

## Notes on London's Oldest Baptist Church

Much of the history of the old Wapping Church is contained in both the Kiffen Manuscript and the Jessey Church Records. The materials therein do not deal with the old Church as a Church, but present many interesting and remarkable facts about those who left Pedobaptism and became Particular Baptists. There is much controversy over both The Kiffen Manuscript and The Jessey Church Records. I have devoted three other studies to the Kiffen Manuscript. Perhaps as my information enlarges I will devote yet more writings to this early history of our spiritual forefathers.

Beyond doubt someone wrote The Kiffen Manuscript. At one time it was reliable. Some suggest that William Kiffen collected and preserved it. Whether he wrote it or not, we do not know. It remained with the Devonshire Square Church Records until Kiffen's death. His co-pastor, Richard Adams, passed it on to Benjamin Stennett. There is some indication of what is found in the ORIGINAL KM. So many people have passed it back and forth that it is difficult or nearly impossible to say what is original and what is revised. Here are some notes on it. After these notes I have included a large amount of study materials.

In my opinion the historians from The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland did present a very reliable Kiffen Manuscript and the notes in their *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society* are the most reliable and accurate of all the KM studies and researches. These studies and notes are mainly found in the first 5 volumes. Most of my conclusions are from these sources.

### The Author of the Kiffen Manuscript

I suspect that William Kiffen or one of his trusted friends wrote the KM sometime near Kiffen's death. When we compare the KM with the *Jessey Church Records*, it appears that someone may have written the KM from memory years after the facts contained in it, and that they wanted to correct the false statements in the *The Jessey Church Records*. At the time of his Kiffen's death, Richard Adams passed the KM on to Benjamin Stennett who was collecting materials for a history of the Baptists. What this means is, The Kiffen Manuscript did then exist and was a trusted and valuable part of Baptist History. Since it left the hands of William Kiffen and Richard Adams, it has been subject to much alteration and many controversies. However, at first, this was not so.

### Making a Clear Distinction

We must remember to make a distinction between *The Kiffen Manuscript* (KM) and *The Jessey Church Records* (JCRS). Most have not made this distinction. The Kiffen Manuscript does not contain the statements producing the various concepts that prompted William Whitsitt and others to deny that Baptists practiced immersion before 1641. This mistaken theory comes from the Jessey Church Records. The JCRs do not give an accurate account of Baptist life during that era except for those persons who left the Jessey Church and became Particular Baptists.

### Co-Mingling of the Two Records

Some writers have even combined the two manuscripts into one manuscript and stated that either Henry Jessey or William Kiffen wrote it. This false co-mingling

has led to many incorrect theories regarding the early Particular Baptists of the 1630s.

### **The Kiffen Manuscript Corrects the Jessey Church Records**

The KM corrects some of the wrong impressions that the JCRS give. The statement relied upon in an effort to prove that Baptists did not immerse before 1641 is properly given in the KM but not in the JCRS. The KM shows that the Pedobaptists who sent Richard Blount over to Holland did not know about Baptists. The JCRS make it appear that no Baptists existed in England in 1640. The KM does not.

This important statement is why I have made this additional study and publish these Notes on The Kiffen Manuscript.

### **The Stages of Development**

The KM comes to us through these stages:

- a. It agrees in many places with the Jessey Church Records;
- b. W. Kiffen, or a trusted friend, kept it until his death about 1703;
- c. Richard Adams, co-pastor with W. Kiffen, passed it to Benjamin Stennett;
- d. Stennett passed it to Thomas Crosby;
- e. Crosby passes it to Daniel Neal, author of *History of the Puritans*;
- f. Crosby retrieves it and writes his own *History of the English Baptists*, using both the KM and the Jessey Church Records;
- g. George Gould finds it, alters it and makes great use of the *Jessey Church Records* to serve his own personal purpose and interest;
- h. Gould sends his conclusions into America, to Thomas Armitage, who in turn helps circulate Gould's conclusions and places them into the hands of Norman Fox;
- i. Gould's notes and reworked manuscripts fell in the hands of many others, such as Henry Dexter, Congregationalist, and later William Whitsitt.

### **Notes about the JCRs and the KM**

1. The Crosby edition may be the most accurate we now have, I am trying to secure the Stennett copy.
2. *The Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, volumes 1 and 2, give the best historical researches thereupon.
3. Someone wrote the KM manuscript years following the events contained therein;
4. The KM is a distinct account from the JCRs even though they both attempt to describe many of the same events and people;
5. The first point to note in the JCRs is that on Sept. 12, 1633, a number of people withdrew and joined with John Spilsbury.
6. Then later, several others, including Richard Blount and Sam Eaton, joined to the original group led by Mr. Wilson and Mark Luker.
7. The KM does not give the names of those who left the Jessey Church and went supposedly with Blount, Luker and Sam Eaton over to John Spilsbury.

8. The JCRs states this about their rebaptism: “Mr. Eaton with some others receiving a further baptism.” This leaves the impression they were a mixed communion church but they were not.
9. The KM describes the rebaptism in this manner: “so they looked upon their baptism they had received in that age as invalid; whereupon most or all of them received a new baptism.” This leaves no room for a mixed membership church.
10. The JCRs introduces John Spilsbury in this manner: ‘They having first forsaken us, and joined with Mr. Spilsbury, viz.’ Several more are named.
11. The KM introduces Spilsbury in this manner: “Their minister was Mr. John Spilsbury.”
12. In the KM the next important date is 1638, as follows: “In the year 1638 Mr. William Kiffen, Mr. Thomas Wilson, and others being of the same judgment, were upon their request, dismissed to the said Mr. Spilsbury’s congregation.
13. The KM gives this account for 1639: “In the year 1639 another congregation of Baptists was formed, whose place of meeting was in Crutched-Fryars, the chief promoters of which were Mr. Green, Mr. Paul Hobson and Captain Spencer.

### The New Direction From Jessey Church Records

The next important entry deals with several others withdrawing from the Jessey Church to become Baptists. This is a very important point because it shows a different method of church constitutions. We will explain why later. These brethren did not join with the churches walking with John Spilsbury, William Kiffen or Paul Hobson. The issue *was not over succession as Crosby incorrectly maintains, but over their being unaware of anyone who had practiced baptism by immersion.*

### The Issue Seen From the Jessey Church Records

Furthermore, the matter did not hinge upon the subject of baptism, but an administrator under believer’s immersion. The *Jessey Church Records* (JCRs) say:

1640, 3d Mo. (May). The Church (whereof Mr. Jacob and Mr. John Latborp had been Pastors), became two by mutual consent, just half being with Mr. P. Barebone, and ye other half with Mr. H. Jessey. Mr. Richard Blount with him, being convicted of Baptism, yt also it ought to be by immersion ye Body into ye Water, resembling Burial and rising again, (Col. ii., 12; Rom. vi., 4); had sober Conference about it in ye Church, and then with some of the forenamed, who also were so convinced; And after Prayer and Conference about their so enjoying it, *none having then so Practiced in England to Professed Believers*, (this is the statement in question-REP) *and hearing that some in the Nether Lands has so practiced they agreed and sent over Mr. Richard Blount (who understood Dutch) with letters of Commendation, who was kindly accepted there, and returned with Letters from them, Jo Batten a Teacher there, and from that Church to such as sent him.*

1641. They proceed on therein, viz., Those persons yt were persuaded Baptism should be by immersion ye Body, had met in two companies, and did intend so to meet after this; all these agreed to proceed alike together; and then Manifesting

(not by any formal Words) a Covenant (which Word was scrupled by some of them), but by mutual desires and agreement each testified. These two Companies did set apart one to Baptize the rest, so it was Solemnly performed by them.

*Mr. Blount baptized Mr. Blacklock; yt was a Teacher amongst them, and Mr. Blount, being baptized, he and Mr. Blacklock Baptized re rest of their friends yt ware so minded, and many being added to them, they increased much.*

#### Observations

1. Because these brethren became convinced of believer's baptism by immersion, they separated out from the Jessey Pedobaptist Church;
2. The JCRs claim that "none having then so Practiced in England to Professed Believers", is corrected in the KM, to as they then knew about;
3. Therefore, they sent Mr. Blount over to the Netherlands;
4. The church there and their teacher kindly received him;
5. These two companies did each set apart one to baptize the rest;
6. Mr. Blount first baptized Mr. Blacklock and then they in turn baptized the others.

There is no de novo origin of baptism such as in Roger William's case in New England in 1639, or the supposed self-baptism of John Symthe earlier. What is present is that a group of believers became convinced that true baptism was by immersion of adult believers only, not of infants, and that no one in England practiced believer's baptism by immersion, *(that they knew of-REP)* therefore, they, believing in a true succession of baptism and a proper church constitution, that is receiving baptism from one already under it and all members so baptized, set out to establish a church in that manner. They did so. Mr. Samuel Blacklock later became an important Baptist minister and was very active in the publication business and in the colonization efforts. Richard Blount passes from Baptist view. He is mentioned in Edwards' Gangrenea and is still among the Baptists in 1646.

Those involved in the Blount mission acted according to what we call true gospel order. There is no invalid or irregular practice here. The question is not about the origin of this church, *but with the possibility of no one in England being yet under believer's baptism by immersion.* Please remember, this is from the Pedobaptist account, the *Jessey Church Records*.

Here is the orderly origin of the church:

1. Orderly withdraw of members from their former church;
2. sending Mr. Blount over to the Netherlands because he knew their language;
3. their reception of him and his return;
4. Mr. Blount, being already baptized in Holland, first baptized Mr. Blacklock;
5. Mr. Blount baptized his group;
6. Mr. Blacklock baptized his group;
7. They form themselves into a baptized church.

