

## Baptist History

[http://www.baptisthistory.org.uk/basicpage.php?contents=home&page\\_title=Home%20Page](http://www.baptisthistory.org.uk/basicpage.php?contents=home&page_title=Home%20Page)

### First sermon at Somersham Baptist Church

Mr Fuller, of Kettering, preached an excellent sermon at Bluntisham the preceding evening, and the next morning a very encouraging one at Somersham, from Zech. iv. 10, 'Who hath despised the day of small things ? ' The congregation was so large in the afternoon, that it was thought expedient to have the service in a close. Mr Ragsdell, of Thrapston, preached from Matt. vi. 10, ' Thy Kingdom come.' The sermon in the evening was by Mr Edmonds, of Cambridge, from Psalm lxxiv. 21, ' Arise, God, plead thine own cause.'"

### Coxe Feary and the awakening in Bluntisham

**FROM "A CLOUD OF WITNESSES" BY MICHAEL HAYKIN IN  
THE EVANGELICAL TIMES ONLINE; MARCH 2002  
REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION**

Coxe Feary (1759-1822) sustained a long pastorate in the village of Bluntisham, about fifteen miles north of Cambridge, England. He was raised in the Church of England, but during his teens became dissatisfied with the irreligious conduct of worshippers at the parish church.

He considered attending a Baptist church in a nearby village — perhaps the work at Needingworth, which had been founded in 1767. But he found the church consisted of 'narrow-minded' hyper-Calvinists, who pronounced 'destruction on all who did not believe their creed'.

For a while he attended a Quaker congregation in Earith, another nearby village, because their views accorded with his belief in the freedom of the human will and the saving merit of good works.

#### CONVERSION

In 1780 he read James Hervey's *Theron and Aspasio* (1755), a massive defence of Calvinism. The book greatly challenged Feary's religious notions and he was deeply disturbed by its arguments.

Offended, he put the book down without finishing it. But two years later he felt constrained to pick it up again and give it a fair hearing. The result was his glorious conversion.

He was seized with a passion for the salvation of the lost in his village. For instance, he wrote the following plain words to a neighbour in 1783: 'I must beg you to attend to the Scriptures, and to pray to God that he may enlighten your mind by his Holy Spirit, that you may see the gracious privileges contained therein.

'They, my friend, are the only rule for us to walk by — they testify of Christ — point him out as the only procuring cause of a sinner's acceptance with God, and his enjoyment of eternal felicity.

'He hath made peace through the blood of his cross, and through that blood we have redemption. It is with regret of mind, my friend, that I think of your carelessness, for I have a great desire for your everlasting welfare, which has been my chief motive for writing to you.

'Therefore, examine yourself impartially — consider how your affairs stand with God, and see if you have an interest in the merits of Christ; for if you have not (I dare not flatter you) you are in a state of death.

'I hope, therefore, you will say: "What must I do to be saved" I shall reply: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved".'

## **AWAKENING**

The awakening in Bluntisham took place during 1784-1785. By 1784 Feary was sitting under the evangelical preaching of Henry Venn (1724-1797) at Yelling, about twelve miles away.

That same year he came across the works of George Whitefield (1714-1770) in a bookshop in St Ives. What is amazing is that he had never heard of Whitefield or his remarkable ministry.

So taken was he with the sermons of the great Evangelist that, the very same evening, he read one of them — 'What think ye of Christ?' — aloud to a small gathering of shepherds and farm labourers in his house.

It must have made an impact, for the following evening a man of means in the village, a certain John Kent, arrived with several others requesting Feary to read another sermon. Flustered by the group, and afraid of being considered 'a Methodist preacher', Feary refused.

But the impromptu congregation would not take no for an answer and Feary relented. A poor woman was so deeply moved by Whitefield's words that she urged Feary to read yet a third time at her house the following evening.

Feary agreed on the condition that she would tell no one. But the thing could not be hid. When he arrived at the house it was packed with neighbours.

## **FOUNDATION**

Feary continued reading sermons in that woman's home throughout the winter of 1784-1785. In the spring of 1785 they had to move to a larger home to accommodate the numbers attending.

