh Day Baptist denomination but nurtured dead and fractured Sabbatarian “Sardis Era” churches for the next three centuries.

In Hubbard’s Journal there is a March 24, 1672 letter from Belcher to the Sabbath keepers at Newport wherein he wrote apprehensively.

In 1677, at age 67 Hubbard’s feelings were hurt when he was no longer allowed to preach to the congregation, a likely attempt by Hiscox, Gibson¹¹² and Mumford to curb his expounding of Particular Baptist ideas by:

...a vote of the church declaring that he had not “the gift of prophesying publicly in the church, tho” says he, “heretofore judged so by those breth’n of the old ch. Yea by most here and encouraged in it.” (Huling, n.d., p. 32).

A year later, in 1678, Hubbard was sick with a “very sore cough” but Hiscox and Gibson declined to anoint and lay hands on him suggesting the ordinance was not then practiced in this Sabbatarian congregation. In Hubbard’s own words:

The church meeting by course, the church coming to see me, I desired of them the ordinances of laying on of hands and anointing with oil, saying I had faith in it. Bro. Hiscox and Bro. Gibson gave me this answ’r—for some reasons they could not for present, but wt they could do were very willing & free. So the ch. drew into my other room agreeing to seek God’s fare for me, poor one. The next day I would have gone to town to give public praise, but was advised not to go... (Huling, n.d., pp. 32-33).

Hubbard remained active in the political affairs of the colony and maintained his relationships with fellow Baptists in First Church. He and Tacy raised his daughters to be Baptists. There is no evidence that he ever truly separated himself from worldly affairs and distanced himself from false believers. Not being allowed to preach aggravated him greatly and later

¹¹² When William Gibson arrived from the Bell Lane Church in England in 1675 he served as an elder assisting Hiscox given oversight of New London and Westerly.

he said "I must say that Bro. Maxson and I had by virtue of church as much power as Bro. Hiscox" (Huling, n.d., p. 32).

A tablet on display in the old Sabbatarian meetinghouse in Newport, constructed in 1729 on Barney Street, commemorates the church's founding. The Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society erected the tablet on August 28, 1922, the dedicatory exercises being a part of the annual session of the Seventh Day Baptist General Conference. The tablet reads:

To the memory of "William Hiscox. Stephen Mumford, Samuel Hubbard. Roger Baster. Sister Hubbard, Sister Mumford. Sister Rachel Langworthy, etc.", who for greater freedom in the exercise of religious faith in the observance of God's Holy Sabbath - the seventh day of the week - reluctantly severed their connection with the parent church, the First Baptist Church of Newport, and "entered into a church cov't the 23 day December, 1671" (old style--January 3, 1672, new style), thereby establishing the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Newport, the first Church of that faith in the new world. It was sometimes called the third Baptist Church of Newport, and was the seventh Baptist church to be organized in America. This house of worship was erected in 1729 under the direction of Jonathan Weeden and Henry Collins. (Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, 1922, p. 103).

The fledgling Newport Sabbatarian congregation joined in covenant as a distinct church with no articles of faith except the Bible. In spite of the claims of later Seventh-Day Baptists its founding was as an independent Sabbatarian fellowship not a Particular Baptist church and unmistakably Clarke's First Church was never the parent church. This Rhode Island Sabbatarian congregation became the mother seventh-day church in colonial America. It grew slowly for about 30 years.

Henry Clarke, in his *A History of the Sabbatarians or Seventh Day Baptist's in America*, understood that the seventh-day Sabbatarians of Newport, unlike the Baptists, did not adhere to the doctrine of the Trinity. He wrote:

I conclude they all believe in one God, the Father and maker of all things, sin excepted, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, or that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and also in the Holy Ghost, as the operative power or spirit of God. But there are few if any, of this denomination, as I conceive, who believe that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are three absolute distinct persons, coequal, coessential, and coeternal Gods, and yet but one God; as such an idea would be in the face of scripture, and repugnant to right reason. (Clarke, 1811, p. 62).

Close examination of the extant seventeenth century writings of members of the mother Sabbatarian church in colonial America shows:

- They kept the Ten Commandments (Clarke, 1811, pp. 8-9);
- They practiced believer's baptism by immersion and did not baptize children;
- Their governance structure was congregational (shared between the ministry and the congregation);
- They worshipped on the Sabbath but there appears to have been no detailed set of rules for Sabbath day conduct;
- They did not practice anointing the sick with oil and laying on of hands on the sick person in compliance with the ordinance James 5:14 (Huling, n.d., p. 32);
- They did not believe in the Trinity (Clarke, 1811, p. 62); and
- They believed the Holy Spirit was the "Power of God" (Clarke, 1811, p. 62).

In 1674 the Bell Lane congregation wrote to Newport asking about Isaac Wells. Wells had been a church officer with Thomas Tillam (?-1676) at Colchester who emigrated from England and settled at Jamaica on Long Island, New York.¹¹³

On the 17th of the 6th month 1674, Bell Lane wrote to Newport asking about Isaac Wells who "had been an officer with Mr. Tillam at Colchester, but had been long gone." Wells had settled in Long Island, at Jamaica, and was probably a member of Hubbard's Seventh-day church at Newport as early as 1675. The London men signing the enquiry were Chr. Williams, John Jones,¹¹⁴ Hugh Heslepp,¹¹⁵ Robert Woodward, Francis Walters, Richard Farnham,¹¹⁶ Robert Hopkins, John Laboure. (McGeachy, *The Times of Stephen Munford*, 1964).

¹¹³ As to the Jamaica reference, rather than the Caribbean island, it refers to Isaac Wells, living in Jamaica, New York. Today Jamaica, on Long Island, is a middle-class neighborhood in the New York City borough of Queens. In 1673, the Dutch re-took the area from the English but relinquished it under the Second Treaty of Westminster in 1674.

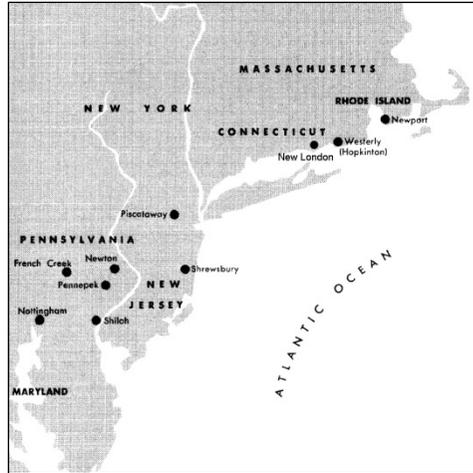
¹¹⁴ Presumably this is the John Jones who in 1654 signed the Fifth Monarchy Declaration, as a member of Feake's church. C. H. Greene of Battle Creek pointed out that the Jones of 1674 purported to join Pinners' Hall in 1687, but was after much dispute adjudged to have remained a member of Bell Lane. He does not appear in the negotiations of 1702 when the churches united; presumably he was dead (Baptist Historical Society, 1914, p. 128).

¹¹⁵ Heslepp was a friend of Thomas Tillam, baptized by him at Hexham on December 15, 1652. The *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society* reports "Like Tillam he was connected with the church at Cheshire, where he was reported to the bishop in 1664; and next year he

In 1675, Stephen Mumford traveled to London and conferred with John Belcher and the Bell Lane congregation to report the exact situation in Rhode Island and to encourage others to come to Newport. Mumford's theology was more in line with that of Belcher and his group at Bell Lane not Peter Chamberlin's General Baptists at Mill Yard, Francis Bamfield's Particular Baptists at Pinner's Hall, or Cowell's Natton-Tewksbury congregation. According to McGeachy:

Mumford wrote to Tacy Hubbard from London on January 14, 1675, stating:

About the 14th of January, we sailed from Boston and had a comfortable time and fair wind for three weeks, in which time we came to soundings, as they judged near the Isle of Scilly, and then we met with a cross wind and that kept us three weeks more, and then we came to anchor in a road between the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth. I took my journey to London in the waggon, where I was received by the brethren with much joy, in some of them who had a great desire to hear of our place and people; some of them talk of coming with me. (Austin, 2009, p. 136).



Locations of earliest Sabbath-keeping congregations in America founded by 1745.

On October 16, 1675, he returned with a new elder William Gibson (1638-1717), with his wife and two children, of the Bell Lane Church. Presumably, Gibson was an ordained elder when he arrived (Davis, 1851). He first preached at New London and eventually settled at Westerly.

In a letter from Samuel Hubbard to Edward Stennett bearing the date Newport, R.I., November 1676:

was the first to put up a tombstone at Hill Cliff, over Elizabeth Haslop. It is not usual to find one man thus a member successively of three churches widely-separated” (Baptist Historical Society, 1914, p. 128).

¹¹⁶ The *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society* states that “Hugh Parnham was the mainstay of the church till his death, and is mentioned in other correspondence as jointly in charge of it” (Baptist Historical Society, 1914, p. 128).