All this appears to be a very good and proper constitution of a Particular Baptist Church. Later this new church would join with the three older churches gathered

in the 1630s. More churches came into existence and they joined the fellowship of these older churches totaling the seven churches that issued the First London Confession of Faith.

### The Problem

The problem is not with the orderly origin of this church but with the statement that *no one in England practiced believer's baptism by immersion*. That statement is in the *Jessey Church Records*, but not in the *Kiffen Manuscript*. Many have developed several wild and incorrect theories because of this statement. Here are some of them:

1. John Spilsbury and his group were a mixed group, some by believers baptism some way other than immersion, others were not baptized again;
2. John Spilsbury was only a separatists at best, holding open communion and mixed church membership;
3. John Spilsbury baptized several others while he was himself unbaptized;
4. Or, those with Mr. Spilsbury formed themselves into an unbaptized church, appointed him to administer baptism, and he did so and then someone later baptized him, originating baptism de novo like Roger Williams did so in New England;
5. If this did not happen, then it follows that Mr. Spilsbury was never properly baptized because he was not baptized later; and it would follow that those churches which did start from this source were not valid churches either;
6. This would make Mr. Spilsbury and the church at Wapping just like Roger Williams and those with him in New England in 1639.

**There is no truth to any of the above.** This I will demonstrate later.

### The New Direction from the Kiffen Manuscript

Remember the JCRs are a Pedobaptist document written from their viewpoint. At that time they knew nothing of the practices of any of the Particular Baptists. It was against the law to rebaptize anyone or be distinct from the Anglican Church. They simply knew that groups had left them and began to walk with John Spilsbury (1633), William Kiffen (1638), and Paul Hobson (1639).

### The Account Taken From the Kiffen Manuscript

The KM gives the *true* reason why the brethren sent Richard Blount over to Holland, it was *because they did not know of anyone who then practiced the immersion of adult believers*.

For in the year 1640, this church (the Jessey Pedobaptist church rep) became two by consent just half, says the manuscript, (JCRS) being with Mr. P. Barebones and the other half with Mr. Henry Jessey. Crosby Vol. 1, pp 148-149.

Here is from the *Kiffen Manuscript*:

Several sober and pious persons belonging to the Congregations of the dissenters about London, were convinced that believers were the only proper subjects of baptism, and that it ought to be administered by immersion, by immersion the whole body into the water, in resemblance of burial and resurrection according to Colos. 2:11, 12; and Rom. vi: 4, that they often met together to pray and confer about this matter, and to consult what methods they should take to enjoy this

ordinance in its primitive purity. That they could not be satisfied about any administrator in England to begin the practice' because though some in this nation rejected the baptism of infants, *yet they had not as they knew of revived the ancient custom of immersion*; But hearing that some in the Netherlands practiced it, they agreed to send over one Mr. Richard Blount, who understood the Dutch language; then he went accordingly, carrying letters of recommendation with him and was kindly received both by the church and there and Mr. John Batten, their teacher.

That upon his return he baptized Mr. Samuel Blacklock a minister, and these two baptized the rest of their company (whose names are in the manuscript to the number of fifty-three). *The Kiffen Manuscript*, Crosby, Vol. 1, pp. 101-102.

#### Observations:

1. In the KM Mr. Blount first appears in the 1640-1641 discussions and mission, while in the JCRs he first appears in 1633, goes to Mr. Spilsbury's congregation and then later must be back with the Pedobaptists and those others who desire the true ordinance and church;
2. The KM shows us that the JCRs are incorrect in their stating that no one in England practiced immersion of believers by noting: "yet they had not as they knew of revived the ancient custom of immersion."
3. These two points make the mark the major differences between the two old accounts.

#### The Issue is Settled

The author of the Kiffen Manuscript correctly shows that the issue was not the *lack of a true administrator of baptism*, but the *lack of the knowledge of a true administrator of baptism*. The question then turns to this direction, why did they not know of any such believers under adult immersion?

#### Richard Blount and the Persecution around Sam Eaton

There are several reasons possible why Richard Blount and his friends did not yet know of any under adult believer's immersion. Let us start with Mr. Richard Blount. *Though the Pedobaptist version would have him with John Spilsbury as early as 1633, the Baptist version does not.* It is not likely that he went to Spilsbury and then left and went back to the Pedobaptists and then left and tried again to become a Baptist. However, to be fair, this is a theory someone else suggested.

Certain writers have stated that upon the persecution and murder of Mr. Sam Eaton, some of those who originally went over to Mr. Spilsbury returned to the Jessey Pedobaptist Church. I am not saying this is what Mr. Blount did, but simply, others have suggested that some went back. They did not name those who returned, but they strongly hinted that Richard Blount may have been one.

#### The Hated Rebaptizers

It was bad enough to be a dissenter in those days, but to be a hated rebaptized dissenter, that was the worst a person could be. This almost always resulted in certain death or banishment. For this reason the Laud's persecutions against the Spilsbury-Eaton group was very severe.

IF, *and I note IF*, Mr. Blount did return to the Jessey Church due to the persecution surrounding John Spilsbury and Sam Eaton, it would be sad. But, if so, when more tolerant times came he did right himself and follow the Lord Jesus Christ in a more full course of obedience. The Kiffen Manuscript does not give us any reason to suppose that was the case. Mr. Spilsbury and Sam Eaton, and the others of the Wapping Church are to be commended for their remaining true to their course even under those terrible times of Laud's Reign of Terror and the Star Chamber.

It seems that the Baptist version, the KM, is correct. Mr. Blount left the Pedobaptists in the 1640-1641 era, not during the 1633s. We do not have any true facts showing that any Particular Baptists found any reasons to disassociate from Mr. Spilsbury.

### The True Reason for this Action

The issue in 1640-1641 *was over the lack of knowing about any administrators under the ordinance of gospel baptism*. Why was there such ignorance? Because when those who left and become Baptists did so, they went on separate ways from the Pedobaptists. Those were the days when Laud was still in power, though in 1640 his power was coming to a rapid close. Most, if not all of the churches, maintained a quite and separated existence because of persecution. The Particular Baptists considered themselves as one general church, but they met in separate congregations to avoid persecutions. *The Pedobaptists did not then know about these church constitutions and adult immersions*. I will have more on this later.

### The Origin of the Problems

Some of the problems originated from *The Jessey Church Records* and not *The Kiffen Manuscript*. In spite of all the KM has passed through it is still very reliable. The KM says nothing to discredit John Spilsbury, William Kiffen or Paul Hobson and the first three Particular Baptist churches formed in the 1630s. It shows that the brethren who sponsored and sent Richard Blount to the Netherlands did so because they, in 1640, were not yet aware of any who practiced the true mode of baptism. This was only their weakness. It was not true that there were no proper administrators of baptism then in England. The group led by Mr. Blount and Mr. Blacklock did not yet know about them. *Hansard Knollys has shown us that those who gathered the first churches in London were men out of the country churches who were already approved ministers preaching and practicing the true ordinances*.

### Proper Administrators in England Before 1641

Did the Particular Baptists in London originate baptism de novo in the early 1630s? Where did these first lasting churches come from in London? Did John Spilsbury and the others around him just spring up like mushrooms? Did they have a previous church connection before they came into London? Why did they come into London? Mr. Hansard Knollys answers these questions for us in his friendly discourse with Mr. Bastwick published in 1645. Here is Mr. Knolly's defense of the Particular Baptists and their orderly origin:

And now I come to the second question, which is concerning the manner of gathering of Churches, and admitting of members and Officers page 98. Which question the Doctor thus states, viz. Whether Ministers of the Gospel may, out of

already gathered assemblies of believes, select and chose the most principle of them into a church-fellowship peculiar unto themselves, and admit of none into their society, but such as shall enter in by a private Covenant, and are allowed by the consent, and approbation of all the Congregation? And this question the doctor brancheth into fix Queries page 98-99. Wherein the judicious reader may perceive the Doctor (through misinformation I conceive) hath mistaken the stating of the question, which he partly acknowledgeth page 100.

But now I shall set down (saith the Doctor page 100) God's method and the Apostles practice in gathering of Churches, and the manner they used in making members in every Church, and compare it with the method our Brethren (the Independents) use, &c. And to this purpose the Doctor begins with Christ's commission, Matt. 28:19-20.

Out of these several Scriptures the Doctor observes these three things, page 101. To Wit, First, That they should teach no other things but what Christ commanded them, and appeared to them in, and for which thy had his Word and warrant. Secondly, the condition, which they were to propound unto all nations and people, upon which they were admitted into the Church, was Faith, Repentance, and Baptism. And Thirdly, that this commission was delivered only to the Apostles and Ministers of the Gospel, that they should admit whosoever believed, and were baptized; and they that believed not would not be baptized, were not to be admitted. These are the Doctors own words, page 102 and page 103. The Doctor for proof quotes the third chapter of Matthew, and Luke 3:7. And the sum of John's preaching (saith the Doctor) is mentioned, verse 3. It was the baptism of Repentance for the remission of sins. Also be there cities Luke 7:19. That all the people that heard him and the Publicans justified God, being Baptized with the baptism of John; but the Pharisees and the Lawyers rejected the council of god against themselves, being not Baptized of him. Page 103-104. But now to go on (saith the Doctor page 104) after the resurrection and ascension of Christ, &c. where he quotes, Acts 2:37-38. Then they that gladly received the Word were baptized, and the same day were added unto them about three thousand souls.