A genuine spiritual awakening gripped the village, as many were moved to ask that old, but utterly vital, question: 'What must I do to be saved?' This work of revival laid the foundation of the Calvinistic Baptist work in Bluntisham.

Eventually, Feary ran out of sermons to read. So it was that he ventured to expound a section of Scripture himself.

A barn had been fitted out for the congregation by John Kent and, on 28 December 1786, Coxe Feary and twenty-five other believers joined together to form a Congregationalist church.

They came from a number of the surrounding villages, including Colne, Somersham, and Woodhurst. Feary was chosen as their first pastor.

## **BECOMING BAPTIST**

Over the next few years, friendship with Robert Robinson (1735-1790), the well-known Baptist of Cambridge and author of the hymn 'Come, Thou fount of every blessing', led to Feary's embracing of Baptist views.

But it may also have been this friendship which led Feary to imbibe deistic ideas, for in his final years Robinson did not maintain a firm grasp on orthodox doctrines.

Feary recalled this period of his life — the early 1790s — thus: 'I appeared infatuated with a desire of wild speculations which ... soon produced a kind of scepticism, which led me to look on all Christian experience as enthusiasm [fanaticism], and was ready to treat it with the utmost contempt, as cant and hypocrisy.

'This brought a damp upon my soul, chilled my affections for God, and love for the souls of my people. In this state of mind, my devotional exercises were, at times, very formal and flat.

'Preaching became dry, and I believe very uninteresting. No conversation suited me, but that which turned upon Politics or Theological controversy. In short, I appeared to myself to be making rapid strides to Infidelity and Deism.'

### AVOIDING DEISM

It is amazing that a man who had known revival at the beginning of his ministry should sink to such depths! But by the close of 1791 Feary had become alarmed at what was happening to him.

He was brought, he said, 'to lament my case before God, who very justly might have given me up to strong delusions to believe a lie, as a sure sign of future destruction.

'But, adored be his holy name, he has caused the riches of his grace to be manifested in me, the chief of sinners, by bringing me back to his fold again.

'I am, beyond the shadow of doubt, confident, that salvation is entirely of grace, and that Jehovah will have mercy because he will have mercy.'

### A USEFUL PREACHER

Eighteenth-century Calvinistic Baptists, like many of their fellow Dissenters, regarded preaching as the pre-eminent aspect of public worship. But not everything that went by the name of preaching pleased them.

They wanted plainness and simplicity in preaching. Hercules Collins (d.1702), the pastor of Wapping Baptist Church, London, from 1676 till his death, explained: 'Rhetorical flashes are like painted glass in a window, that makes a great show, but darkens the light...

'The Prophets and Apostles generally spoke in the vulgar and common languages which the ordinary people understood: They did not only speak to the understanding of a king upon the throne, but to the understanding of the meanest subject.'

Writing in the autumn of 1802 to a friend studying at the Bristol Baptist Academy (the only Baptist seminary in England at the time) Feary counselled: 'I hope you make a point of studying two sermons every week, that you disuse your notes as much as possible in the pulpit, and that you constantly aim to be the *useful*, more than the *refined*, preacher'.

Feary explained that he was not advocating the use of 'vulgar' speech or common slang in sermons. Rather, he wanted his friend 'to commend [himself] to every man's conscience in the sight of God, and to the understanding of [his] hearers'.

In other words, his sermons should be easily understood by all his hearers, so that he would be a 'useful' preacher and 'an able minister of the New Testament'.

### PERMANENT CHANGE

Such a minister was Feary. After his death in 1822, Newton Bosworth (1776-1848), a well-known Baptist of the era who eventually emigrated to Canada, said of him: 'Mr. Feary was in many respects, an extraordinary man.

'The moral reformation which, by the blessing of God, he effected in his native village, and its neighbourhood, and which must have afforded him, in the retrospect, unspeakable delight, is an event to which under all its circumstances not many parallel cases can be adduced.