Now, dear brother, although we are not destroyed by the Indians, God hath visited this land by taking away many by death - in, in this place, of all sorts. Of the old church, first, Mr. Joseph Torrey; then my dear brother John Crandall; then Mr. John Clarke; then William Weeden, a deacon; then John Salmon.") Married Elizabeth, dau. of Samuel Gorton?, and had sons John, Joseph, Peter, Jeremiah, Eber, & (James?). (Backus, 1871, p. 344).

In 1678, Samuel Hubbard reported that there were a total of thirty-seven Sabbatarians in America: twenty in Newport, seven at Westerly (originally called Misquamacut, later Hopkinton), and ten at New London, Connecticut (Denison, 1878, pp. 59-60). Formal Church records at Newport did not begin until 1692.

List of Members of Newport Church, July 25, 1708

William Gibson, Pastor

Mary Arnold	Damaris Bliss	Joseph James	John Read
Sarah Arnold	Elizabeth Chase	William James	Ellen Rogen
Ester Ayres	Philip Chase	Rachel Langworthy	Sarah Rogers
Ester Ayres (the younger)	Rebecca Clarke	Elizabeth Martin	Catharine Sabin
Hannah Ayres	Amy Collins	Sarah Martin	Jonathan Sabin
Freelove Barker	Elizabeth Emerie	William Martin	Hannah Stone
Peter Barker	Joseph Emerie	Elizabeth Millard	Ruth Trehy
Elizabeth Barney	James Fowler	Ebenezer Moon	Rachel Weeden
Israel Barney	Edith Higgin	Ruth Philips	Elizabeth West
Margaret Bennet	Hannah James	Hannah Read	Peter West
			Ruth West

On May 14, 1681, Samuel Hubbard wrote to Isaac Wells still residing at Jamaica, New York, in response to his inquiry, and said:

As concerning your friends mentioned, Mr. John Clarke died (the) 20 (th) day of April, 1676, Mr. Luker, the 26th day of December, 1676, Mr. Vaughn is dead, elder Tory, my dear brother John Crandall, . . . Mr. Smith, W. Weeden, John Salmon, Mr. Edes, several of the church, gov'r Arnold, gov'r Easton, gov'r Coddington, gov'r John Cranston, choice men, are all dead. (Huling, n.d., p. 34).¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ *The Genealogical Dictionary of Rhode Island: Comprising Three Generations* states this letter to Wells includes the statement "a ship came from Virginia, hither 2d day of April, 1680,

Wells had settled on Long Island and helped the work of the Newport Sabbatarian Church remotely. Griffis describes the community of New York in that decade as including Calvinists of four languages, German speaking Lutherans, which the Irish Governor Dongan referred to as “Dutch,” and numerous Quaker preachers, men and women, especially women. In an 1686 letter Dongan wrote there were:

...singing Quakers, ranting Quakers, Sabbatarians, anti-Sabbatarians, some Jews, in short, all sorts of opinion there are some and the most part of none at all. ...But as for the King's natural born subjects, that live on Long Island and other parts of the government, I find it a hard task to make them pay their ministers.”(Griffis, 1909, p. 223).

Chronological Highlights

1776	Late in the year British troops occupy Newport.
1781	French assist the Continental Army forcing the British surrender at Yorktown, Virginia.
1783	On September 3, 1783, Great Britain formally recognized the independence of the United States in the Treaty of Paris.
1778	Many of the Hopkinton members admitted their coldness and indifference During the year 1778, “many members, upon being cited to attend church meeting, confessed that the reason of their indifference, was owing to their coldness, and not to their dissatisfaction with the church” (Seventh-Day Baptist Publishing Society, 1854, p. 136).
1812	War with Great Britain.
1813	The Newport and Hopkinton Sabbatarian Congregations now Seventh Day Baptist congregations.
1813	The Sabbatarian Conference at Cohansey, New Jersey, consisting of twelve Seventh-day Baptist congregations including Newport and Hopkinton.
1818	The Sabbatarian Conference meeting at Berlin, New York, formally renamed themselves Seventh Day Baptists.

On August 22, 1685, the Bell Lane church wrote again to Newport, the signatures being John Becher [senior], Henry Cooke, Robert Hopkins, John Laboura, John Walters, Joseph Parkham, Giles Ray, Christopher Williams, Simon Blunt or Brunts (Baptist Historical Society, 1914, p. 128).

When Hiscox died in 1704, having been pastor for 33 years at Newport, William Gibson succeeded him as full pastor (or ruling elder). Gibson served until his death March 12, 1717. The next, or third ruling elder at Newport, was Joseph Crandall (abt. 1661-1737) ordained May 8, 1715.

twenty-six souls, five of them baptized, brother Hargel, a smith and his wife, brother Henry Key and his wife, Hope Covey (sic)” (Austin, 2009, p. 92).

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In the fall of 1705 the Piscataway, New Jersey, church organized with Edward Dunham (1661-1777), as its elder. In September of that year Gibson ordained Dunham as the first pastor of the Sabbatarian Church in Piscataway. The church records:

The Church of God keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ, living in Piscataway and Hopewell, in the province of New Jersey, being assembled with one accord, at the house of Benjamin Martin, in Piscataway, the 19th day of August, 1705 -- we did then, and with one mind, choose our dearly beloved Edward Dunham, who is faithful in the Lord, to be our elder and assistant, according to the will of God; whom we did send to New England to be ordained; who was ordained in the church-meeting in Westerly, Rhode Island, by prayer and laying on of hands, by their elder, William Gibson, the eighth of September, 1705. (Seventh-Day Baptist Publishing Society, 1853, p. 121).



In 1774 *The Rose*, under the command of James Wallace, was sent to Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island to put an end to the lucrative smuggling which had made Newport the fourth wealthiest city in America. Rhode Island also initiated the Declaration of Independence by declaring its own independence from Britain on May 4th, 1776, two full months before the rest of the colonies and by petitioning Congress to form a Continental Navy to rid Narragansett Bay of the *Rose*, the creation of the United States Navy may be directly attributed to the presence of the "H.M.S." *Rose*. Photo is of a replica of *The Rose*.

The Church Clerk from 1692 to 1708 was Joseph Clarke, a nephew of Dr. John Clarke, Pastor of the First Church in Newport. His son, Joseph Clarke, Jr., succeeded him, and both became members of the Westerly Church, in 1708.

As the Church grew in America, it attracted many first-day Baptists as converts. Unfortunately these orthodox Baptist converts brought with them their Protestant ideas of the Trinity, dualism, and congregationalism as a form of Church government. As more became convinced of the Sabbath observance these local congregations became infected with the doctrines of dualism (immortal soul) and Trinitarian theology. As in the Sabbatarian churches of England, the congregational form of government served to

facilitate Baptist Sabbatarians coming to power and adopting deceptive doctrines. Sadly, the Independent Sabbatarians had a tendency to remain oblivious to the inherent spiritual danger in mixed fellowships and the practice of sharing in worship and fellowship with first-day Baptists.

In 1708, the enlarged and geographically widespread Newport congregation officially broke into two groups. The "Westerly" or "Hopkinton" congregation retained the original church records as it became the leading or headquarters location. The Church of Newport did not fully ratify the separation from the brethren at Westerly until sometime after the yearly meeting, though the church at Westerly had become completely organized, and had ordained John Maxson, Sr. (1638-1720), as their pastor.¹¹⁸

A number of other congregations formed as new converts and immigrants from England became Sabbath keepers. Although these brethren recognized their relationship to the mother Sabbatarian church in Rhode Island, distance motivated those residing in New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania to gather in annual meetings in their own areas.

The American Revolution

The Revolutionary War (1776-1783) significantly impacted the Sabbatarian churches. As their members scattered some congregations ceased to function altogether during the war. Along the New Jersey coast the inhabitants generally moved their families to the interior to avoid the British. At Piscataway British combatants encamped near Dunham's house:

...but he, being advanced in years, and some of his sons in the army, remained at his own home, and was treated with due respect by the British officers, who often called at his house. Many of the church had moved away, or were serving in the army; consequently, for a number of years their meetings were seldom attended. Some of the members of the church were officers in the army, and others were serving as teamsters, volunteers, and militiamen. (Seventh-Day Baptist Publishing Society, 1852, pp. 116-117).

¹¹⁸ John Maxson, Sr. served as deputy to the General Assembly of Rhode Island in 1670, 1690 and 1705. In 1687 he was overseer of the poor. His son John, Jr. followed his father as pastor of Westerly from 1720-1748, and his grandson John Maxson was elder of the Newport Church from 1748-1778.



ARRIVAL AT NEWPORT MARCH 1781. Washington came ashore and was greeted by Rochambeau's land troops, standing several ranks deep on each side of the street all the way to the Colony House. As Washington passed by on his mile-long trek to the Colony House, cannon from the ships kept up a continuous salute and the troops came to attention, rank by rank. At the steps of the Colony House, he was greeted by Rochambeau and escorted to the Vernon House, where he would stay for nearly a week. Vernon House is one of Newport's last grand merchant's houses, and played host to many notable guests during Vernon's ownership. The Newport Colony House is the fourth oldest statehouse still standing in the United States. © Copyright 2003-2014 David R. Wagner. All rights reserved.