Hence the Doctor observes, that the Apostles propounded no other condition or terms for the making all and every one of them members of the Church, but Repentance and Baptism, the which, when the people had accepted of (saith the Doctor) They were forthwith admitted, &c. page 104. For another proof the Doctor produceth, Acts 10:44,47,48. Where the Doctor affirmeth, page 106. That those brethren who came with Peter did not intermeddle in that business, to wit, of their admittance (by Baptism) into the church. Now I conceive the reason, why those brethren did not intermeddle to hinder their admittance to that Ordinance of Jesus Christ, (to wit, Baptism in water) and so to an entrance into the Church; was, not because they had not such Liberty, but because the Brethren had no just objections or hindrance to declare to Peter.

That the Brethren had a liberty to have declared any thing, which might justly have hindered the administration of that Ordinance of baptism unto them, doth appear by the question which the Apostle expounded verse 47. Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized? And the Doctor. Himself acknowledged, page 102 that the brethren or Disciples of the church of Jerusalem (who must be a pattern [saith the Doctor] of all churches) had this liberty to except against some sorts of persons, and hinder their admittance into the church, though baptized according to Christ's' commission, and preachers chosen and sent by Christ himself. And that in case such persons have been formerly known to be open enemies, and persecutors of the church, and then they are

justly to be suspected (saith the Doctor page 102) until they have given public evidence by witness to the Ministers of their true conversion, and there produceth a plain instance to prove this page 102. Acts 9:26-28 And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

Now this liberty have all the disciples in the like case, because Jerusalem the mother church is the pattern of all other the Daughter Churches, as the Doctor confesseth, yea affirmeth, page 97 and saith, all men acknowledge, that the Mother Church must give an example of government to all the Daughter churches. And that is also by the Doctor, acknowledged, page 102, to be a part of the power of the Keys, to open and shut the doors of the church; that is, to admit such as are for their Faith, Knowledge and Repentance sufficiently qualified, and fitted to be members, and to refuse such, as are not fit to be received into the fellowship of the church; either for their ignorance or other sins and offences, &c. Now then when it doth evidently appear, that the Disciples or brethren (not to say sisters, though they are Disciples also) or the Church in Jerusalem (in her most flourishing condition) had this liberty to declare their fears, and the ground thereof against Paul, who was at that time a believer, a baptized person, and a Preacher, or minister of the gospel, so that although, he came, and assayed, to be joined to the Disciples, and be admitted a member among them, that he might have fellowship with them in the worship, and ordinances of the gospel: Yet was thereby hindered from admittance! Barnabas witnessed his condition and conversation to the Apostle, and then was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem. How can the doctor make good, that the Presbyters alone without the consent of brethren may admit members, and cast out members, and that the Brethren or the Congregation hath nothing to do to hinder any such thing, pate 102, 106.

For further proof hereof: The Doctor urgeth Acts 8:35-40. The example of the Eunuch, to whom Philip being sent preached Jesus, and Baptism in his Name, and it is related, that when they came to a certain water the Eunuch said unto him; See here is water? What doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest, ---- ----- . And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God: And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he Baptized him. Here we see (saith the doctor) that Philip admits him into the number of believers, and makes him a member of the church. But the Doctor saith, this was without consulting with the Congregation, by his own authority, and upon the Eunuch his own testimony page 106.

I answer, that Philip had a special command from God for what he did herein, and so had Ananias. Acts 9:15 touching Saul, which is the next instance which the Doctor brings in this same page 106 and albeit the Doctor affirms; that Ananias did not say to Saul, I will consult with the Church to see whither they will admit thee to be a member, for thou hast greatly wasted the Church, and made havoc of the Saints, and therefore I will have their approbation, and consent, and thou shalt give in evidences of thy true conversion, &c. and so be received and admitted.

But with out all this ado (saith the Doctor page 107) he baptized Paul, and admitteth him into the number of believers, and makes him a member of the Church. Yet if the reader look back into page 102 of his book, the Doctor there makes an exception from the power which he a little before had affirmed the Presbyters have to admit Members, by virtue of Christ his Commission, upon the

profession their faith and repentance, and receiving baptism, without any further testimony; unless (saith the Doctor) they had been formerly known to be open enemies, and persecutors of the Church, and then they were justly to be suspected, till they had given public evidence by witness of their true conversion: And gives an instance in Paul, who for a time the Disciples feared Acts 9:26-27, till they had better information, and proof, that he now preached the faith, that he had once persecuted, and had suffered for it, page 102. To rehearse all the Scriptures alleged to prove this method of God and practice of the Apostles were needless. But passing by such as are not so plain and clear for the proof thereof, and also omitting, what the doctor hath said touching the Brethren, in comparing their practice with the Apostles: Because the Doctor is mistaken in stating the question, and also in his queries as before I mentioned in the 14 page of this my answer, and the reader may see pages 98,99 and 100 of the Doctors book. I shall give the reader the result of all, that the Doctor hath written from page 100 to the end of his book, touching God's method, and the Apostles practice in gathering of churches and admitting members, viz. First, that Christ having given a commission to his Apostles to teach all Nations, and baptize them Matt. 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; the Apostles practiced accordingly. Acts 2:37-38; 10:44-48 and so did Philip Acts 8:35-38. And Ananias Acts 9:10,18. *Secondly, that the condition or terms, which they were to propound unto all Nations and people upon which, they were to be admitted into the Church were Faith, Repentance and Baptism. Mark 15:15-16. For the commission was delivered to the Apostles, that they should admit whosoever believed, and would be baptized, and they, that believed not and would not be baptized, were not to be admitted,* page 102 and 104. The Apostles (saith the Doctor) propounded no other condition or terms for making all and every on members of the Church but repentance, and baptism, acts 2:37-38. *Thirdly, that the Apostles and all succeeding ministers of the Gospel should admit whosoever believed, and were baptized, to be members of the Church, and teach them to observe no other things but what Christ commanded them, and for which they had his Word and warrant:* Pages 101 and 103. Matt 28:19-20. And this (saith the Doctor) the Apostles did practice, without requiring them to take a private covenant, or enter into the church by way of a particular covenant, Page 105. Acts 2:37-38.

This being the sum and result of that method and practice, which the Doctor conceives should be done in gathering Churches an admitting members, which the Scriptures will warrant, and Christ Jesus approve of as his fathers will, I shall now take liberty to declare, what I know by mine own experience to be the practice of some Churches of God in the City.

That so both the Doctor and the reader may judge how near the Saints, who walk together in the Fellowship of the Gospel, do come in their practice, to these Apostolic rules and practice propounded by the Doctor as God's method in gathering Churches, and admitting Members. *I say, that I know by mine own experience (having walked with them) that they were thus gathered; viz. Some godly and learned men of approved gifts and abilities for the Ministry, being driven out of the countries, where they lived by the persecution of the Prelates, came to sojourn in this great City, and preached the Word of God both publicly, and from house to house, and daily in the Temples and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ: and some of them have dwelt in their own hired houses, and received all that came n unto them, preaching the kingdom*

*of God, and teaching those things, which concern the Lord Jesus Christ.* And when many sinners were converted by their preaching of the Gospel, some of them that believed, consorted with them, and of professors a great many, and of the chief women not a few. *And the condition which those Preachers both publicly and privately propounded to the people, unto whom they preached, upon which they were to be admitted into the Church was Faith, Repentance and Baptism; and none other.* And whosoever (poor as well as rich, bond as well as free, servants as well as masters) did make a profession of their Faith in Christ Jesus, and would be baptized with water into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, were admitted members of the Church; but such as did not believe, and would not be baptized they would not admit into Church-communion. This hath been the practice of some Churches of God in this City, without urging or making any particular covenant with Members upon admittance, which I desire may be examined by the Scriptures cited in the Margent, and then compared with the Doctors three conclusions from the same Scriptures, whereby it may appear to the judicious Reader, how near the Churches some to them come to the practice of the Apostles rule, and practice of the primitive Churches, both in gathering, and admitting members. And my humble request to the Doctor is; That he will use all means, that he method of God, and practice of the Apostles in gathering of Churches, and admitting members, may be conscionable practiced by his brethren of both sides according to the revealed Word and Will of the Father.

The End

In the 1630s the Particular Baptist churches did have several qualified administrators of baptism among them such as John Spilsbury, Sam Eaton, William Kiffen, Paul Hobson, Mr. Green, Captain John Spencer, and others. These gospel administrators did form the churches in proper order.

### King's Way to Sion

Mr. Spilsbury, Mr. Kiffen, Mr. Thomas Patience and others did join with Mr. Daniel King in the publishing of his *The Way to Sion*. These brethren first published this remarkable work in 1651. The Scottish Particular Baptists re-published it in 1656.

In this work Mr. King explains what the Particular Baptist meant when they argued with the Seekers over baptism being lost and recovered. He shows they granted this only for argument's sake to demonstrate that the Scriptures did warrant their recovery of any ordinance and truth if it had been lost. They DID NOT SAY IT WAS LOST, BUT IF IT HAD BEEN.

Let us now take up our points:

1. After settling these two new churches into gospel order, Mr. Blount also appears in Mr. Thomas Edwards work, *Gangrena*. Edwards associates Blount with Mr. George Wright states that they were leaders in one of the prime churches of the Anabaptists.
2. George Wright later became a Seeker;
3. Mr. Blount and Mr. Blacklock baptized several others including Thomas Kilcop, Thomas Gunn and John Mabbitt.
4. Mr. Kilcop's church was the Petty France Church and Mr. John Mabbitt's church was the Glazier Hall or Glasshouse church.

