

**HISTORY OF THE HIGH
STREET BAPTIST CHURCH IN
CHARLESTOWN, MS.: WITH
THE NAMES OF MEMBERS**

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History of the High Street Baptist Church in Charlestown, Ms.: With the Names of Members by Various

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VARIOUS

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HISTORY
OF THE
High Street Baptist Church

IN CHARLESTOWN, MS.

WITH THE
NAMES OF MEMBERS.

BOSTON:
PRESS OF J. HOWE, 39 MERCHANTS ROW.

.....
1853.

U.S. 13189,39.25

1854, May 20
Empl. Money.

HISTORY
OF THE
HIGH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH.

ORIGIN OF THE BAPTISTS IN CHARLESTOWN.

The earliest account of the Baptists in Charlestown is in 1665, when Thomas Gould, Thomas Osborne, and some others, separated themselves from the First Parish Church, as it appears, on the following grounds:—“1. Because of Infant Baptism. 2. Their allowing of none but such as had human learning to be in the ministry. 3. Their severe dealing with those of a contrary judgment from themselves.” “Hubbard says that ‘Thomas Gould, and some of the rest, were men of a grave and serious spirit and sober conversation.’” * They then embodied them-

* “History of the First Church, Charlestown.”

selves into a church, "covenanting to walk together in all the appointments of their Lord and Master, so far as he should be pleased to make known his mind and will unto them by his word and Spirit."

This proceeding was denounced by the civil authorities, and those engaged in it were looked upon as disturbers of the public peace. They were summoned to appear before the magistrates at different times, and subjected to disfranchisement, fines, and other annoyances of the intolerant spirit then prevailing. The General Court ordered some of them to depart from their jurisdiction, on pain of imprisonment; but it would seem without the desired effect, as it is recorded that some of them were confined in the jail at Boston for nearly a year.

This little band embraced individuals of like views in some of the neighboring towns, and in 1668 consisted of about twenty members. For fourteen years they held their meetings in dwelling houses, at Charlestown, Boston, and other places,

the zealous vigilance of the authorities rendering it impossible to assemble in a public manner. Mr. Gould appears to have acted as teacher or pastor until 1675, when he died, and was succeeded in that relation by Isaac Hull, John Russell, and John Miles.

In 1678, a more tolerant spirit prevailing, the church erected a house of worship in Boston, and became permanently located there as the First Baptist Church.

FIRST AND SECOND BAPTIST CHURCHES.

More than a hundred years elapsed, after this removal, before another attempt was made to form a Baptist Church in Charlestown. In August, 1800, in the First Parish Church, it was moved "that the Society take into serious consideration the obvious necessity of erecting another house for public worship, and use their influence to effect the same." The motion was unanimously adopted, and a committee appointed to devise means to carry it into effect. The committee reported in favor of encouraging the Baptist brethren in building

the contemplated house. The latter, considering this as a favorable opportunity, and as indicating the will of Providence, undertook the enterprise; and, a lot of land having been offered them by Oliver Holden, it was accepted. A meeting was held at Mr. Holden's house, September 16th, 1800, comprising all the brethren in Charlestown, who then associated themselves together for the purpose of forming a Church and building a house of worship.

In October, 1800, the Meeting-House* was commenced, and, notwithstanding the Church were somewhat disappointed in receiving expected aid, it was finished and dedicated in the following May.

Rev. THOMAS WATERMAN, the first pastor, was installed Oct 7th, 1802, but retained the pastoral charge only eight months.

Rev. WILLIAM COLLIER, the second pastor, commenced his labors on the 18th of April, 1804, and was publicly installed on the 3d of May following. He retained his connection fifteen years and four months.

* The house now occupied by the First Methodist Church.

In 1809, Mr. Oliver Holden, who was largely interested in the pecuniary affairs of the Society, and a few other individuals, having embraced some peculiar religious views, requested and obtained dismission to form a Second Church. This movement was productive of much temporary trial; and the Society, finding themselves unable to meet the demands upon the Meeting-House, relinquished it to Mr. Holden, he agreeing to release them from further liability.

It now became necessary to build another house of worship; and, aided by the donations of benevolent individuals, the Society were enabled to erect a convenient house, of brick, on Austin Street, which was dedicated September 23d, 1810.

Another Baptist Church was formed in the early part of 1809. Mr. Walter Balfour, formerly a preacher of the Church of Scotland, then a Haldancist and a Congregationalist, was baptized by Mr. Collier, but did not unite with the Church. Shortly after, several individuals seceded from the