'Without education, except in the slightest elements of it ... he produced a most remarkable and permanent change in a great part of the population around him; commencing his labours without a single follower, continuing them, with an ardent, yet well-tempered zeal, amidst alternate hopes and fears, successes and discouragements, and ending by the formation of a flourishing church and congregation — the latter amounting to seven or eight hundred persons.

'If, as Scriptures assure us, "he that winneth souls is wise", Coxe Feary's reputation as a wise man cannot be disputed.'

## Church History

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To set the scene, we need to go back to England in the 1650s when there were very few people who were not "Church of England". In Bluntisham, there were just a few Quaker families and they had a place for public worship, but their group was declining. Later in the century, three or four Baptist families had occasional preaching at their houses.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the state of religion in the established Church was considered deplorable. Many clergy were incapable of ministering about spiritual things and there was widespread clerical absenteeism. In many parishes, there was not even a curate. However, there were soon to be many encouraging signs of new life.

In 1733 in Oxford, the 'Holy Club' was making its influence felt among many men in training for the ministry. John and Charles Wesley were beginning their work. And when in 1736, George Whitefield was ordained, the Evangelical Revival may be said to have begun. Among those influenced by Wesley and Whitefield was Henry Venn, vicar of Huddersfield, who, though himself remaining an Anglican minister, was also to plant many Congregational churches in Yorkshire. In 1771 he became rector of Yelling, about 12 miles southwest of Bluntisham, where his church became a centre of evangelicalism.

### COXE FEARY

A further account of Feary's life and work can be found [here](#).



In 1784, Coxe Feary (1759 - 1822), a Bluntisham farmer, took up a recommendation to hear Venn at Yelling. The preaching impressed him so much that he stopped attending Bluntisham parish church and went every Sunday to Yelling. Feary's neighbours often enquired about this and it gave him opportunities for speaking to them about the salvation of their souls and the advantages of evangelical preaching. The result was that some of them accompanied him to Yelling to hear Venn.

In the autumn of 1784, Feary purchased "The life and sermons of Whitefield", and the same evening read one of the sermons, *What think ye of Christ*, to his shepherd Zach Furley, his labourer Biobert Pichard, and his friend William Asplan. The next evening, a number of poor people came with John Kent, a gentleman of the village, to hear him read a sermon. He was so embarrassed at the idea of reading before so many people and the shame of being thought of as a Methodist preacher, that he refused! But they told him that they would stay until he did read to them, and so eventually he gave in, and read the same sermon to them. One of the poor women begged him to read a sermon at her house the next evening and he promised to do so, on condition that she did not make it known. When he arrived, however, he found the house filled with people.

### REVIVAL!

Feary tells us of a "profound attention and deep seriousness with which the people received the glad tidings of salvation." He continued reading to people in the same cottage throughout that winter of 1784/85. The cottage was likely to be one of four that stood at the junction of the High Street and the St Ives road.

In the spring of 1785 they moved into the next house as their numbers had grown. Here, for the first time, Feary found courage to pray with them. The company was still increasing and they opened a still larger house in the village, where they met two, three or four evenings a week.

Revd Charles Simeon (a leader of the influential 'Clapham Sect,' and later, the co-founder with Venn and others, of the Church Missionary Society), preached at Feary's house at five o'clock one morning that summer. So many people attended that Simeon, standing outside, addressed his hearers through an open door and window. On the same spot, Feary used to stand, surrounded by the people, as he read and spoke to them.

Coxe Feary had kept Venn updated with the situation at Bluntisham and Venn encouraged him in this work. In the summer of 1785, Venn came over from Yelling and John Kent offered the use of his barn for the meeting. Subsequently Kent allow the barn to be used permanently as a meeting place, and it was fitted with a few simple furnishings. By the summer of 1786, with over four hundred people meeting regularly to hear him, Feary was still reading Whitefield's and others sermons and occasionally attempted himself the exposition of some Scripture passage.

#### A CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH FORMED

Feary was not keen to become a dissenting minister separated from the established church. He put some effort into encouraging the parish church to appoint a Mr Houseman as the curate, but the rector refused to consider the proposal. Realising that there was no way forward, and "desiring to walk together in the order and fellowship of the Gospel", the group examined the principles of Dissent and sought advice on forming themselves into an independent church.