5. The Glasshouse church sponsored Mr. John Myles and sent him to Wales where he and the ancient church at Olchon, produced the great Welsh Baptist Revival out of which came several lasting Particular Baptist Churches of the closed communion order.

### **SPILSBURY, KIFFEN AND HOBSON**

So far no one has given any personal facts about Mr. John Spilsbury and his origin as a Baptist. We do not even know if he had an already existing church for the first groups to join or if he was alone. We do know that Mr. Sam Eaton was one of the first successful ministers whom Mr. Spilsbury baptized and ordained. Laud's agents arrested Mr. Eaton. They could not silence him, and he continued to have a successful ministry even while in prison. They murdered him while he was still in prison.

#### **John Spilsbury and Sam Eaton**

In 1633 Mr. Sam Eaton and several others joined with Mr. Spilsbury. Here is what we have found out about Mr. Eaton.

Under the leadership of Laud and his Reign of Terror, the Anglicans severely persecuted Mr. Spilsbury and the others in the next few years after 1633. They imprisoned Mr. Sam Eaton, one of the ministering brethren now with John Spilsbury.

Here are John Taylor's (Anglican) remarks.

#### **A Precious Youth**

Also one Spilsbury rose up of late, (Who doth, or did dwell over Aldersgate) His office was to weigh Hay by the Trusse, (Fit for the pallet of Bucephalus) He in short time left his Hay-weighing trade, and afterwards he Irish Stockings made: **He rebaptized in Anabaptist fashion one Eaton (of the new found separation) A zealous Button maker, grave and wise; and gave him order, others to baptize;** who was so apt to learn that in one day, hee'd do't as well as Spilsbury weighed Hay. This pure Hay-lay man to the Bankside came, A Basket-maker's wife, known wonderous well, in Moses his Alley he and she doth dwell. A Swarme of Sectaries, and Schismatiqves, London, 1641 pages 6, 7:

#### **Baptized in Anabaptist Fashion**

Mr. Spilsbury did baptism Mr. Eaton in "Anabaptist fashion". Mr. Spilsbury both baptized Mr. Eaton and ordained him or gave him orders others to baptize. He did this in what is called Anabaptist Fashion. So, what is Anabaptist fashion? Is it sprinkling, pouring or immersion?

According to Daniel Featly, "Anabaptist fashion" is by immersion head and all. In 1645, Mr. Featly informs his readers that the Anabaptists had been baptizing in this fashion for over 20 years near his home place. In addition, Mr. Featly traces this terrible Anabaptist sect and their baptism by Anabaptist fashion clear back to the time of Queen Elizabeth. Featly stated:

They preach, and print, and practice their heretical impieties openly; they hold their conventicles weekly in our chief cities, and Suburbs thereof, and there prophesy by turns; and (that I may use the phrase of Tertullian) adificantur in

ruinam, they build one another in the faith of their Sect, to the ruin of their souls; *they flock in great multitudes to their Jordans, and both Sexes enter into the River, and are dipt after their manner with a kind of spell containing the heads of their erroneous tenants, and their engaging themselves in their schismaticall Covenants,* and , (if I may so speak) combinations of separation. And as they defile our Rivers with their impure washings, and our Pulpits with their false prophecies and phanaticall enthusiasms, so the presses sweat and groan under the load of their blasphemies. For they print not only Anabaptism, from which they take their name; but many other most damnable doctrines. . . Page 3 and 4 of The Epistle Dedicatory. *The Dippers Dipt. Or, The Anabaptists Ducked and Plunged over Head and Ears, at a Disputation in Southwark.* London, 1645.

Mr. Featly discussed these points with Mr. William Kiffen and others.

The Anglicans defined baptism according to Anabaptist fashion, or after their manner, *as being dipt and dunked over head and ears.* Both John Taylor and Daniel Featly used this terminology in describing the mode of Anabaptist baptism. Featly was good enough to define the act for us. Was this a new act for baptism? No, Featly stated again:

This venomous Serpent (vere solifuga) flying from, and shinning the light of God's Word, is the Anabaptist, who in these later times first showed his shinning head, and speckled skin, *and thrust out his sting near the place of my residence, for more than twenty years.* Ibid., last page of The Epistle to the Reader.

This places Featly's first notice of these Anabaptist immersions back into the early 1620s. Had Richard Blount and the others known of Mr. Featly and asked him about the immersion of adult believers, he could have told them about those in England, near his home place, who immersed adult believers for more than 20 years.

Complaining further about the antiquity of the Anabaptists, and the reasons why they were no longer held down, Mr. Featly stated:

So we may say, the name of the father of the Anabaptists signifieth in English a senseless piece of wood, or block, and a very blockhead was he: yet out of this block were cut those chips that kindled such a fire in Germany, Hosfatia, and Suenia, that could not be fully quenched, no not with the blood of 150,000 of them killed in war, or put to death in several places by the Magistrates.

This fire in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth, and King James, and our gracious Sovereign, till now, was covered in England under the ashes; or if it brake out at any time, by the care of the Ecclesiastical and Civil Magistrates it was soon put out. But of late, since the unhappy distractions which our sins have brought upon us, the Temporal sword being other ways employed, and the spiritual locked up fast in the scabbard, this sect, among others, has so far presumed upon the patience of the State, *that it has held weekly Conventicles, rebaptized hundreds of men and women together in the twilight in Riverlets and some arms of the Thames, and elsewhere, immersion them over head and ears.* Ibid., last page of To the Reader. (Remember, there is an Epistle to The Reader and then a To the Reader).

Mr. Eaton being a preaching brother, Mr. Spilsbury also did “give him orders others to baptize.” That is how the Anglicans made fun of Baptists. The reason I have given this note is due to Gould’s position that John Spilsbury and his church were still unbaptized as late as 1644.

In Turloe’s State Papers for the year 1638 under item 64. Note the following about Sam Eaton:

Petition of Francis Tucker, B. D., prisoner in Newgate for debt, to the same. Samuel Eaton, prisoner in Newgate, committed by you for a schismatical and dangerous fellow, had held conventicles in the goal, some to the number of 70 persons, and is permitted by the keeper openly to preach. Eaton has oftentimes affirmed in his sermons that baptism was the doctrine of devils and its original an institution from the devil, and has railed against the archbishop, affirming that all bishops are heretics, blasphemers and anti-Christians. The keeper, having notice hereof by petitioner, who desired that these great resorts might be prevented, and Eaton be reprov’d, and removed to some other place in the prison, replied to petitioner disdainfully, threatening to remove him to some worse place. The Keeper has been present in a conventicle of 60 persons when Eaton was preaching. He said there was a very fair and goodly company, and stayed there some season. Contrary to the charge of the High Commission, he permits Eaton to go abroad to preach to conventicles. The keeper also caused petitioner’s sister to be removed out of the prison, contrary to the opinion of a doctor, and she died the very next day, her chamber being presently after her removal assigned to Eaton, it being the most convenient place in the prison for keeping his conventicles. Prays the Archbishop to refer the examination of this matter to Isaac Pennington and John Wollaston, sheriffs of London, and in the meantime to take such course with the keeper as shall be thought fitting.

### **Preaching, Baptizing and Suffering in the 1630s**

So far we find Mr. Spilsbury preaching, baptizing and ordaining from 1633 to 1639. His ministering associates consisted of Sam Eaton, William Kiffen and Paul Hobson with several others who served these three Particular Baptist Churches. Mr. Spilsbury, Mr. Eaton and the others did this in ANABAPTIST FASHION. **That meant immersion.** We conclude that Mr. Kiffen and Mr. Hobson, and those with them, did their work in ANABAPTIST FASHION. Anabaptist fashion is how the Pedobaptists described these older brethren who *dipped their converts over head and ears.*

### **Many Other Closed Communion Churches**

The London Particular Baptists branched out in different directions. As they became able during the times of toleration, they sent out church commissioned ministers to preach, baptized and gather churches. These ministers gathered and established strict communion Particular Baptist Churches.

Gangrena or Thomas Edwards, Presbyterian, stated:

**They (the Anabaptists-REP) send forth into several Countries of this Kingdom from their Churches in London, as Church acts, several Emissaries, members of their Churches, to preach, and spread their errors, to dip, to gather and settle Churches. They are not content with their own meetings on Lord’s days, week days, keeping constant Lectures in set places for all to come to that will, thereby poisoning many in the City. They endeavor the leavening of all the Counties, as I**

might give instances of Lam, (Lamb, the General Baptist, REP) Kiffen, with many others sent abroad, yea are some sent into the North as far as York. *Gangrena*, volume 1, London 1646; Page 65.

Trying to make the Anabaptists look like the Jesuits, Edwards stated:

As the Jesuits are famous for sending out Emissaries into several Countries, to corrupt, not contenting themselves to do mischief at home, so do our Sectaries send forth their members into all Counties and places of this Kingdom. They lay hands upon, and send them as a church act to preach such and such errors, to rebaptize ect. *Ibid.*, Pages 45, 46.