Henry Clarke summarized the situation with the mother Sabbatarian church at Newport:

This church [at Newport], previous to the Revolutionary war, had a number of members, respectable for their talents, learning and abilities, and in eminent stations in the public affairs of state. But the war scattered them, and death has finally deprived her of them, for this church has not yet recovered the splendour it had before the war. Notwithstanding the long and fervent labours of Eld. Bliss, there has been but small additions, and no remarkable revivals, since the troubles of the war. The family of Eld. Bliss, like many others is much scattered, in different states of the Union. Perhaps he has been long sewing the seed of the word, for others to reap the fruits of his labours.

And possibly, it may be owing to the spirit of infidelity, that has appeared to gain so much in America, generally since the war: as it may be remarked both from scripture and history, that those nations and cities, where the glorious display of God's divine Revelation; and where eminent and numerous churches

have been dedicated to the true God; and where the gospel has had great success—are now very generally overrun with Paganism, Mahometanism,¹¹⁹ or other false worship. (Clarke, 1811, pp. 23-24).¹²⁰

Captain Sir James Wallace, commanding officer of the *Rose*, on station off Newport gathered provisions for the British army by having his sailors' and marines go ashore and simply take what they needed (Allen, 2010, p. 88).¹²¹ This prompted local farmers and merchants to move further into the interior of the country. According to Withey, the war devastated Newport and its trade and forced a substantial part of its population to flee the city. She writes: "Its residents fearing the worst, began to flee even before British soldiers occupied the town in late 1776 (Withey, 1984).

Of the Sabbatarians, those indwelt with the Spirit of God were to obey all of the Ten Commandments including the sixth prohibiting the taking of human life. The war zone became an inhospitable place for God's people which prompted many of them to move west.

Being political, the Seventh-day Baptists openly participated in the Revolutionary War. They had no problem with bearing arms, engaging in revolutionary activities and participating in local and national politics. The Westerly (Hopkinton) Church record illustrates this practice in its minutes dated September 1, 1777 as follows:

Brother Amos Burdick appeared at this meeting, (a meeting held Sept. 14th, 1777,) and being asked the reasons why he did not walk with the church, replied, that the church admits members to their communion on conviction, according to his understanding; and likewise approves the taking up of arms and learning of war, which was contrary to his opinion. The church told him he might have the liberty to act his own opinion as to bearing arms, but did not think it right for him to labor to hinder others at this difficult and distressing time. Said brother requested a record to be made in this book that

¹¹⁹ Mahometanism is an archaic English word for Muslims referring to followers of the Islamic founder Muhammad.

¹²⁰ The interment of William Bliss was by the side of his first wife, in his own family burying ground, near his house in Middletown, and at the foot of the hill on which still exists the intrenchment (an entrenched fortification or a position protected by trenches) which was thrown up by the British troops in the Revolutionary War, now called Indian Fort. On his tomb-stone is the following inscription: "In memory of Eld. William Bliss, pastor of the Sabbatarian Church in Newport, who died May 4th, 1808, in the 81st year of his age" (Seventh-Day Baptist Publishing Society, 1852, p. 21).

¹²¹ In 1776, one of the first ships commissioned to serve in the Continental Navy during the American Revolutionary War was named the *Oliver Cromwell* (Hahn, 2000, pp. 74–101).

he might have liberty to speak and act his liberty in full on said matter, which was refused, and nothing more was done respecting the matter at this meeting. (Seventh-Day Baptist Publishing Society, 1854, p. 136).

Consider the situation of the Newport congregation when an elderly John Maxson¹²² (1714-1778) served as the church's fourth pastor:

Mr. Maxson's labors in Newport commenced at an important epoch in the history of the country, and continued through the protracted difficulties with France and Great Britain, the latter of which terminated in the Revolutionary struggle. Under those trying circumstances, he labored for the good of souls, undiverted by the scenes of commotion and clamor of war. The sentiments he entertained on the subject of our civil affairs were freely expressed and zealously carried out in his efforts on the side of his country. His sons were engaged during the war in the Continental Army; his church was much scattered, and his meeting-house was for a long time closed;... (The Westerly Seventh-Day Baptist Church, 1852, p. 13).

Opponents labeled those who did not participate in the Revolutionary War with the epithet Tories. American author and historian Thomas B. Allen tells of the tar-and-feathering, house-burning, and lynching by Rebels and Tories. Allen cites Brigadier General Nathanael Greene who took command of the Continental Army of the South in 1781, who wrote to Colonel Alexander Hamilton: "The division among the people is much greater than I imagined and the Whigs¹²³ and Tories persecute each other, with little less than savage fury. There is nothing but murders and devastation in every quarter" (Hamilton A. , 1961, p. 528); (Allen, 2010, p. xiv).

The people of God in Newport did not escape the consequences of war. Clarke explains:

The church at Newport, about this time, experienced very heavy afflictions.— Their pastor's death—about the same time this youth died.—As the seat of war was there their deacon, Mr. Tanner, a man much esteemed, with Col. Bennet and a number of their principal members left the Island to be more secure from the, British, and moved into different parts of the country, for refuge.— None but those who have experienced the like, can sympathize with them. (Clarke, 1811, p. 21).

¹²² The interment of John Maxson is in the Common Burying Ground at Newport. He was a son of Jonathan Maxson (1680-1732) and Content Rogers (1678-1777) and a grandson of John Maxson, Sr. (1639-1720) and Mary Moshier (Cole, 1889, pp. 344-345).

¹²³ A Whig was an American colonist who supported the American Revolution.

After the Revolution, Sabbatarian congregations declined severely from the lack of competent leadership and the ravages of war. The result was the emptying of God's people from the old Sabbatarian congregations leaving a clear Baptist majority who only differed from other Baptists on the matter of the seventh-day as the day of public worship. By June 10, 1813 the Newport congregation had become Seventh Day Baptist with only 90 members (Benedict, 1813, p. 412 in Volume 2).

The Church of God people had scattered westward toward the American frontier. There they remained independent and out of public attention for nearly a century. These independent Sabbatarians joined other Americans in the great westward movement. Their migration took them on to western Pennsylvania, the Ohio Valley, the Middle Western frontier (Illinois, Iowa, Michigan and Wisconsin) and ultimately to the Oregon territory.

The Seventh Day Baptists Unite

Following the Revolutionary War the Sabbatarian congregations of New England became more and more a truly orthodox Baptist denomination in their doctrine, governance and praxis. While these independent congregations remained fiercely autonomous some sought to gather together in annual meetings where their friends, relatives, and brethren could reminisce, fellowship and promote unity. But it was not until the Baptists came to dominate the movement that a unification effort began to succeed beginning with the Rhode Island congregations.

...in 1696, there was appointed a General or Yearly Meeting of Rhode Island Seventh-day Baptists; and our conference is a direct descendant of that general meeting. (Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, 1910, p. 150).

After the War of 1812, a military conflict lasting for two and a half years fought by the United States of America against the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, its North American colonies, and its Native American allies, the emerging Sabbatarian Baptists took action to distance themselves from non-Baptist Sabbatarians.

As of 1813 the members of several Sabbatarian congregations, including Newport and Westerly, had so adopted Baptist ideology that David Benedict in his work *A General History of the Baptist Denomination in*

America published in 1813, described the group as Seventh-Day Baptists. He states:

The Sabbatarians differ from the Baptists generally in no other article but that of the Sabbath. And upon that subject, as near as I can understand from their writings and conversation, they hold that the ten commandments are still binding on Christians... (Benedict, 1813, p. 412 in Volume 2).

At this time Seventh-day Baptists of twelve congregations were “united in an Association by the name of the Sabbatarian General Conference, which holds its anniversaries in different places, as best suits the convenience of the churches” (Benedict, 1813, p. 424 in Volume 2).

The Cohansey Conference			
<i>Church</i>	<i>Began</i>	<i>Pastors</i>	<i>Members</i>
Hopkinton, RI	1703	Mathew Stillman	980
Newport RI	1671	Henry Burdick, Arnold Bliss	90
Cohansey, NJ	1737	John Davis	173
Piscataway, NJ	1705	Gideon Wooden	75
Waterford, CT	1784	David Rogers, Jabez Beebe, Jr.	46
Burlington, CT	1780		46
Berlin, NY	1780	William Satterlee	436
Brookside NY	1797	Henry Clarke	151
Deruyter, NY	1806	David Davis	35
Lost Creek, VA		John Davis	23
Salem, VA		John Davis, elder of both churches	38
Salem, NJ		Jacob Ayeres	35
			2,028

A General Conference of these twelve congregations took place on June 10, 1813 at Cohansey, New Jersey (Benedict, 1813, p. 348 in Volume 2). The sermon was by Piscataway Pastor Gideon Wooden.

Benedict makes it quite clear that as of 1813:

The number of communicants in the Sabbatarian connexion is a little less than two thousand. But it is supposed by Mr. [Henry] Clarke, their historian, that the Seventh-day Sabbath is observed by a population of not less than fifteen thousand.

In baptism, church discipline, &c. the Sabbatarians differ in nothing from their First-day brethren; in doctrine, some of them are Calvinists, but perhaps a greater part are inclined to the Arminian system; which, however, they wish to define for themselves. (Benedict, 1813, p. 424 in Volume 2).