On 28 December 1786, a public meeting was held in the barn, when, in the presence of a large congregation, Coxe Feary with twenty-five others, thirteen women and twelve men, gave themselves "to the Lord and to one another, to walk together in fellowship".



*A memorial plaque can be seen to the left of the main stage.*

The next year the congregation was recognised as a Baptist Church with Coxe Feary as it's first pastor and the church appointed four deacons: William Asplan of Bluntisham, William Barley of Earith, and Robert Leeds and William Carter of Colne.



## Somersham

Coxe Feary first preached at Somersham in May 1786 and by 1812 a Meeting House had been built - opened by the influential Andrew Fuller from Kettering. Eventually, with Feary in failing health, the Somersham congregation formed an independent church

<http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/robert-walker-dixon/a-century-of-village-nonconformity-at-bluntisham-hunts-1787-1887--with-intro-ala/page-17-a-century-of-village-nonconformity-at-bluntisham-hunts-1787-1887--with-intro-ala.shtml>  
CHAPTER XXVI.

SOMERSHAM, COLNE AND WOODHURST.

Mr Coxe Feary in his "Memorials" writes: "1786, May

17th. This evening I walked to Somersham, and for the first time preached there, from **Ephes. ii. 13**. The barn was very full, my mind was in some degree at liberty, the people very serious, and I hope the Lord was with us of a truth." For some time meetings were held in the barn, till, their numbers increasing, the friends there decided to have a regular place of worship, and we are told by Mr Audley "Mr Feary having several members and friends at Somersham, two miles from Bluntisham, to whom he preached lectures, they were desirous of a more comfortable place than that in which they had worshipped for their occasional meetings. Ground therefore was purchased, and a very neat meeting-house erected, which was opened in the spring of 1812. Mr Fuller, of Kettering, preached an excellent sermon at Bluntisham the preceding evening, and the next morning a very encouraging one at Somersham, from Zech. iv. 10, 'Who hath despised the day of small things ? ' The congregation was so large in the afternoon, that it was thought expedient to have the service in a close. Mr Ragsdell, of Thrapston, preached from Matt. vi. 10, ' Thy Kingdom come.' The sermon in the evening was by Mr Edmonds, of Cambridge, from Psalm lxxiv. 21, ' Arise, God, plead thine own cause.'"

#### SOMERSHAM, COLNE AND WOODHURST. 243

It appears that the zealous Baptist minister of Needingworth, Mr Thomas Ladson, previous to this, had frequently visited Somersham and continued to do so till his death, preaching in houses opened for him. When he died, the persons who attended his services appear chiefly to have joined the Bluntisham congregation under Mr Feary. Mr Ladson was a High Calvinist, and is reputed to have said, " A man under peace has no more to do with the law than a dead man with his old shoes." This was received as though intended in the debased antinomian sense, and not in its original and Apostolic meaning " Therefore ye are no longer under the law, but under grace."

When Mr Ladson first held meetings at Somersham, the resident clergyman was much annoyed, and summoned him to appear at the Huntingdon Assizes for holding a conventicle and creating a disturbance, but Ladson being protected by the " Act of Toleration," which had recently come into force, the petty persecution fell to the ground. The Curate's action appears to have strengthened Mr Ladson's cause, for shortly afterwards a cottage at the bottom of Church Lane was converted

into a permanent meeting-house for his followers. A grave-yard attached to this meeting-house is still in existence, being probably one of the smallest in the kingdom. The "Act of Toleration" alluded to as having recently come into force was that modification of the legal disabilities under which dissenters had laboured imposed by Queen Elizabeth and by the " Act of Uniformity " and the "Test and Corporation Acts." This "modification" became law in 1779 just ninety years after the other modifications of these Elizabethan and Stuart penal statutes, which modification was enacted in the reign

162

#### 244 SOMERSHAM, COLNE AND WOODHURST.

of William and Mary, and was called " The Act of Toleration." Before 1779 all Dissenting preachers and teachers were required to take oaths and subscribe before a general or quarter session all the Articles of Religion excepting the thirty-fourth and fifty-sixth, or neglecting to do so, were liable to the penalties of the " Act of Uniformity " and the " Conventicle " and " Five Mile Acts" of Charles II. The names of all subscribers to these Articles were required to be registered. Dr Doddridge was summoned by a clergyman for non-compliance with the provisions under the " Test Act " respecting Dissenting Teachers, but the prosecution was stopped by order of George II., who declared that he would have no prosecution for conscience sake during his reign. It was fortunate for Mr Ladson that he was protected by the new " modification " against the persecuting intolerance of the Curate.