He makes this interesting statement:

. . . these men were sent down from the Church as a Church Act unto the country of Esses to make Disciples and propage their way, and indeed into most counties of England (where these men can do with safety) some Emissaries out of the Sectaries Churches are sent to infect and poison the counties, some out of Lamb's, some out of Kiffen's, some out of others. About September last one Kiffen, an Anabaptist, went his progress in Kent, and did a great deal of hurt; and I have been informed from good hands, by the means of some that are acquainted and intimate with them, that not only Emissaries from London go into these nigher counties, as Esses, Kent, Suffolk, Harford, Cambridge, &c., but into Yorkshire and those Northern parts (since reduced to the Parliament) and no doubt also into the West; and several Sectaries went early to Bristol and those parts, as one Mr. Bacon, Sumonds, &c., and into Wales, also, so that we are like to have Sectarisme like a universal Leprosy over-spread this whole Kingdom. I pray God keeps it out of Ireland; and I hope Scotland by God's mercy, and the benefit of the Presbyterial Government will keep it out there. *Ibid.*, Page 93.

### Elder Mark Luker

Mark Luker was notable among those who joined with Mr. Spilsbury in 1633. He and his wife left England sometime after their union with John Spilsbury. It may have been following the murder of Mr. Sam Eaton. In my *A Friendly Review of Dr. Asher's John Clark*, I have gathered the following information about Mark Luker and his connection with John Spilsbury and the London Particular Baptists and Dr. John Clark and the Newport, R. I. Particular Baptists. The following information comes from my *A Friendly Review of Dr. Asher's John Clark*.

In this chapter, (VII) Dr. Asher introduces us to Elder Mark Luker. Therefore, we will now turn our attention to Elder Mark Luker and establish further the close connection between the Newport Church and Dr. John Clark to the London Particular Baptists with William Kiffen and John Spilsbury.

During Archbishop Laud's final years his main efforts were to rid England of the terrible Anabaptists. Laud's persecution scattered most of the Particular Baptists churches in and around London during the early 1620s. Then his attention turned to the country. Seeking refuge, many of the Particular Baptist ministers came back into London to hide. In the course of the next few years, these new brethren proceeded to gather Particular Baptist Churches. See Hansard Knolly's *A Moderate Answer to Dr. Bastwick*. Some of this is discussed in Dr. Christian's *History of the Baptists*, Volume 1, chapter XV. "The Baptists in the Reformation Period in England", starting on page 189. The weak point in Christian's

discussion is that he failed to note that among the English Baptists of the 1641 era onward, when they spoke of the Reformation, they were referring to the Presbyterian Reformation in England which began in the early 1640s, and not the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s. However, this chapter is must reading before anyone can properly understand the Particular Baptists in England prior to 1640. Their churches were mostly scattered and driven out from London. See also Jane Turner's Diary.

Now, we return to Elder Mark Luker. For this we will quote from the *Jessey Church Records* mistaken called the *Kiffen Manuscript*, as follows:

There having been much discussion these denying Truth of Ye Perish Churches & Ye Church now become so large yt it might be prejudicial, these following desired di-mission that they might become an Entire Church & further ye communion of these Churches in Order amongst themselves, wch at last was granted to them & performed Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>, 1633, viz. Henry Parker and wife; Wid. Fearne, ...Hatmaker, Mary Millman, Marke Luker, Mr. Wilson, Thos. Allen, Jo. Millburn. To these joined Rich Blount, (This shows it to be the Jessey Records, not the KM-REP) Thos. Hubert, Rich. Treadle, and his wife Kat; John Trimber, William Jennings and Sa, Eaton, Mary Greenway . . . Mr. Eaton with some others receiving a further baptism, others joined to them. In 1638, those also being of the same judgment with Sam Eaton and desiring to depart and not be censured our interest in them was remitted with prayer made in their behalf, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 1638. **They having just forsaken us and joined with Mr. Spilsbury**, viz., Mr. Peter Fener, Hen. Pen, Tho. Wilson, Mm. Batty, Mrs. Allen (died in 1639) and Mrs. Norcott. Taken from *The Western Recorder*, December 31, 1896, page 2; Dr. T. T. Eaton, Editor. (Please note that *The Western Recorder* is the official record of the Ky. Baptist State Convention of Southern Baptists.)

For a complete discussion on the origin and merits of The Kiffen Manuscript, see our section in my work called Particular Baptist Origins, volume one of The Particular Baptist Treasury, and my Studies on the Kiffen Manuscript in three different volumes.

During the early 1630s, Mark Luker and his wife were among the first ones to leave the Jacob Pedobaptist Church and go over and join with Mr. Spilsbury and the Particular Baptist Church at Wapping. Please also note that neither Mr. Spilsbury nor the Wapping church came from the Jacob Pedobaptist church. Pedobaptist dissenters made up the Jessey church. Jacob gathered this dissenting pedobaptist church in the late 1500s or early 1600s.

We know that Mr. Spilsbury originally came from one of the scattered country churches thanks to Knolly's remarks in his answer to Dr. Bastwick. He was one of those who gathered the first lasting Particular Baptist Church at Wapping that later Kiffen, Hobson and many others joined.

Now we return to Elder Mark Luker. Here are some interesting remarks from The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland's Historical Society, taken from their *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society*, Volume 1, about 1909, starting on page 227.

### **Rise of the Particular Baptists in London, 1633-1644**

Numb. 2

An Old MSS, giveing some Accott. of those Baptists who first formed themselves into distinct Congregations, or Churches in London found among certain Paper given me by Mr. Adams

Sundry of ye Church whereof Mr. Jacob & Mr John Lathorp had been Pastors, being dissatisfied 1633 with ye Churches owning of English Parishes to be true Churches desired dismission & Joyned together among themselves, as Mr. Henry Parker, Mr. Tho. Shepard, Mr. Sam. Eaton, Marke Luker,<sup>2</sup>

1. There are two or three men of this name at this period. A minister of Cambridge in Massachusetts is of course not the man, place, date, doctrine and social rank all distinguish him clearly And probably the carpenter of St. Andrews in I London, who on 16 May 1637 was in some kind of trouble with the High Commission is not the man Cot three other facts about a third 1 man fit well with these notices —On I15; Oct. 1635 Thomas Sheppard of St. Olaves in Bermondey, a leather dresser was brought before the High Commission as a Separatist. About 1639 he was still 11 a prisoner in the Marshal's care. In 1644 he was college with Thomas Munden mentioned further in this document singing the Baptist Confession where his\* name appears as Skeppard. In 1646 he was replaced by George Tipping, who two years before had been a colleague. He has left no other trace in literature.

2. the name of Luker at this period reminds us that Cyrll Luker patriarch first of Alexandria and then of Constantanople was in friendly relations with James I. and Charles I., having been bread a Calvinist. It was in gratitude for their kindness that he sent the famous Alexandrine manuscript of the Septuagint and the new Testament, now lodged at the British Museum. The name sets us wondering whether our Mark Lucar was connected with his family. When we turn to the Hatleian Soceity's Vindication of London in 1538, by Clarenceux, augmented after 1613 by William Camden, we find the Lucar family prominent enough to bear arms, but apparently only of brief residence, for the pedigree begins with Emanuel Lucar of London, Esquire, who married Elizabeth the daughter of Paule Winthpole, by whom he had children: Emanuel, Henry, Mary, Jane. Then he married Joane, the daughter of Thomas Turnbull, by whom he had: Ciprian, Mattha, Mary, Mark and John. This is apparently our Mark. The names have a slightly Hellenistic flavor.

Now the Greeks have never abandoned immersion as the only act of baptism; and if Mark Luker had any Greek blood in him, and Greek relations coming to see him, there was an easy means of the attention being drawn to this detail. He is well known in America as an original member of the First Baptist church at Newport, Rhode Island, formed in 1644. (That is 1638, REP)

& others with whom Joined Mr. Wm. Kiffen.<sup>3</sup> 1638. Mr. Tho. Wilson, Mr. Pen, & H. Pen, & 1638, 3 more being convinced that Baptism was not for Infants, but professed Believers joined with Mr. Jo. Spilsbury ye Churches favor being desired therein.

3 Kiffen avowedly Joined this group under other circumstances from his autobiography we learn it was in 1638, though apparently after Eaton's death they were able to join Jessey. The two lists of 1633 may be compared: Records of an Old Manuscript: Henry Parker and wife, Willow Fearne, Mr. Wilson, Marke Luker, Mary Milburn, John Milburn, Arnold [Green] Hatmaker, Thomas Allen, Thomas Shepard, [Eaton, afterwards] Samuel Eaton.

A Third comparison is useful. The Jessey Records say that these six were of the same judgment with Eaton; this manuscript says they were convinced baptism was not for infants, but for professed believers. This confirms the supposition that Eaton did not quit at the same time with Luker, and that the ground of his separation was slightly different. We infer that many in Spilsbury's church shared Eaton's views in 1638. (These distinctions are not justified, REP)

3<sup>rd</sup>. month: The church became two by mutual consent (1640) just half being with Mr. P. Barebone, and ye other half with Mr. H. Jessey. Mr. Richard Blount with him being convinced of baptism ye also it outh to be by immersion ye body into ye water, resembling burial and rising again, Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:4; and sober conference about it in ye church, and then with some of the forenamed who also were so convinced: and after Prayer and conference about their so enjoying it, **none having then so practiced in England to professed Belivers, (This shows it to be the Jessey account, not the KM, REP)** and hearing that some in ye Netherlands had so practised, they agreed and sent over Mr. Richard Blount (who understood Dutch) with letters of commendation, who was kindly accepted there, and returned with letter from them, Jo: Battee a teacher there, and from that Church to such as sent him.

They proceeded on therein, viz., those persons yet were persuaded baptism should be by immersion ye body had met in two companies, & did intend to to meet after this, all these agreed to proceed alike together. And when manifesting (not by any formal words or covenant) with word was scrupled by some of them, but by mutual desires and agreement each testified: Those two companies did set apart one to baptize the rest; so it was solemnly performed by them.