So in 1813 there were about 2,000 Seventh-Day Baptists in the United States, but more importantly, an estimated added population of 13,000 scattered Sabbath keepers independent of the Sabbatarian General Conference. Five years later in 1818, the Sabbatarian General Conference

meeting at Berlin, New York, formally renamed themselves Seventh Day Baptist General Conference.

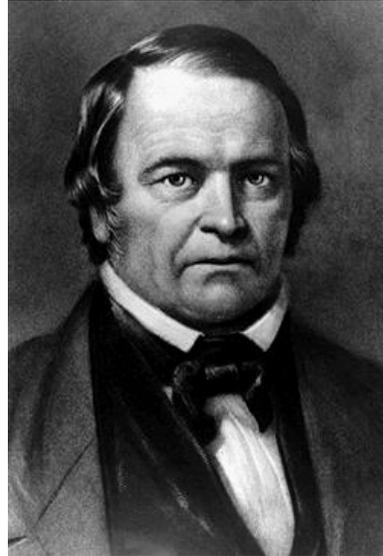
It was voted to substitute the words Seventh-day Baptist for Sabbatarian in the name of the conference. (Seventh Day Baptist General Conference, 1910, p. 169).

The Baptists fully separated and distanced themselves from the Trinity and immortal soul rejecting Sabbatarians. Ten or twelve Sabbatarian congregations in Pennsylvania and Rhode Island would not at first affiliate with the Conference. As late as 1828, only 16 to 20 congregations were present at the Seventh Day Baptist Conference meetings.

In context, the Seventh Day Baptists and the Sabbatarian Churches of God arose out of the same nexus of events. This means that there is some shared history in spite of the continued loud and tiring rhetoric of denial of many Seventh Day Baptist historians.

Chapter 14 Millerism and the Rise of Sabbatarian Adventism

Following the American Revolutionary War there were numerous Sabbatarian congregations and scattered brethren in the former 13 British colonies. The rise of the Seventh Day Baptists depleted the ranks of the Sabbatarian Church of God but there remained many independent Sabbatarians. Some of them got caught up in the Adventism of William Miller. Adventism and the ideas of James and Ellen G. White significantly impacted the Sabbatarian Churches of God as they morphed into the Church of God (Adventist) and later COG7.



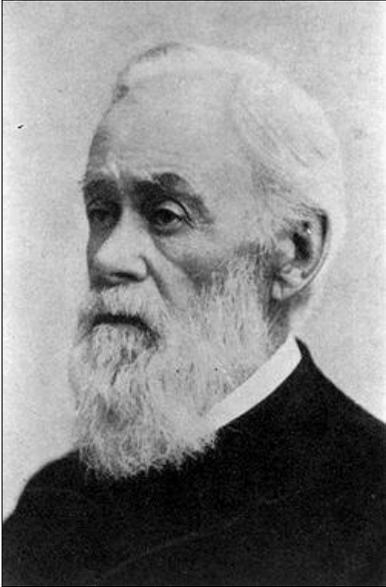
William Miller (February 15, 1782 – December 20, 1849) was a Baptist preacher, from the United States, who is credited with beginning the mid-nineteenth century North American religious movement known as the Millerites and Adventists.

The Advent Movement

After the War of 1812, William Miller, a farmer, and Sunday Baptist preacher, began a systematic study of the Bible. He concluded that the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, especially Daniel 8, predict that Jesus Christ would soon return to earth. From 1831 to 1844, Miller headed an Advent movement preaching the immanent return of Christ.

At first Miller did not set a specific date for the Second Advent saying only that it would be "about 1843." He finally set an ultimate time as the spring of 1844. Others, called Millerites by the popular press, picked the more precise date of October 22, 1844, which Miller and many of the leaders of the first movement accepted shortly before the date arrived. The

basis of this belief was the day-year principle¹²⁴ and Miller's interpretation of the 2300 days mentioned in Daniel 8:14 wherein "the sanctuary would be cleansed." The Millerites understood this verse to point to Christ's return to "cleans" the earth.



Joshua Vaughan Himes (1805–1895) was a Protestant leader and publisher. At 18 he joined the Christian Connexion church in New Bedford where he was licensed as an exhorter and later ordained to the ministry. He pastored several districts in Massachusetts, before becoming pastor of the First Christian Church in Boston in 1830. Becoming involved with the followers of William Miller he eventually became a prominent leader in the Advent Christian Church. Photo licensed under PD-US via Wikipedia.

apparently only had one issue (Himes, 1844).

Unmistakably, the work of Miller and Himes was not that of the historical Churches of God but that does not mean that Sabbatarian Adventism did not exist. No connection, however, has been found between William Miller's Adventism and the nineteenth century successors of the

Joshua V. Himes met William Miller in 1839 at Exeter, New Hampshire. On March 20, 1840, Himes published and edited the first Millerite newspaper, the *Signs of the Times* in Boston. Two years later he started a daily paper, *The Midnight Cry*, in New York. The first issue bears the date of November 17, 1842, and carries the announcement: "We intend by this little sheet to lay before the public in a cheap and popular form, some of the principal reasons for our faith in the second coming of Christ in 1843" (page 2 under ITS OBJECT). The inaugural issue includes a historical summary of Millerite Adventism entitled "Memoir of William Miller" (Himes, 1842, pp. 1-2). There is no mention of Sabbatarian Adventism. In May 1844 Himes began a new journal, *The Advent Shield and Review*, which

¹²⁴ The day-year principle, year-day principle or year-for-a-day principle is a method of interpretation of Bible prophecy in which the word day in prophecy is symbolic for a year of actual time.

early Sabbatarian churches of colonial Rhode Island and the United Kingdom. The extant evidence suggests that Seventh-Day Sabbatarianism entered Millerite Adventism independently through the efforts of Joseph Bates, a sea captain who became known as the "apostle of the Sabbath" in Seventh-day Adventism.

The Millerite Adventist theme was the immediate advent (return) of Jesus Christ and the beginning of the Millennium. The Millerites preached Christ's second coming and stressed their belief in an inspired Bible, including the whole Bible, consistent within itself. Miller encouraged others to study the Bible, speak from the Bible, and center their lives on the Bible. Many of the Sabbatarian Church of God brethren found this message compelling for it aligned with their own doctrinal understanding—the Bible is the Word of God and Jesus Christ will return to earth and establish the millennial Kingdom of God.

CHRONOLOGICAL HIGHLIGHTS

1843	While attending the "Christian Brethren" church with her daughter, Rachel (Harris) Oakes Preston (a member of a Seventh Day Baptist congregation in Verona, New York) attempted to present her views about the seventh-day Sabbath.
1844	Frederick Wheeler, an ordained minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and promoter of the prophetic teachings of William Miller, preached his first sermon on seventh-day Sabbath to his "Christian Brethren" congregation.
1844	The Great Disappointment occurred October 22, 1844.
1844	Thomas Motherwell Preble appears to have accepted the seventh-day Sabbath, possibly from Frederick Wheeler or someone associated with the Washington, New Hampshire, Church.
1845	In March Owen Russell Loomis Crosier Edson and F. B. Hahn, begin publishing a small Millerite paper the Day-Dawn in Canandaigua, New York (SE of Rochester).
1845	Joseph Bates accepted the seventh-day Sabbath after reading a tract by Thomas Motherwell Preble and from discussions with Rachel Oaks-Preston and Frederic Wheeler. Bates had been a Free Will Baptist minister in New Hampshire and a Millerite preacher
1845	In the fall, Crosier begins keeping the seventh-day Sabbath.
1845	John Nevins Andrews, a later leader in the Seventh-day Adventist movement, also began to observe the seventh-day Sabbath.

In this period, Sabbatarian Church of God brethren were scattered and independent and their number small and influence minimal. Some got caught up in the hysteria of the Millerite cause. Realize, however, that not many Church of God Sabbatarians became part of the Millerite Adventist movement. Some never did.



Rachel (Harris) Oakes Preston (March 2, 1809 – February 1, 1868) was a Seventh Day Baptist who persuaded a group of Adventist Millerites to accept Saturday, instead of Sunday, as Sabbath.

The Sabbath was said by Gilbert Cranmer to have come to the attention of Miller's Adventist followers in 1843 through the *Midnight Cry* in an article by J.C. Day of Ashburnham, Massachusetts. There appears to be no extant copy at this time.

Those who did unfortunately admit Millerite lecturers into their fellowships and began preaching it themselves, quite literally became Adventists while retaining their uniqueness of Sabbatarianism, baptism by immersion, anti-Trinitarianism, Semi-Arianism, anti-dualism, adherence to the name of the church as Church of God, and annual

observance of the Christian Passover. Their limited understanding of biblical prophecy, however, was simply in error.

The Sabbath Question

In 1843, Rachel (Harris) Oakes Preston¹²⁵, a member of a Seventh Day Baptist congregation in Verona, New York, visited the "Christian Brethren" church in Washington, New Hampshire as a guest of her daughter Rachel Delight (Oakes) Farnsworth. There she attempted to present her views about the seventh-day Sabbath. However, the focus of this Millerite congregation was on preparing for the Second Coming of Christ, which they earnestly thought would occur in 1843 or 1844.