The congregation at Somersham still continued a branch of the Bluntisham church, but in the year 1818 became a separate community. Its independence came about in this way. In that year Mr Coxe Feary was seized with paralysis, and was so ill that he was obliged to give up active work, and the church at Bluntisham had to get preaching supplies, one of whom they chose for their new minister. An earlier supply Mr Joseph Belsher being much liked by the Somersham part of the Bluntisham congregation, they, to the number of fourteen, requested their dismission, in order to form themselves into a separate church of the same faith and order. With this request the church at Bluntisham complied. Somersham became consequently a separate church ; and having chosen Mr Belsher for their pastor, they addressed an

affectionate letter to the church at Bluntisham, in which,

SOMERSHAM, COLNE AND WOODHURST. 245

among other things, they say, " It would afford us pleasure, and give to the world a proof of your regard, if you would permit our esteemed friend, your pastor, to take a part in the solemnities of our Ordination, on the 17th March, 1819." Mr Feary was incapable of attending, but Mr Green (Mr Feary's co-pastor) went, and gave the charge to Mr Belsher.

THE BAPTIST MAGAZINE, VOLUME 11 P215 JANUARY 1819 BY BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

**SOMERSHAM, HUNTINGDONSHIRE.**  
In March, 1813, a new meeting-house was opened in this populous village,\* in connexion with the Baptist church at Bluntisham, under the pastoral care of Mr. Cox Feary, until October last, when it appearing that the infirmities of this excellent man were not likely to be so far removed as to allow him again to engage in active life, twelve members, residing in Somersham, requested their dismission, to form a separate church, which was acceded to by the church at Bluntisham; and, March 10, 1819, Mr. Joseph Belcher, a member of the church in Newhall-street, Birmingham, was ordained to the pastoral office over them. Reading of the scriptures and prayer, Rev. Mr. Shepherd. Introductory address, Rev. Mr. Manning. Ordination prayer, Rev. Mr. Howlett. Charge, Galatians i. 10, Rev. Mr. Green, late of Dereham, co-pastor with Mr. Feary. Address to the people, 1 Thess. iii. 8, Rev. Mr. Ragsdell.

#### John Ingle? 1819

John Ingle was the son of John Ingle, a Baptist minister of Somersham, Huntingdonshire, England. He, his wife, and five children, immigrated to the United States in 1818, stayed awhile at Princeton, Indiana, and in 1819, settled in Vanderburgh County, Indiana. His son, John Ingle, Jr., was born in 1812 at Somersham, England. He was a lawyer, president of a railroad, a coal mine owner, and community leader in Evansville, Indiana.

John Ingle (1788–1874) immigrated from Somersham, England, to America in 1818. He settled near Saundersville (now Inglefield) in Vanderburgh County where he farmed and served as the town's postmaster from 1823–69.



Sources: A Guide to Manuscripts of the Indiana Historical Society and Indiana State Library, Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society. p. 100. General and Reference Collection Z1281 .P85 1986.

The collection consists primarily of correspondence of Ingle and his wife, Martha, with their family in England, 1813–69. The letters discuss a variety of subjects including the differences between life in America and England, the development of Southern Indiana, conditions in England, the family business, and economic, religious, and political matters. Also included is John Ingle's description of his trip from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Indiana, and his visit to Morris Birbeck's Illinois settlement in 1818. There also are letters from the Ingles' son, John, Jr., to his English relatives, 1834–37. ([www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org) [<http://www.indianahistory.org/>](http://www.indianahistory.org))

# INDIANA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY

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## The Coming of the English to Indiana in 1817 and Their Hoosier Neighbors

By JOHN E. IGLEHART, Evansville, Ind.