Mr. Blount Baptized Mr. Blacklock yet was a Teacher amongst them, & Mr. Blount being Baptized, he & Mr. Blacklock<sup>14</sup> Baptized ye rest of their friends that ware so minded, & many being added to them they increased much (15) The Names of all 11 Mo. Janu: begin Richard Blount, Sam. Blacklock, Tho. Shephard, Greg. Fishburn, Doro. Fishburn, his Wife, John Cadwell, Eliz. Cadwell, Mary Millisson, Sam. Eames, Tho. Munden, Tho. Kilcop, William Willieby, Robert Locker, Mary Locker, John Braunson, John Bull, Rich. Ellis, Mary Langride, W. Creak, Mary Herman, Robt. Carr, Sarah Williams, Martin Mainprise, Joane and Anne Dunckle, Hen: Woolmare, Eliz. Woolmore, Robt. King, Sarah Nonman, Tho. Waters, Isabel Woolmore, Henry Creak, Judeth Manning, Mark Lukar, Mabel Lukar, Henry Darker, Abigal Bowden, Eliz. Jessop, Mary Creak, Susannah King, 41 in all.

(14) Mr. Blacklock seems to have escaped recent notice, and the present editor believes he is the first to draw attention to the Clarke Papers, published by the Camden Society, wherein we read that on 3 July, 1647, Samuel Blacklock had an information against the committee of the London militia, and that on 28

December 1648, he was one of the sixteen who presented a protest to the generals, others being John Liburne and Richard Overton, both known in Baptist circles: Lawrence and like Blacklock are fairly well known in the publishing trade then, and in colonial emigration.

(15) Many of these people figure in the High Commission Court, as well be seen in the annotated list below. The most important of them are Thomas Kilcop, Mark Lucar, Thomas Munden, Thomas Sheppard, all of whom became Baptist leaders.

(11).\* January 9 added 16 1th month, understood John Cattope, George Denham, (as appears above, this was Jany 9th.) Nicholas Martin, Tho: Daomunt, Ailie Stanford Rich Colgrave Nath Matthon, Eliz Hutchinson, Mary Burch, John Croson, Sybilla Lees, John Woolmoore, thus 53 in all Those that ware so minded had communion 1644 together were become Seven Churches in London.<sup>11</sup> | Mr. Green with Cap Spencer had begun a Congregation ( 1639) in Clutched Fryers, to whom Paul Hobson joined who was now with many of that Church one of ye Seven.<sup>18</sup> These being much spoken against as unsound in (1644) Doctrine as if they ware Armenians, & also against Magistrates &c they joined together in a Confession, see ye notes of their Faith in fifty two Articles which gave at ye end of Confession.

Now we will take up the Transaction's account of the Jacob- Jessey pedobaptist church as follows:

### **The Jacob-Jessey Church, 1616-1678**

FROM the three fore-going papers, we can comprehend the early history of this remarkable church: about 1653 we get another glimpse of it from the correspondence with Hexham, and from 1669 to 1678 we get further insight from the Broadmead Records, both printed by the Hansard Knollys. Society. On the basis of these documents of the church itself, we may briefly tell its story, with touches from other contemporary sources.

It was founded during 1616 in London, where there were at least two other Separatist churches, the Ancient Church of 1592 and the General Baptist Church of 1609. Its sympathies were rather with the Puritans within the Church of England, than with either of these. Its pastor. Henry Jacob, published a Confession and a plea for toleration, but failed to obtain it, so resigned about 1622 intending to emigrate to Virginia. A second ex clergyman took charge in 1624. John Lathorp from Kent: in his time troubles arose both within and without; the latter were so serious when Laud came to supreme power that Lathorp agreed in emigrated, and several members went with him in 1634 to New England, where he founded the churches at Scituate and Barnstable. **The internal troubles arose with a member from Colchester begging them to renounce all fellowship with the parish churches, and in especial to repudiate the baptism they had there received.** They declined, and he left in 1630 with some others. But at the request of the Ancient Church they renewed their covenant. In 1633 another group left, including Henry Parker and Mark Lucar: these were reinforced by Richard Blount, Thomas Sheppard, and Samuel Eaton, a button-maker of St. Giles, who induced some of them to receive baptism

on profession of their faith at the hands of John Spilsbury. (Remember this is not form the KM- REP)

(Editor's Note, there were many additional Baptist churches in the London area dating back into the late 1,500s.)

In 1637 a third ex-clergyman took charge of the main stock. Henry Jessey had been deprived of his living in Yorkshire for non-conformity, had come to London in 1635 and had helped this church occasionally. He remained pastor till his death in 1633, by which the Jacob-Jessey Church, 1616-1678.

Until the power of Laud was broken, there were frequent arrests of the members, but that did not hinder great discussions and developments. Six members left almost at once to join Spilsbury, but the death of Eaton in 1639 *seems* to have brought about the reunion of some. In May 1640 a fresh division occurred, half forming a church under Barebone. That same year discussion arose whether baptism ought not to be immersion, and whether any other act could be so regarded. *The result was that in January 1641-2 some fifty members were immersed, and although Jessey promptly adopted immersion as the only act for dedicating infants, thence forward there was a further division and separate worship.* On the other hand, the church gained another ex-clergyman, Hanserd Knowles. and a young brewer's clerk called William Kiffen who was able to hold his own against the great Dr. Featly in open debate. (This is incorrect, they were Baptists a few years before this, REP) In 1643 Knowles raised the point whether infants bought to be baptized at all, and after months' debate both he and Kiffen left the church. During 1644 Kiffen's new church and six others joined in a Confession very explicit on all these points, which called forth prompt protest and argument from an ancient member of this church. In the middle of 1645 Jessey himself was baptized by Knowles. (These wrong dates contained in the Jessey Church Records have been corrected by the KM. However, there are other names given and they are very helpful. REP)

In 1647 and 1651 Jessey joined with Knowles. Kiffen and many other ministers, both Baptist and Pedobaptist, in issuing declarations as to the sobriety of their churches. (The Baptist Union writer is very incorrect here. They may have joined in the discussions but not in church membership. The writer should have read Kiffen's work on A Brief Remonstrance and his Communion. Kiffen left this Pedobaptist church in 1638 and never rejoined it. REP) But neither in 1646 nor in 1651 did he sign the Baptist Confession. In 1653 we find the church at home in Swan Alley off Cole-man Street, but having apparently few London friends, for it joined in a letter to Hexham with eight others on the Welsh borders, whose most prominent member was John Tombes. Jessey was sent that year by several churches to visit 36 congregations in the home counties; and he expounded his views on Mixed Communion both in 1650 and 1653. By this time he needed a colleague, and found one in George Barren. In the Bedfordshire district other Mixed Communion churches were growing, which learned to quote Jessey as justifying their practice. In April of 1657 some Baptist ministers of London begged Cromwell not to accept the title of King, and Jessey signed this request with Knollys, Spilsbury and many Others. In 1663 Jessey died, and in the troubles of the times the church declined, till Vavasor Powell owned it was but small. . In 1669 a member was dismissed to the Mixed Communion church at Broadmead, and the correspondence thus initiated carries us on one stage more. A fourth ex-clergyman, Thomas Hardcastle

from Yorkshire, was on trial for eldership, but Broadmead also wanted him. A letter of his on 10 March 1670-1. Pages 246, 247; Transactions.

**More from Transactions of Baptist Historical Society on Wapping Church,  
pages 188, 189.**

The most ancient of English Particular Baptist Churches is that which has just quitted Commercial Street. It claims 1633 as its date of origin—a reference to the fact that about that time John Spilsbury is known as pastor of a little company who renounced their parish baptism and pledged themselves anew. They met in Wapping, and presently obtained a home near the Coal Harbour, to which members reported from as far away as Watford. At Broad Street they built a meeting-house, where John Norcott ministered, then Hercules Collins, Edward Elliot, William Curtis, Clendon Dawkes, and Samuel Wilson. During his pastorate new premises were occupied in Rose Branch, Goodman's Fields—better known today as Prescott Street—though a few lingered in the old building for a year or two. From this new site went out a stream of ministers, to other churches, such as Benjamin Beddome, the writer of hymns, Josiah Thompson, the wealthy historian; and others of less fame. In 1752, trouble arose as to a new pastor, and those who favored James Fall left to establish a new cause in Little Alie Street. To the parent church presently came Samuel Burford from Lyme, who held the lot to 1768. His successor was Abraham Booth from Nottinghamshire; having been a General Baptist and having changed, he naturally adopted extreme views and became the great champion, not only of Baptist principles but of exaggerated Calvinism. When the influence of Andrew Fuller was leavening the denomination with more evangelistic views, the tradition Booth was upheld, and the church limited itself to supporting the educational movement, which resulted in the academy at Stepney, now housed in Regent's Park. Another home was found in Commercial Street, where a stately building testifies to the prominence of the church last century. A little faithful band has kept the flag flying, and friends in the Metropolitan Association were invited lately to the final meetings before the ancient church went forth, like Abraham, not knowing whether it should rest.

This ends my quoting the Transactions from the Baptist Union for a time.

In 1933, Spilsbury's old Wapping church, gathered in the early 1630s, published its own history. We will now take up some remarks from this interesting and valuable account.