Due to Rachel's influence, Frederick Wheeler, an ordained minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and promoter of the prophetic teachings

¹²⁵ Rachel (1809-1868) married Nathan T. Preston, and referred to as Rachel Oakes Preston. She did not fully embrace all of the teachings of the Whites and their Seventh-day Adventist followers until the last year of her life. Her interment is in the Tyler Cemetery at Vernon, Windham County, Vermont.

of William Miller, preached his first sermon on the topic of the seventh-day Sabbath to his "Christian Brethren" congregation on March 16, 1844. Thomas Motherwell Preble appears to have accepted the seventh-day Sabbath in 1844, possibly from Frederick Wheeler or someone associated with the Washington, New Hampshire, congregation. Preble was the first Millerite to advocate the Sabbath in print. S.C. Hancock of Forestville, Connecticut also advocated the doctrine at the same time.

The Sabbatarianism of a few Millerites did not result in the general adoption of Sabbath-keeping by Millerites. The Millerites were predominantly Sunday-observing Protestants. They were Evangelicals who were not friendly to a seventh-day Sabbatarian cause.



William Miller's home and farm (1614 County Route 11, Whitehall, NY 12887) is nestled in the scenic Adirondack Mountains near Hampton, New York.

On October 22, 1844, at Miller's farm, about a mile south of Whitehall, New York, many Millerites gathered to await the second coming of Jesus Christ. Jesus did not return that night. After that nonevent, termed the "Great Disappointment," confusion set in among these Adventist Evangelicals. Ridiculed by mainline Protestants, some quickly became disillusioned and gave up religion altogether.

The majority of the remaining disillusioned Millerites abandoned the 1844 date, however some hardliners, including Hiram Edson (1806–1882) and Owen Russell Loomis Crosier (1820–1912), easily concluded the event predicted by Daniel 8:14 was not the second coming, but rather Christ's entrance into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary.

Edson claimed he had a vision in a cornfield the day after the Great Disappointment which made clear that the Millerites' error was not in the date, but in the event. Jesus had begun His work as High Priest in the most holy place in Heaven. Crosier, Edson, and Hahn joined together to study the subject, and Crosier wrote out their findings on the subject of the sanctuary and its cleansing, leading to their new understanding.

The Investigative Judgment

Crosier, Edson and Hahn began publishing a small Millerite paper the *Day-Dawn* in Canandaigua, New York. Franklin B. Hahn functioned as publisher of the *Day-Dawn*, while O.R.L. Crosier was the editor. Merlin D. Burt in reviewing microfilm copies of area newspapers at the Canandaigua, New York, Historical Society in 1995, discovered that the entire back page of the March 26, 1845, issue of the *Ontario Messenger* contained the first number of the *Day-Dawn*. It had been thought by researchers to have been lost. Burt writes:

I suspect that the first number of the *Day-Dawn* was printed as a broadside. Since the newspaper office had printed the *Day-Dawn* on a contract basis and already had the type set, the editor decided to include it on the last page of the newspaper as an item of interest. (Burt, 2006, p. 317.)

In their paper they explained how there was a sanctuary in heaven, which Christ, the heavenly High Priest, was to cleanse. They believed this cleansing was in reference to the 2300 days in Daniel. This belief became known as the “investigative judgment.”¹²⁶

Burt continues:

The bulk of the broadside was devoted to an article by Crosier suggesting that the answer to the October 1844 disappointment was a correct understanding of the heavenly-sanctuary ministry of Jesus. He tentatively suggested that Jesus had begun a special extended atonement in the heavenly sanctuary on the tenth day of the seventh month, the Day of Atonement according to the Karaite calendar. A year later, Crosier set forth his matured understanding in a seminal article, “The Law of Moses,” which took up an entire issue of the *Day-Star* Extra, February 7, 1846. His exposition of the earthly and heavenly sanctuaries became a major foundation of Seventh-day Adventist theology. (Burt, 2006, p. 317.)

Their belief led to a series of Bible studies with other Millerites to test the validity of the proposed solution. Others continued to search the Scriptures to see where they had gone wrong. Several alternative interpretations of the prophecy were put forward.

¹²⁶ The Investigative Judgment is a unique Seventh-day Adventist doctrine, which asserts that the divine judgment of professed Christians has been in progress since 1844. They believe Christ moved from the Holy Place to the Most Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary on October 22, 1844, and began a new phase of ministry.

Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Timeline

- 1843 - Rachel (Harris) Oakes Preston, a member of a Seventh Day Baptist congregation in Verona, New York, visited the "Christian Brethren" church in Washington, New Hampshire and introduces the Sabbath question.
- 1844 - In December Helen G. Harmon began having visions.
- 1846 - A "broadside," published on April 6, 1846 by James White and H. S. Gurney, entitled, "To the Little Remnant Scattered Abroad" contained an account of Ellen White's first three visions.
- 1846 - Bates urged seventh-day Sabbatarianism on Adventists. A copy of Bates' tract on the Sabbath was given to the White's about the time of their marriage.
- 1846 - James White married Helen G. Harmon in August 30, 1846.
- 1846 - Crosier promotes the seventh-day Sabbath keeping in the December 1846 issue of the *Day-Dawn*.
- 1847 - *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* a twenty-four page pamphlet published by James White.
- 1848 - A series of Bible conferences held 1848-1850 (sometimes called "Sabbath conferences" in Adventist literature) to bring together the disparate beliefs among "the scattered flock" in New England and New York State.
- 1848 - By the end of the year, the SDA movement reached a basic consensus on such fundamental beliefs as the Sabbath, sanctuary, state of the dead, and the Spirit of Prophecy (Mustard 1988:93-103).
- 1849 - James White started the first Sabbatarian Adventist periodical entitled *The Present Truth* as a result of instructions Ellen White had received in a vision.
- 1849 - John Nevins Andrews met James White and Ellen G. White.
- 1850 - Seventh Day Adventists were a scattered flock of about 200 members (Maxwell 1977:129).
- 1850 - *The Present Truth* was combined with the *Advent Review* in 1850 to become the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*.
- 1853 - The Whites and Bates appointed local leaders and issued their preachers (known as "traveling brethren") ministerial credentials. The first cards of authorization were issued in 1853.
- 1855 - White relocated the fledgling center of the Seventh-day Adventist movement to Battle Creek, Michigan in 1855.
- 1860 - Battle Creek Conference held September 28 to October 1 when with one dissenting vote attendees adopted the name "Seventh-day Adventist" as an essential prerequisite to legal incorporation.
- 1861 - May 3, 1861, was the incorporation date of the Seventh-day Adventist Association incorporated in the city of Battle Creek, Michigan.
- 1861 - The first SDA state conference (Michigan) organized in October, and within a year seven other state conferences followed suit.
- 1863 - First SDA General Conference and formation of the SDA church on May 21.
- 1871 - First college opened which later became Andrews University.
- 1871 - J. N. Andrews sent to Switzerland as a missionary.

Crosier's published account of Edson's vision came into the possession of James White (husband of Ellen G. White) and Joseph Bates, the latter of whom then visited Edson in New York and convinced him of the seventh-day Sabbath. Bates had become convinced of the veracity of the seventh-day Sabbath after reading a tract by Thomas Motherwell Preble and from discussions with Rachel Oaks-Preston (a Seventh Day Baptist) and Frederic Wheeler. Bates had been a Free Will Baptist minister in New Hampshire and a Millerite preacher. Miller rejected Sabbatarian Adventism and remained a committed first-day Christian.

In the fall of 1845, Crosier began keeping the seventh-day Sabbath. By 1846, Bates urged seventh-day Sabbatarianism on Adventists including James White and Ellen G. White. It was Bates who in fact brought the Sabbath question to the attention of rank-and-file Millerites. Bates soon became known as the "apostle of the Sabbath" and wrote several booklets on the topic. One of the first, published in 1846, was entitled *The Seventh Day Sabbath, a Perpetual Sign* (Bates, 1846).



James White and his wife Ellen G. White co-founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

After the Great Disappointment many people became ex-Millerites, including Sabbatarian Church of God people, but some diehards remained committed Adventists. As a result some brethren later had to reject and distance themselves from the demonic visions, heretical teachings, and fanatic discourses of Ellen G. White. She first experienced such visions in December of 1844.

The Rise of the White Party

A "broadside," published on April 6, 1846 by James White and H. S. Gurney, entitled, "To the Little Remnant Scattered Abroad" contained an account of Ellen White's first three visions.¹²⁷ White then married Ellen in

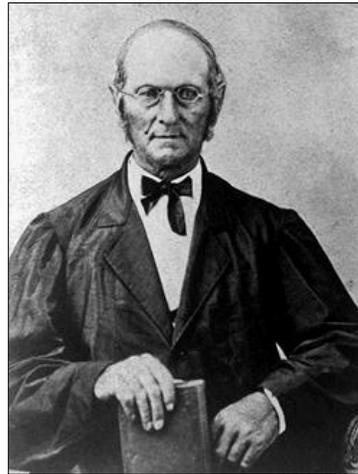
¹²⁷ A broadside was a sheet of paper printed on one side only, forming one large page.