### INTRODUCTION

(Copyright 1919, by John E. Iglehart)

In 1916, at the request of the mayor of the city of Evansville, the writer undertook the organization and direction of the work of a Historical Commission of the Evansville Centennial for 1917. With a view to qualify himself better for the work he sought the literature of the early western travelers, as well as other writers, and began a search in the early records of the city and county of Vanderburgh, as well as of Warrick and Knox counties, out of which Vanderburgh county had been created.

The travels of William Faux in the west in the fall and winter of 1819 resulted from his intimacy with the Ingle family in Somersham, Huntingdonshire, England, where both families lived, and a promise made by Faux to Rev. John Ingle, a Baptist minister, that the former would visit the son of the latter at Saundersville in Vanderburgh county. The diary of Faux during five weeks he spent in John Ingle's cabin is the only record in existence of the first British settlement in Indiana. While local histories have recorded the

Indiana magazine of history (Volume yr.1921). p30

The Ingles

This family appears the most prominently of all others in Faux, Travels. Faux lived at Somersham, Huntingdon-

shire, England, had been a boyhood friend of John Ingle (2nd), known in Vanderburgh county as John Ingle of Saundersville to distinguish him from his son, John Ingle, Jr., who from 1840 until the close of the Civil war, was the leading man in Vanderburgh county, and so far as my knowledge goes, in southwestern Indiana as a commonwealth builder.

**John Ingle, a Baptist minister of Somersham**, frequently referred to by Faux as the patriarch, kept Faux's butler and took charge of his business in England for more than a year, upon the promise of the latter to visit the former's son, John Ingle of Saundersville in Indiana, when he came to America and after traveling a year in the Atlantic coast states in November, 1819, Faux came from Philadelphia, eight hundred miles, due west, and spent seven weeks in the English settlement, in Vanderburgh county, visiting with Ingle, who introduced him to the leaders of the New Harmony settlement and the Edwards county, Illinois, English settlement of Birkbeck and Flower, of the last two of whom he writes with most indiscreet freedom. The monotony and hardships of pioneer life, the beginnings of life anew in the wilderness, without servants and without the necessities of English life, to which Faux had been accustomed, the second year of Ingle's life in America, so overpowered Faux's judgment as to present in his diary a picture almost hopeless, but it was only a short time after he returned to England that the resources of the land and the country yielded a more comfortable living, and the dire forebodings of Faux were never realized, and John Ingle of Saundersville lived until the last quarter of the century, to become the head of a large, prominent, and successful family. Two of his sons, James and William Ingle, became members of the first native pioneer Methodist ministry, who though baptised as children in England in the Baptist faith, joined the Methodist church under the leadership of the Wheelers, Parrett, Shrader and others before the Baptist church was established in their locality. James Ingle married Eliza, daughter of Mark Wheeler, and the descendants of William Ingle live in this section, including the children of Frank Staser.

The oldest of the children of John Ingle of Saundersville was a son known in the history of Evansville and southwestern Indiana as John Ingle, Jr. He was born in 1812 in Somersham, England, but reared in the wilderness. His education in the schools was limited, but his natural ability, high ideals, and the training in the life of a pioneer developed so many qualities of leadership as to make a remarkable history, and his active life is bound up in the history of Evansville. He was in his seventh year when he left England, and had already had one year in a "dame" school, and his father took a standard English newspaper as long as he lived, and when Ingle came to manhood, after learning the cabinet-maker's trade in Stringtown and travelling through the states along the river to New Orleans, he sailed for Phila-

delphia, where he studied law at night and earned his living by work during the day.