**LONDON'S OLDEST BAPTIST CHURCH**  
**Wapping 1633—Walthamstow 1933**  
**BY**  
**ERNEST F. KEVAN**  
**London**  
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**CHAPTER II. HOW THE CHURCH BEGAN.**

THE circumstances under which this little Baptist group originated were of an extraordinary kind, and the founding of a Baptist Church under such hostile conditions constitutes a challenge to the quality of present-day Christianity.

First let the bare statement of the fact be given in the words of an old manuscript which has been attributed by some ancient historians to William Kiffen. William Kiffen joined the Church about the year 1638—five years after its formation—and so was one of the earliest members. This manuscript, commonly known as the Kiffen Manuscript, gives the following account.<sup>1</sup>

" There was a congregation of Protestant Dissenters of the independent Persuasion in London, gathered in the year 1616, whereof Mr. Henry Jacob was the first pastor; and after him succeeded Mr. John Lathorp, who was their minister at this time. In this society several persons, finding

(1) All quotations throughout the book are inserted exactly as found in respect of both spellings and punctuation.
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that the congregation kept not to their first principle of separation, and being also convinced that baptism was not to be administered to infants, but such only as professed faith in Christ, desired that they might be dismissed from that communion, and allowed to form a distinct congregation, in such order as was most agreeable to their own sentiments.

"The church, considering that they were now grown very numerous, and so more than could in these times of persecution conveniently meet together, and believing also that those persons acted from a principle of conscience and not obstinacy, agreed to allow them the liberty they desired, and that they should be constituted a distinct church; which was performed the 12th of Sept. 1633. And as they believed that baptism was not rightly administered to infants, so they looked upon the baptism they had received in that age as invalid : whereupon most or all of them received a new baptism. Their minister was Mr. John Spilsbury. What number they were is uncertain, because in the mentioning of the names of about twenty men and women, it is added, with divers others.

"In the year 1638, Mr. William Kiffen, Mr. Thomas Wilson, and others, being of the same judgment, were upon their request dismissed to the said Mr. Spilsbury's congregation."

(The above is from The Kiffen Manuscript, not the Jessey Church Records. Mr. Kevin distinguished correctly between the two, most have not, REP.) He continues:

This Independent church in Southwark, which was founded in 1616, is the keystone to the whole situation, and deserves a little reference. As observed in the previous chapter, the members of this group, like many others, separated for conscientious reasons from the Church of England.

The perils and persecutions of the time made the gathering together of a large company of worshippers unadvisable and dangerous. Hence, this consideration, in addition to the brotherly difference of view about baptism, removed any hesitation there might have been about giving friendly permission to

**the Baptists to form themselves into a distinct body. (Those whom he is calling Baptists, were only Baptists in faith, not yet in order and practice, REP)**

Now it is from the records of this ancient church of 1616 that further details are forthcoming in relation to the forming of this Baptist Church. The Independent church had three ministers only: Henry Jacob, John Lathorp and Henry Jessey. It was in the time of John Lathorp that the Baptist members were dismissed. A year later Mr. J. Lathorp went to New England. Henry Jessey was his successor. This **Henry Jessey compiled a private record of the experiences of the church to which he was called to minister.** These papers of his, now known as "The Jessey Papers," were handed on to his friends, who were Baptists, and so the actual facts have been preserved in the words of eyewitnesses.

After describing the coming of John Lathorp, Jessey suddenly transports the reader into the stern and hard realities of the times in which these brave souls lived and worshipped. Here are his words;

**"1632. the 2d Month (called April) ye 29th Day being ye Lords Day, the Church was seized upon by Tomlinson, ye Bps. Pursevant, they ware mett in ye house of Hump: Bernet, Brewers Clark in Black: Fryers, he being no member or hearing abroad, At which time 18 were not committed but scaped or ware not then present." About 42 were all taken & their names given up. Some ware not committed, as Mrs. Bernet, Mr. Lathorp, W. Parker, Mrs. Allen &c. Several ware committed to the Bps Prison called then the New Prison in [illegible] (now a merchants house again) & thence Some to ye Clink,<sup>2</sup> some to ye Gathouse, & some that thought to have escaped he joyned to them, being in Prison together viz John Lathorp, Mr. Sargent, Widd. Ferne Sam How Sam House Sister House Bro. Arnold, Mr. Wilson, John Woddin, John Milburn, Marke Lucar, Mr Crafton, Mr Granger, Henry Parker, Mr Jones, H. Dod, deceased, a Prisoner, Mr Barbone, Mr. Jacob, Mr Lemar. Elizab. Milburn, about 26 committed ye 12th of ye 2nd Month (called May 12th) being ye Lords Day. Just a fortnight after was ye Ancient Church so seized upon & two of them committed to be fellow Prisoners with these. The Lord thus tryed & experienced them & their Friends & foes ye Space of some two Years, some only under Baill, some in Hold: in which" time ye Lord Wonderfully magnified his Name &**

**1. In that time ye Lord opened their mouths so to speak at ye High Commission & Pauls & in private even ye weake Women as their Subtill.**

**2 "the Clink was an old prison for keepers of brothels who exceeded the licence given them by the bishops of Winchester. . . . At Westminster, over two gateways into the Abby precincts, was the Gate-house,, very convenient for both Star Chamber and High Commission."**

refreshed their Spirits abundantly, for & malicious Adversaries ware not able to resist but ware ashamed.

**2. In this Space ye Lord gave them So great favour in ye Eyes of their Keepers yet they suffered any friends to come to them and they edified &**

comforted one another on ye Lords Days breaking bread &c.

3. By their Holy & Gracious carriage in their Sufferings, he so convinced others yet they obtained much more favour in the Eyes of all Such generally as feared God then formerly, so that many ware very kind & helpful to them, contributing to their Necessities, some weekly sending Meat &c, to them.

4. Their Keepers found so sure in their promises that they had freedom to go home, or about their Trades, or business when soever they desired, & set their time, & say they would then return it was enough without the charges of one to attend them.

5. In this very time of their restraint ye Word was so far from bound, & ye Saints so far from being scared from the Ways of God that even then many were in Prison added to ye Church, viz (here follow fourteen names)

6. Not one of those that ware taken did recant or turn back from the truth, through fear or through flattery, or cunning Slightes but all ware ye more strengthened thereby. . . . After ye Space of about 2 Years of the sufferings & Patience of these Saints they ware released upon Bail (some remaining so to this day<sup>3</sup> as Mr Jones &c, though never called on) only to Mr Lathorp & Mr Grafton they refused to shew such favour, they ware to remain in Prison without release." (This is why I have said elsewhere that the supposed theory that Richard Blount went back during persecutions is invalid. REP)

This record in Jessey's own words has been given at such length because it is a contemporary account of the very people who were the first members of this historic Baptist Church. The historical value of the above narration is attested by State Papers. This story of the trial and imprisonment of these godly people is confirmed by the official records of the Star Chamber and High Commission. These were the infamous courts by which these Christian folk were condemned and before which " even ye weak Women " were able to speak so that " their Subtill & malicious Adversaries were not able to resist but were ashamed." These State Papers give some names which Jessey omits, such as Samuel Eaton, who will be noticed again.

### Names of the First Members

The continuation of Henry Jessey's narrative gives an account of the formation of this Baptist Church. His story, of course, is from the point of view of the Independent church that amicably dismissed those members. This is what Jessey says:

"1633. There having been much discussing these denying Truth of ye Parish Churches. & ye 3 Church being now become so large yet it might be prejudicial,<sup>4</sup> these following desired dismission that they might become an Entire Church, & further ye Communion of those Churches in Order amongst themselves, which at last was granted to them & performed Sept. 12. 1633 viz Henry Parker & Wife, Widd : Fearne, Mark Luker, [Green] Hatmaker, Mr. Wilson, Mary Milburn, Tho: Allen, Jo : Milburn, Arnold.

To These Joyned Rich: Blount, (Remember these are from the Jessey Records-REP) Tho: Hubert, Rich. Tredwell & his Wife Kath :, John Trimber, Wm Jennings &

Samuel Eaton , Mary Greenway,— Mr. Eaton with Some others receiving a further Baptism. " Others joyned to them."

It would appear by the manner of expression here, and by other external evidences, that those in the second group joined slightly later than the first nine. Mr. Eaton, above-mentioned, was in prison till 24th April, 1634, and was again imprisoned on 5th May, 1636. He must, therefore, have been baptised by Spilsbury between those dates.

These seventeen names, with addition of the unnamed hatmaker, are the names of the first members who constituted this Baptist Church. How wonderful that, in spite of all the persecution of those days and the consequent secrecy in which these believing people had to work, their names are preserved! These are the pioneers of Baptist privileges.

(4)To their safety from spies

Shall the sacrifice and suffering by which they won those privileges be despised? The freedom for which they fought, the principles they held, and the faith that possessed them are the precious heritage of Britishers to day.

#### THE CHURCH FORMED IN PRISON.

But at this point a little reflection reveals a fact which should create a thrill of admiration in the heart of every Baptist living.

It will be remembered that the capture of the members of the Independent church at their meeting, and their consequent imprisonment, *occurred in April-May, 1632*. The length of their imprisonment is described as two years. This carried them into 1634. The Kiffen Manuscript and the Jessey Records say that the Baptist Church was founded on **September 12th, 1633**.

A simple comparison of the list of original members of this Baptist Church with the list of prisoners in the first extract from Jessey's papers will show that when these people resolved to be a Baptist Church seven of them were at that very moment in the Clink and the Gatehouse Prison. These are the noble seven : HENRY PARKER, WIDOW FRARNE, MARK LUCAR, MR WILSON, JOHN MILBURN, BRO. ARNOLD, SAMUEL EATON.