August 30, 1846. As her husband and handler, he and his followers promoted Ellen as a prophetess who received visions of instruction from no less than God Himself.

A copy of Bates' tract on the Sabbath was given to the Whites about the time of their marriage. From that point forward this faction of Millerism morphed into Seventh-day Adventism. When Bates first approached Ellen White on the Sabbath doctrine, her initial reaction was negative (as was, also, Bates' initial reaction when first told that she had been given a genuine prophetic gift). Both, however, changed their respective opposition. James and Ellen White initially observed the Sabbath on the basis of their supposed study of the Bible following Bates challenge *not* because she had had a vision on the subject showing it to be the right day.

Bates became a strong supporter of James White and Ellen's so-called prophetic gift, which he believed was manifested in visions received by the young Mrs. White. He contributed to the White's early publications such as *A Word to the "Little Flock."* Bates was active with the Whites in participating in a series of Bible Conferences held in 1848 to 1850 (sometimes called "Sabbath conferences" in Adventist literature) that have become known as the Sabbath and Sanctuary Conferences.

The Whites convened these meetings to bring together the disparate beliefs among "the scattered flock" in New England and New York State. By the end of the year, the Whites' Adventist movement reached a basic consensus on such fundamental beliefs as the Sabbath, sanctuary, state of the dead, and the Spirit of Prophecy (Mustard 1988:93-103). During the 1850s Bates supported the development of a more formal church organization that culminated in 1863 with the formation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



Joseph Bates was an American seaman and revivalist minister. He was the founder and developer of Sabbatarian Adventism, a strain of religious thinking that evolved into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In 1845, John Nevins Andrews, a later leader in the White's Seventh-day Adventist movement, also began to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. In September 1849, Andrews first met James and Ellen White. Later, the Whites boarded with the Andrews family. In 1850 Andrews began an itinerant pastoral ministry in New England and when ordained in 1853, he played a pivotal role in the establishment of Seventh-day Adventist theology.

Crosier promoted seventh-day Sabbath keeping in the December 1846 issue of the *Day-Dawn*. Yet in 1847, he separated from the Sabbatarian Adventists and their view on the sanctuary and the Sabbath and through 1853 was on staff of Joseph Marsh's *Advent Harbinger and Advocate* in Rochester. By 1858 Crosier had become an evangelist in the Michigan Conference of the Advent Christian Church (a First-Day group). In 1848 Joseph Bates countered the anti-Sabbath writings of the *Advent Harbinger and Advocate* in his booklet *A Vindication of the Seventh-Day Sabbath* (Bates, 1848, p. 5).

On May 30, 1847 James White published a twenty-four page pamphlet entitled *A Word to the "Little Flock"* at Brunswick, Maine. The titles of the seven articles in the pamphlet were: "The Seven Last Plagues," "The Voice of God," "The Time of Trouble," "The Time of Jacob's Trouble," "Thoughts on Revelation 14," "The Temple of God," and "The Judgment." When James White penned these articles on prophecy there were not more than 100 Sabbath-keeping members of the White party in the United States.

James White began the first Sabbatarian Adventist periodical in 1849 entitled *The Present Truth* printed in Middletown, Connecticut. *The Present*



Truth came into being as a result of an instruction which Ellen White received in a vision at Dorchester, Massachusetts, in November 1848 (White *Life Sketches* 1915:125). *The Present Truth* merged with another periodical called the *Advent Review* in 1850 to become the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* with the first issue printed in Paris, Maine.

Seventh-day Adventists came to believe Ellen had the spiritual gift of prophecy as outlined in Revelation 19:10. This was a powerful tool to promote the White's cause of Seventh-day Adventism and their dominance and control of the movement which in 1850 was a scattered flock of only 200 members (Maxwell 1977:129). The Whites and Bates appointed local leaders and issued their preachers (known as "traveling brethren") ministerial credentials. The first cards of authorization were issued in 1853, if not earlier (see Mustard 1988:122-23).

The Messenger Party

In the 1850s there were some Sabbatarian Adventists who resisted the Whites and their followers. In the autumn of 1850, White began publishing the *Review and Herald* [actually the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*] as Volume 1 Number 1. In 1853, some of the "anti-White" Sabbatarian Adventists led by Hiram S. Case and C.P. Russell began publishing the *Messenger of Truth* at Jackson, Michigan, to counter the false teachings being spread by the Whites' *Second Advent Review and Herald*.

Case and Russell rejected the notion that Ellen G. White (Ellen Harmon) had a "prophetic gift" from God. Forming an opposing group, they rejected White as a prophetess and condemned her visions as false and unreliable. Discussing Ellen's visions as a "Test of fellowship" matter, J. B. Bezzo wrote in *The Messenger of Truth* that Hiram S. Case had been tried in the fall of 1853 partly for "his presuming to express his doubts relative to the truthfulness of the visions" (*The Messenger of Truth* 16.3.2).

Some hold that the first publishing of *The Messenger of Truth* was in the summer of 1853 and that the paper continued until 1858 but the latter is without verification. The Whites considered their opposition rebels and referred to Case, Russell and their followers as the "Messenger Party."

Earl W. Heslop writing in *The Ministry for World Evangelism* reported members of the Messenger Party, besides Case and Russell, included

Wyman, Bezzo, Chapin, Lillis, and Hicks (Heslop 1954:11). The Messenger Party was the first of three known groups of disagreeing Sabbatarian Adventists to withdraw from the Sabbatarian Advent movement as the White Party took control and dominated it.

Church of God (Adventist) Timeline

- 1829 - Gilbert Cranmer baptized into the Christian Church (Christian Connection).
- 1842 - Cranmer left the Christian Church and became an Adventist (Millerite).
- 1845 - Gilbert Cranmer became established in the Sabbath truth.
- 1853 - Cranmer made acquaintance of SDA elder Joseph Bates and joined the SDA movement.
- 1858. - Cranmer rejects the visions of Helen White and the entire SDA movement as unbiblical.
- 1849 - Merritt E. Cornell became a Sabbath keeper as a result of Bible studies given by Joseph Bates in 1849.
- 1860 - Cornell founded the Church of Jesus Christ in Marion, Iowa, on June 10, 1860.
- 1860 - Cranmer organized his congregations into a state conference in Michigan
- 1863 - *The Hope of Israel* printed in Michigan, in August 10, 1863.
- 1863 - The Marion, Iowa, group joined with the Church of God (Adventist).
- 1863 - A delegation from the Church of God met with President Abraham Lincoln in order to establish conscientious objector status for young men in the Church.
- 1874 - A. F. Dugger, Sr. of Nebraska entered the full-time ministry of the Church of God.
- 1860 - Sabbatarian Adventist body formed in Iowa in 1860.
- 1863 - Iowa body joined with Michigan group.
- 1863 - "Cranmerites" begin the publication of a monthly paper called *The Hope of Israel* at Hartford, Michigan (a direct successor to *The Messenger of Truth*).
- 1866 - *Hope of Israel* (the Church of God paper) is revived at Marion.
- 1872 - *Hope of Israel* is renamed the Advent and Sabbath Advocate. Jacob Brinkerhoff, editor and publisher.
- 1874 - Missouri Conference is organized.
- 1884 - A loose confederation called the "General Conference of the Church of God" founded.
- 1888 - Church of God headquarters is moved to Stanberry, Missouri (from Marion, Iowa).

These three groups joined by other independent Sabbath keepers formed the eventual basic membership of the Church of God (Adventist) in the late 19th Century. The Church of God (Adventist) changed its name to Church of God (Seventh Day) in the 1920s.

The three extant copies of *The Messenger of Truth* [Issue 3 (19 October 1854), Issue 4 (2 November 1854) and Issue 5 (30 November 1854)] published by the Publishing Committee (W. J. Lusk, H. S. Case, C. P. Russell, E. Picket, H. Drew, J. B. Bezzo, for issue 3; Erastus Clark joining in issue 4; and Picket leaving in issue 5) suggests that the basic opposition of the publishers was to Ellen White being a prophetess, her visions and the doctrinal import assigned to them. The articles in these three issues of *The Messenger of Truth* suggest:

1. The Whites and their followers followed another rule of faith and practice in addition to the Bible;
2. Contrary to the White's teachings the gift of prophecy closed with "the end of the apostles' day;"
3. The spirit of prophecy was not Helen White's alleged "prophetic gift" but rather the spirit of Christ which the true remnant had to represent and had nothing to do with the gift of prophecy; and
4. Ellen G. White's "prophetic gift" had been made a test of fellowship and a rule of action in their Sabbatarian Advent movement.



Gilbert Cranmer [1814-1903, founder of the Church of God in Michigan]. The Church of Christ, as it was known in Michigan, organized a conference in 1860. It had congregations in Waverly, Alamo, Bangor, Hartford, Casco, Goblis, Bloomingdale, Hamilton, West Olive, and Otsego, among other places. Some of these congregations numbered more than 100 members.

confederation of conferences, and it should not be confused with the Seventh-day Adventist Church formed in 1863 at Battle Creek, Michigan.