He had, therefore, the view of the old world civilization, as well as of the Atlantic coast states, when he returned in 1838 to Evansville. He then began law practice with James Lockhart, one of the strong characters of the time, and after remaining with him a year, became a partner of Judge Battell, one of the prominent citizens of Evansville from the beginning. With Judge Battell, his partner, and later alone in the practice, he became one of the leaders of the Evansville bar, and travelled the circuit, and is mentioned in the local histories of other counties in the circuit, and he had a large and valuable practice. He held for a time the office of prosecuting attorney. After Judge Battell retired in 1846, Horatio Q. Wheeler was admitted to Mr. Ingle's office as a student or young lawyer. A year later Wheeler became his partner, and in 1849 Asa Iglehart entered the firm then known as Ingle, Wheeler and Iglehart.

John Ingle, Jr., was the only man in Evansville who saw the future in a railroad, and knew how and was able to give the time to organize, promote, and build it and lead in its operation. Other men, equally prominent in other individual work, aided in many ways, but no one else was so active and influential in all of that work as a whole. He was a charter member of the Evansville & Illinois railroad company, organized under a special charter, later known as the Evansville & Crawfordsville railroad company and still later as the Evansville & Terre Haute railroad company, which later became consolidated with the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad company. In 1853 the railroad was completed to Pigeon creek, then to Princeton, then to Vincennes, later to Terre Haute, and still later, under the administration of John Ingle as its president, extended to Rockville. This was the first railroad in southwestern Indiana south of Vincennes and west of Louisville. The first president of the railroad was Judge Hall of Princeton, who was a man of high character, had been circuit judge, was engaged in other affairs, and was chosen by the directors to that office, but it is said by one of the historians that Ingle rescued the railroad enterprise, which was struggling when the city was poor, and when the men who had undertaken its beginning were exhausted and powerless, and that by his energj<sup>^</sup>, persistence and fidelity he completed the railroad and managed its affairs with superior skill during his executive control ; that the railroad enjoyed immunity from accident, as no other railroad in the country; and that he ran no trains on Sunday upon religious and conscientious grounds. 45

John Ingle was the first secretary and the superintendent of the railroad, and had charge of the contracts for building, and was most active in the purchase of the rails first used in the building, and went to England to buy them. The city of Evansville and county of Vanderburgh each subscribed

\$100,000.00, with which money the rails were bought, which finished the road to Pigeon creek. This event was one of supreme importance to Evansville, and was celebrated by a

Anne Cowle Iglehart, mother of John E. Iglehart, was born in England December 27, 1817, and was in her fifth year when she came with her widowed mother and two small brothers to join the first British settlement in Indiana. Her mother's brother, John Ingle, was one of the founders of this British settlement and platted its capital, Saundersville.

John Ingle of Somersham, Huntingdonshire, England, a Baptist minister, was the father of John Ingle of Saundersville, who planted the Town of Saundersville in 1819 and who was the ancestor of two of the three wives of the original three Igleheart brothers, while John Ingle of Somersham was the common ancestor of all three wives of the elder Iglehearts, resulting from the fact that Asa Iglehart married Ann Cowle, whose widowed mother, Sarah Ingle Cowle, a sister of John Ingle of Saundersville, came to him in the British Settlement in 1822, bringing three small children, one of whom was Ann Cowle, the niece of John Ingle of Saundersville, who later married Asa Iglehart.

On the burial plot on the old Ingle homestead at Saundersville, is a memorial tablet, inscribed with letters in bronze, which reads as follows:

**SACRED TO THE MEMORY**  
**of**  
**SARAH INGLE COWLE WHEELER**  
**1793 1833**

Daughter of Rev. John and Dinah Ingle of Somersham, Huntingdonshire, England. Widow of William Cowle.

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In April 1822 emigrated with her daughter and two sons joining here on this farm her brother John Ingle of Saundersville, who was one of the founders here of the first British Settlement in Indiana. Saundersville was planted by him in 1819 half a mile south of here at the junction of the State Road and the Boonville and New Harmony Road.

John Ingle, born in Somersham, Huntingdonshire, England.

More About John Ingle:

Resided: Somersham, Huntingdonshire, England

Children of John Ingle are:

18 i. John Ingle, died 1876 in Vanderburgh Co., IN.

ii. Sarah Ingle, married (1) Cowle Bef. 1822; married (2) Mark Wheeler 1825.

More About Sarah Ingle:

Moved: 1822, to Vanderburgh Co., IN as a widow.