Perhaps some of the other members were also among the forty-two who "*were taken,*" as Jessey recounts, and who are likewise to be honored for their *steadfastness and faith*. What courage is here! There is an old motto which surely moved and sustained these brave hearts—" Rather Deathe than false of faythe."

Men and women in prison because of their desire to worship God according to their consciences, illegal even as Independents, in the eyes of the law with no right to exist, are here, during the very term of their imprisonment, daring to take a further step by repudiating the State church in its practice of Infant Baptism! Imprisoned in the foulest of dungeons, they fear not to form their purpose of adherence to the Scripture, in defiance of cruel intolerance, and to place themselves one

step farther away from conformity to the wishes of their most bitter persecutors!

Very shortly after their formation it would appear that John Spilsbury came to them as their first Pastor. This has led some to call John Spilsbury the "Founder of the Baptists," but such a statement is not strictly accurate. (This may be an incorrect statement as John Spilsbury was their minister already, REP)

Below is another passage from the anonymous Manuscripts which have been attributed by some to William Kiffen and by others to Henry Jessey.

"1633. Sundry of ye Church whereof Mr Jacob & Mr John Lathorp had been Pastors, being dissatisfied with ye Churches owning of English Parishes to be true Churches desired dismission & Joined together among themselves, as Mr Henry Parker, Mr Tho. Shepard, Mr Sam. Eaton, Marke Luker, & others with whom Joyned Mr Wm Kiffen. "1638. Mr Tho: Wilson, Mr Pen, & II. Pen. & 3 more being convinced that Baptism was not for Infants, but professed Beleivers joyned with Mr. Jo: Spilsbury ye Churches favour being desired therein."

John Spilsbury, by the above reference, seems at this moment to have been sufficiently prominent as the lender of this Church for it to be called by his name. Thus, in this remarkable way, on 12th SEPTEMBER, 1633, began the Church's long career, which has now run into three hundred years. This ends my quotation from this remarkable *History of London's Oldest Baptist Church*.

This statement shows that John Spilsbury's Church may have been a gathered church when all this was this happening.

Kevan's point that this old church was formed in prison is very interesting and seems to be true up to a point. This could well explain how that John Spilsbury and Sam Eaton came together. If such were the case, then it would follow that John Spilsbury was already in prison. The Old Church may have already existed and these newer members were simply received and added unto it even while in Prison. We do know that later, when Spilsbury left London, about 1653, if was due to the continuing threat of persecution.

There is no record of any self-baptism in this prison, nor anywhere else for that matter. If such had occurred, while in prison, the pedobaptists would not have let it pass, but would have made much fun of it.

### The Connection Between the Wapping and Newport Churches

While there are many unanswered questions concerning these historic events we can established one important factor, *that is, the connection between the Newport church and the Wapping church*. This connection is further confirmed in Dr. Clark's *Ill News from New England*. In this he and Holmes address the church that walks with Mr. Kiffen and Mr. Spilsbury.

### Returning to Mr. Asher's Narrative

Returning to Dr. Asher's narrative, we find his very interesting account of Clarke's and Lucar's outreaches involving preaching and baptizing. We now take up from Dr. Asher's remarks on page 49:

By the latest in 1649 an active Baptist crusade was begun by the Baptists at Newport, Rhode Island, under the leadership of missionary-pastor John Clarke and his companion in the ministry, Elder Mark Lucar. In that year both Clarke and Lucar were at Seekonk, Massachusetts, not far from Providence, Rhode Island, conducting an evangelistic missionary crusade. It was reported that they won several converts and baptized more than a dozen candidates. Roger Williams wrote to Winthrop about the event on December 10, 1649, in which Williams stated:

At Seekonk a great many have lately concurred with Mr. John Clarke and our Providence men about the point of a new Baptism, and the manner by immersion; and Mr. John Clarke hath been there lately (and Mr. Lucar,) (In the Graves and Adlam's History, Williams calls Mr. Luker an Elder in Mr. Clarke's Church- REP)) and hath dipped them. I believe their practice comes nearer the first practice of our great Founder Christ Jesus; then other practices of religion do.<sup>1</sup>

The expression "a new baptism" sparked controversial notions. As understood by Winthrop, it seemed that the new baptism had to do with one performed in a different manner and for a different purpose than the original act.<sup>2</sup> To some it was simply a repeated or rebaptism performance.<sup>3</sup> A more probable twentieth century interpretation of the account would be like the following: "Since those baptized had been sprinkled as infants without making a profession of faith, a great number at Seekonk have recently agreed with Clarke and our Providence men about the act of rebaptizing on a profession of faith and performing it by immersion the candidate."

To be sure, this agrees with Clarke's account of his practice as he explained it to the Massachusetts magistrates, when they accused him in 1651 of branding their practice of baptizing infants by sprinkling as null and void. The cause for all the verbal exchanges that erupted over Clarke's practice stemmed from Massachusetts Governor John Endicott's allegation against Clarke when he was arrested. Fortunately Clarke recorded Endicott's charge in his book, III Newes, as follows:

You affirmed that you did never Re-baptize any, yet did acknowledge you did Baptize such as were Baptized before, and thereby did necessarily deny the Baptism that was before to be Baptism... And also did in the Court deny the lawfulness of Baptizing of Infants.<sup>4</sup>

Since we have investigated the question of Elder Mark Luker and found him to come from the old Wapping church in London, one of John Spilsbury's co workers, we will now turn our attention to the matter of a "new baptism."

**What is New Baptism?** Briefly there are two concepts relating new baptism.

1. Some meant by it rebaptism, or the repudiation of any former baptism, infant's baptism or believer's baptism renounced for any one of different reasons. For example, the General and Particular Baptists rebaptized each other in the main until close to the 1700s.
2. Some have since meant by it that this was an entire new baptism, meaning a new subject and a new mode. This is Whitsittism's revisionist interpretation and without any historic justification. It concerns itself with the restoration of adult baptism by immersion.

When new converts received a "new baptism," they were baptized in water, or received gospel baptism upon a profession of their faith in Christ. This is a good time to make the following summary.

## Apostolic Baptism

Apostolic Baptism had to do with immersion of believers in water by an administrator who also could give the outward gifts of the Holy Spirit, that is, the visible manifestations as did the apostles. It is baptism in water and in the Spirit at the same time. This is why many denied the validity of Baptism, because there was no baptism in the Spirit in their act of water baptism. C. Blackwood wrote on this in his *Apostolic Baptism* about 1645, and tried to clear up the ideas that Holy Spirit baptism was not involved. John Spilsbury deals with this in part 1 of his *God's Ordinances*, 1646, but not as clearly as it should be for we must know the circumstances involved to have a clear understanding of the concept. The best treatment of this is found in Thomas Kilcop's *Seeker's Supplied*, London; 1646. We have no plans to modernize Blackwood's work as he was a renegade Baptist, that is, he took state pay to preach and was disowned by the Particular Baptists.

Many persons left the Pedobaptist churches and came to the Baptists in an effort to secure the great apostolic baptism. When they did not receive the extraordinary baptism in the Holy Spirit with their water baptism, they left the Baptists and went into either Seekerism or Quakerism. It was not a question of the invalidity of Baptist administrators due to an improper church order, but because they did not give the expected baptism in the Holy Spirit with their water baptism.

### In Conclusion

When we consider the various Particular Baptist outreaches into other parts of England and even into New England *during the 1630s*, it becomes evident beyond a reasonable doubt that they did know about and did practice the immersion of adult believers and preached the true gospel and practiced the true ordinances as toleration gave them an open door.

It is further evident that the many of the Pedobaptists were not yet aware of this practice in 1640. The reason for the Blount mission was that some of these Pedobaptists were unawares of a proper administrator of adult immersion of believers rather than the absence of such an administrator.

It becomes further evident, beyond a reasonable doubt that John Spilsbury was already an able minister in 1633, and that several persecuted dissenters knew about him and went over to him and his congregation at that time.

The question now is, how did they know about him? London was then a large city and the methods of communications were very limited. How did they know about him except for the Prison confinements. Due to the prison confinements, either with Spilsbury being confined, or others from the old church, contact with Pedobaptist dissenters became established. Word spread among the underground or Prison ministries and cellmates that John Spilsbury was somehow involved in a further work of following Christ than the Pedobaptists had yet experienced.

This knowledge seems to have passed back and forth in a very private manner among the prisoners. Some became converted to the full Anabaptist position and therefore received a further baptism, a new baptism, or a rebaptism. These three terms all describe the one dipping of adult believers then being practiced even by the prison inmates.

Let us also remember that the keepers would allow these Anabaptists and others great liberty to hold services and even to leave their prison and hold services and then return. During these harsh times the Pedobaptist brethren, already Particular Baptists in faith, met the orderly Particular Baptists, received a new baptism or rebaptism and joined with them.

This seems to be the manner in which the Old Wapping Church either became enlarged or had its first beginnings. I would say it became enlarged in this manner, for at this time John Spilsbury was already a well know Particular Baptist ministers and he did have a congregation that the newly converted brethren joined.

Perhaps someday the entire remaining prison records of that area and era will become known and studied carefully. They would reveal much about our older spiritual brethren. Until then, we trust this account will supply several missing pieces.

Let us remember in closing that we are not the first to suggest that the old Wapping Church either began or became enlarged during these Prison times and experiences. The very history the old church published is the source for our conclusions. Their very pastor then, drew these conclusions and shared them with all who would read his account. In my opinion is he correct in his major premises.

*Finish*