Gilbert Cranmer rejected the visions of Helen White and the entire Seventh-day Adventist movement as unbiblical. Cranmer, baptized into the Christian Church (Christian Connection/Connexion) left it in 1842 to become an Adventist (a Millerite). He met Joseph Bates in 1853 and joined

According to Richard C. Nickels the Messenger Party was "important in that it was a direct, if not organic, precursor of the Church of God (Seventh Day)" (Nickels 1996:5).

Rejecting the teachings of the Whites, some Sabbatarian Adventists, following Gilbert Cranmer, organized themselves into an independent religious entity in 1858 called the Church of Christ and were later joined by others. While various individuals parted company with the Whites and their followers, others came from that part of the Advent movement not drawn to the Whites. These ultimately membered the Church of God (Adventist), a loose

the Seventh-day Adventist movement when Bates visited Cranmer's home town (Cranmer, 1863). Cranmer became established in Sabbath keeping in 1846.

Cranmer stopped working with the Whites over an incident that occurred in late 1857. While preaching at a Sabbath service at Otsego, Michigan, he was challenged to accept Ellen White's vision concerning the Investigative (Pre-Advent) Judgment and the shut-door doctrine. Upon refusing to do so, the Whites sent word to the congregation that he was not to preach for them.

Upon hearing that he would not be allowed to preach, Cranmer decided to begin preaching independently of the Whites' congregations. Once the Whites made their doctrines a test of fellowship and tried to get Cranmer to accept them in 1857, he withdrew from fellowshiping with their congregations and began to preach apart from them in January-February 1858. In 1860 Cranmer organized his congregations into a state conference in Michigan.

About the same time, Merritt E. Cornell founded the Church of Jesus Christ in Marion, Iowa, on June 10, 1860. Unfortunately the harmony of this Marion congregation was short lived. Cornell had become a Sabbath keeper as a result of Bible studies given by Joseph Bates in 1849.

When Merritt E. Cornell returned from attending a Seventh Day Adventist conference held in Battle Creek, Michigan, about the beginning of 1862, he insisted that the membership of the church accept the writings and visions of Ellen White on a par with the Bible. He associated with James and Ellen White and did extensive evangelistic work throughout the Midwestern part of the United States on their behalf. One half of the Marion church accepted Cornell's proposition, and one half wanted to retain their organizational covenant, which rejected any other writings on a par with the Bible.

A quotation from a circular letter from brethren in Marion, Iowa, published in the September 7, 1864, issue of *The Hope of Israel*, the Church's publication, provides insight into the events at the time:

On the 10th of June, 1860, something over 50 of us adopted a form of a church covenant, drawn up by [M. E. Cornell].... Nearly a year and a half afterward, the same messenger held up, publicly, some other volumes by the

side of the Bible...and urged us to adopt their teaching also, as a rule of faith and discipline. A portion of us were unwilling to accept these new planks in the platform of our Church.... The result was, about one half of the Church decided to receive these volumes as a valid Scripture, and drew off from us, or rather repelled us from them, denouncing us as rebels.... As it regards us being rebels, we boldly assert that we are not rebels. We have not rebelled against the constitution which we adopted, for we stand firm on it yet...so the charge of rebellion reflects with shame on them, who have made it, they being the ones who have departed from their first position and have adopted a new one. [Robert Coulter, *The Story of the Church of God Seventh Day*, p. 16.].

The statement of this half of the church's members held to their organizational covenant as they refused to accept Ellen White's writings as follows:

We, the undersigned, do hereby express our wish to be associated together in Christian fellowship, as a Church of Jesus Christ, at Marion, whose covenant obligation is briefly expressed in keeping the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus, taking the Bible, and the Bible alone, as the rule of our faith and discipline. . . . As it regards us being rebels, we boldly assert that we are not rebels. We have not rebelled against the constitution which we adopted, for we stand firm on it yet. We have not rebelled against Ellen G. White, for we never endorsed her; nor have we rebelled against any of the messengers, for we never acknowledged allegiance to them; so the charge of rebellion reflects with shame on them, who have made it, they being the ones who have departed from their first position, (the Bible and the Bible alone), and have adopted a new one. (Church of God Marion, 1860)

This segment of the Marion church continued to meet and grow in membership, and eventually became part of the Church of God (Adventist). The Iowa church learned of the church in Michigan early in 1863, and from that time the two churches shared the work they had in common. The Church of Jesus Christ in Marion, Iowa, was the first congregation outside of Michigan to become a part of the Church of God (Adventist).

In the first issue of the *Hope of Israel*, printed in Michigan August 10, 1863, Cranmer wrote:

I started alone, with my Bible in my hand. God has blessed my labors beyond utmost expectations. We have some eight ministers and some hundreds of members in the State of Michigan. God has manifest His power among us in a wonderful manner. (Cramner, Gilbert , 1863)

In 1863, a delegation from the Church of God met with President Abraham Lincoln in order to establish conscientious objector status for young men in the Church.

In an Open Letter Published in *Hope of Israel*, Aug. 10, 1863, Gilbert Cranmer wrote:

About ten years ago [1853] a Seventh-day Adventist minister, by the name of [Joseph] Bates, came to our town and advocated the whole Law, the gifts of the Spirit, and many other glorious truths. The gifts belonging to the Church, I had believed in for over twenty years. Hence I felt to rejoice; supposing I had found the people I had been so long looking for. He told me that the gifts were realized among them, that they had the gift of prophecy and the gift of healing the sick. But as long as I was with them I never knew of any being healed. I have known them to try but they always failed. In this I was disappointed. I also found the spirit of prophecy, with them, was confined wholly to a woman. By this time I became suspicious that I had gotten on board the wrong ship. I then commenced to giving her visions a thorough investigation. I found they contradicted themselves, and that they contradicted the Bible. My doubts concerning the visions I made known to the brethren. At once they gave me the cold shoulder, and I was held at bay. Not knowing any people I could unite with, I remained with them for years, hoping they would get sick of the visions of E.G. White, and that we could yet walk together in unity of spirit. But instead of rejecting them, as I hoped they would, they only drew the reins the tighter. At last I made up my mind I would not belong to a church that was ruled by a woman any longer. From that time the Bible has been my creed, with Christ at the head of the Church. I started alone, with my Bible in my hand. God has blessed my labors beyond my utmost expectations. We have some eight ministers and some hundreds of members in the state of Michigan. God has manifest His power among us in a wonderful manner. (Cranmer, 1863)

Formation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

The Whites sought for an organizational conference and an official name, Seventh-day Adventist Church. There were those who opposed this change as unscriptural and also opposed giving credence to the visions of James White's wife, Ellen. Nevertheless, in 1860 R. F. Cottrell, J. White and others in the *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* debated church organization. In the issue of September 11, 1860, J. N. Andrews, U. Smith, J. H. Waggoner, and J. White, invited believers to "...a General Conference at Battle Creek, to commence on sixth-day, at 6 p.m., September 28, 1860" (J. N. Andrews, 1860, p. 136).

R. F. Cottrell sent a letter to the conference proposing a congregational form of government. At a general meeting, held September 26-October 1, with representatives from five states, the delegates failed to adopt Cottrell's proposal. The leaders opted for a constitution in creation of the first official, legal entity of the church as a whole. They voted to legally organize a publishing association. On Monday, October 1, 1860, they chose a church name, Seventh-day Adventist.

They called the Battle Creek Conference held September 28 to October 1, 1860. The attendees agreed that legal incorporation of the publishing enterprise was necessary and adopted the name "Seventh-day Adventist" as an essential prerequisite to legal incorporation with only one dissenting vote. The organization of the first Seventh-day Adventist state conference (Michigan) was in October 1861, and within a year seven other state conferences followed suit.

Mrs. White's visions were increasingly advanced as "new truth" for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Throughout the 1860s, the split between the majority who followed the Whites, and the dissenting scattered remnant that did not, became more and more divisive. Spicer wrote that once the conference adopted the Seventh-day Adventist church organization and a church name that Cottrell "...swung into line, and kept his place as a strong supporter of the cause" (Spicer, 1940, pp. 8-9). Cottrell later became Secretary and President of the New York Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The Whites relocated their fledgling center of operations for the Seventh-day Adventist movement to Battle Creek, Michigan in 1855.

The First Seventh-day Adventist General Conference and formation of the Seventh-day Adventist church occurred on May 21, 1863. At this point their movement had grown from the scattered flock of 200 in 1850 to a membership of over 3,500. They claimed 22 ordained ministers and 125 churches.

The first Seventh-day Adventist college, which later became Andrews University, opened in 1871. In that year the Whites sent J. N. Andrews to Switzerland as a missionary.

Chapter 15 Church of God Adventist

Late in 1857, Gilbert Cranmer rejected the visions of Helen White and the entire SDA movement as unbiblical. He then began preaching independently of James White, his wife Ellen, Joseph Bates, and the traveling brethren to whom they had issued ministerial credentials. He publically denounced the “prophetic gift” of Ellen G. White.

The Litmus Test

The Whites had made Ellen’s self-styled “prophetic gift” a litmus test for joining their faction of Sabbatarian Adventism. When they pressed Cranmer to submit he refused to do so and he withdrew from fellowshiping with them and their assemblies.

He commenced to preach apart from them in January-February 1858, raising up several small congregations. In 1860, Cranmer organized his fledging congregations into an independent state conference in Michigan. The Church of God [Adventist] commenced publication of *The Hope of Israel* in 1863. In the first issue of the *Hope of Israel*, a small church paper printed in Michigan and started with less than forty subscribers on August 10, 1863, Cranmer wrote:

I started alone, with my Bible in my hand. God has blessed my labors beyond utmost expectations. We have some eight ministers and some hundreds of members in the State of Michigan. God has manifest His power among us in a wonderful manner. (Cranmer, Gilbert , 1863)

Their group grew as others, aligning themselves with the Church of God people doctrinally, joined them. Some had parted company with the Whites and their followers and others were Sabbatarian Adventists never drawn to the Whites. In his open letter published in *Hope of Israel*, August 10, 1863, Cranmer explained:

About ten years ago [1853] a Seventh-day Adventist minister, by the name of [Joseph] Bates, came to our town and advocated the whole Law, the gifts of the Spirit, and many other glorious truths. The gifts belonging to the Church, I had believed in for over twenty years. Hence I felt to rejoice; supposing I had found the people I had been so long looking for. He told me that the gifts

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were realized among them, that they had the gift of prophecy and the gift of healing the sick. But as long as I was with them I never knew of any being healed. I have known them to try but they always failed. In this I was disappointed. I also found the spirit of prophecy, with them, was confined wholly to a woman. By this time I became suspicious that I had gotten on board the wrong ship. I then commenced to giving her visions a thorough investigation. I found they contradicted themselves, and that they contradicted the Bible. My doubts concerning the visions I made known to the brethren. At once they gave me the cold shoulder, and I was held at bay. Not knowing any people I could unite with, I remained with them for years, hoping they would get sick of the visions of E.G. White, and that we could yet walk together in unity of spirit. But instead of rejecting them, as I hoped they would, they only drew the reins the tighter. At last I made up my mind I would not belong to a church that was ruled by a woman any longer. From that time the Bible has been my creed, with Christ at the head of the Church. (Cranmer, 1863)

The Church of Jesus Christ in Marion

About the same time Cranmer parted company with Bates and the Whites, one Merritt E. Cornell, a James and Ellen White supporter, founded the Church of Jesus Christ in Marion, Iowa. Cornell had become a Sabbath keeper as a result of Bible studies given by Joseph Bates in 1849. On June 10, 1860, Cornell and his fledging flock entered an organizational covenant creating the new congregation. Unfortunately the harmony of this Marion congregation did not last.

On his return from Battle Creek, Michigan, having attended one of the Whites' conferences in 1862, Cornell sought to apply the Whites' litmus test to the Marion congregation. He insisted that the membership accept the writings and visions of Ellen White on a par with the Bible. While about half of the Marion church foolishly accepted Cornell's pitch, the other half decidedly rejected it. The latter chose to retain their organizational covenant which rejected any other writings on a par with the Bible.

In 1863, during the War Between the States (the American Civil War), Church of God (Adventist) members took a firm stand as conscientious objectors, in contrast to the Seventh-Day Adventists under the White's leadership. A delegation from the Church of God (Adventist) met with President Abraham Lincoln in order to establish conscientious objector status for young men in the Church.

It was 1874 when A. F. Dugger, Sr. of Nebraska entered the fulltime ministry of the Church of God (Adventist).

The revival of the *Hope of Israel*, the Church of God (Adventist) paper, took place at Marion, Missouri, in 1866. The renaming of the paper to the *Advent and Sabbath Advocate* occurred in 1872 with Jacob Brinkerhoff, editor and publisher. Brinkerhoff was one of the most prominent figures in the Church of God [Adventist] during this time. He edited the paper from 1871 until 1887, and again from 1907 until 1914.

The General Conference of the Church of God

The organization of the congregations in Missouri into a state conference was in 1874. A decade later, in 1884, a loose confederation called the "General Conference of the Church of God" came into being, made up of state conferences of Michigan, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska and Kansas with A.C. Long as president. A move of the Church of God (Adventist) headquarters to Stanberry, Missouri (from Marion, Iowa) took place in 1888.

In 1874 Andrew F. Dugger Sr. of Nebraska entered the full-time ministry of the Church of God. From the 1870s until the years just prior to World War I, Elders Brinkerhoff and Dugger contributed many of the articles that helped to clarify and solidify doctrine in the Church. Articles on prophecy, clean and unclean meats, tithing, proper observance of the Passover and what it means to be born again filled the pages of *The Bible Advocate* during those years.

As early as 1866, articles on prophecy taught that the Jews would be restored to a homeland in Palestine. There was some truth restored and taught but, all in all, the efforts of the Church were weak and only reached small numbers of people, primarily in rural parts of the Midwest. Through the remainder of the nineteenth century their numbers slowly increased, though they still remained relatively few.

Over the years the paper underwent several name changes, ultimately being called *The Bible Advocate*.

1863–1872, *The Hope of Israel*

1872–1874, *Advent and Sabbath Advocate and the Hope of Israel*

1874–1888, *Advent and Sabbath Advocate*

1888–1900, *Sabbath Advocate and Herald of the Advent*

1900-1972, *The Bible Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom*

1972–to the present, *Bible Advocate*

It was 1914 when Andrew N. Dugger became President of the General Conference and editor of the *Bible Advocate* (formerly the *Advent and Sabbath Advocate*). At the end of World War I in 1918, Andrew Dugger had an interview with President Woodrow Wilson and obtained conscientious objector status for the Church. In 1923, the Church of God (Adventist) dropped Adventist and added the phrase "Seventh Day" to its name and incorporated itself as the Church of God (Seventh Day).

In 1926 Herbert W. Armstrong and his wife Loma came into contact with Church of God (Seventh Day) brethren in Willamette Valley, Oregon. His baptism came soon thereafter in the spring of 1927. His ordination was in June 1931 when he was set apart by the Oregon State Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day).

The End of the Sardis Era

During the Great Depression, the Church divided in 1933 into the Church of God (Seventh Day) of Stanberry, Missouri and the Seventh Day Church of God of Salem, West Virginia, over doctrinal issues. The Salem group organized themselves according to supposed "scriptural organization." Selection by lot placed Herbert W. Armstrong as one of "the Seventy" to go forth in giving the "warning message of the hour." He was the fortieth in the published list of the Seventy (Dodd, 1936).

The Sardis Era of the Church of God lasted for over 300 years (ca.1600-1933). It was essentially a church, which for the entire period, characterized by doctrinal confusion, contention, heresy, and congregationalism. Yet it had a work to do and there were some in Sardis who were deeply converted people who risked life and fortune in God's service. But for 70 years after departing company with the White's Adventists, the Church as a whole in the United States remained spiritually powerless.

There were many heroes and heroines who suffered a great deal to follow the way of God. The work of the Sardis Era included bringing the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the Americas (North and South) and into

other regions of the world. During the Sardis Era the Church of God (Adventist), later Church of God (Seventh Day), existed only about 75 years, and even then the COG7 was simply one fellowship. This means it is incorrect technically to say the Church of God (Seventh Day) was the Sardis Church. Only some of its members and elders were converted people and part of the Sardis Era of the Church of God, as were some in other fellowships. Just a few remained faithful in the Sardis Era of the Church of God (Rev. 3:4). While the Church of God (Adventist)/Church of God (Seventh Day) existed only for 25% of the Sardis Era it sought during that time to do a commendable work.

Nevertheless, as a whole, this era of the Church of God did not "remember how" it had received the truth from earlier Christians who were faithful even to death by fire. Nor did it, like those, "hold fast" what truth it had. It did not emphasize repentance (verse 3). It did not "watch" (verse 2; Matthew 25:13).

During those last 70 years, only a few individuals really repented and strengthened the truth that was ready to perish in their midst. Briggs describes the situation as follows:

Certain strong families provided the Church of God a tenuous continuity. These came to be located mainly in Missouri, Oklahoma and Oregon. Some of them retained a knowledge of God's Holy Days and the identity of modern Israel.

During the same period, Church of God ministers began missionary-like work in Mexico, Chile, Argentina, the Philippines, etc. A few thousand of their converts and I or their descendants remain throughout Latin America to this day. Spanish-speaking congregations in Chile and Argentina kept the Holy Days continuously from their beginning in the 1890's until the middle of the twentieth century. Ambassador Bible Course.

Most of their ministers, instead of yielding themselves to be used by God, tried to carry on a work by their own human power. At the end of the era, many of them were only seeking an income for themselves. They were not diligently seeking to serve God. These ministers had rejected God's government, having lost the knowledge of how Christ governs the Church. They absorbed the Protestant idea of applying democracy to church government - with its accompanying divisions, controversies and selfishness.

The result of rejecting Christ's direction was increasing doctrinal deviation and lack of true conversion among the members. These were the people Herbert and Loma Armstrong came in contact with in 1927.