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ON Wednesday, March 10, 1819, the Rev. Joseph Belcher was ordained over the Baptist Church, at Somersham, Huntingdonshire. Mr. Shepherd, of Ely, read and prayed; Mr. Manning, of Spaldwick delivered the introductory discourse and asked the questions; Mr. Howlett, of Streatham, presented the Ordination Prayer; Mr. Green, of Bluntisham gave the charge from Gal. i. 10. and concluded the Morning service. In the Evening Mr. Pinchard, of Haddenham, prayed; Mr. Ragsdell, of Thrapstone, preached to the people, from 1 Thess. iii. 8, and concluded the delightful solemnities of the day in prayer.

The Church at Somersham is of recent origin. They rejoice in the goodness of God, who has hitherto blessed his word, and still animates them with the brightest prospects.

**Belcher, Joseph** (1794-1859)—Originally from Birmingham, Belcher was a prolific author, producing numerous biographies of evangelical figures from the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. An active leader within the Baptist Home Missionary Society, he ministered to churches at Somersham, Folkestone, Chelsea, and Greenwich from 1818 to 1842. From 1832 to 1840 he served as Secretary to the Baptist Union. He emigrated to America in 1844 and died in Philadelphia in 1859. He published brief biographies of George Whitefield, Isaac Mann, and William Carey, as well as a history of the Baptist Irish Society in 1845. See *DEB*.

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TO THE EDITOR.

MY DEAR SIR,

I avail myself of the first opportunity that presents itself of forwarding to you the Shropshire Circular Letter for the present year. As I perceive no notice of the Association last year, perhaps no one sent you the Letter. It would indeed be a happy circumstance if it were possible to attend to the suggestion of my esteemed friend, Mr. Green of Bluntisham, which appeared in the *Magazine* a few months ago, to present a Yearly View of the state of the Churches. But as that will not, I fear, soon be accomplished, would it not be well if the different Circular Letters were published in London? A Collection of them all, *if printed in one size*, would every year or two make an agreeable volume, and exhibit the state of the churches which thus walk together. I intend, as soon as I can collect the requisite information, sending you a list of the Churches in this County, on a similar plan to that of Buckinghamshire. I am, my dear Sir,

Yours truly,

J. BELCHER,

Late of *Somersham*, Huntingdonshire.

*Whitchurch, Salop, June 3, 1820.*



We are guardians of an altar  
 'Midst the silence of the sky.  
 The rocks yield founts of courage,  
 Struck forth as by thy rod;  
 For the strength of the hills we bless thee,  
 Our God, our fathers' God.

For the dark resounding caverns,  
 Where thy still small voice is heard;  
 For the strong pines of the forest  
 That by thy breath are stirred;  
 For the storms on whose free pinions  
 Thy Spirit walks abroad;  
 For the strength of the hills we bless thee,  
 Our God, our fathers' God.

The banner of the chieftain  
 Far, far below us waves;  
 The war-horse of the spearman  
 Cannot reach our lofty caves.  
 Thy dark clouds wrap the threshold  
 Of freedom's last abode;  
 For the strength of the hills we bless thee,  
 Our God, our fathers' God.

For the shadow of thy presence  
 Round our camp of rock outspread;  
 For the stern defiles of battle,  
 Bearing record of our dead;  
 For the snows and for the torrents,  
 For the free heart's burial sod;  
 For the strength of the hills we bless thee,  
 Our God, our fathers' God!

#### BAPTIST BIOGRAPHY.

For the *Baptist Family Magazine*.

##### JOSEPH BELCHER, D. D.

The grave has closed over many of the most honored and useful men among us since this year began. Other denominations have sadly seen such men as Dr. JOHNS and Dr. JAMES ALEXANDER pass away. We also mourn the loss of such men as CURTIS, KINGSFORD, EATON, HARRISON, NOTT, and BELCHER. We desire to put on record such facts as we have been able to ascertain concerning the last of these—who, besides his great services to the cause of Christ, as a preacher and writer, for years has been to us a brother, a counsellor, and a friend. How hard it is to feel that we are to meet him on earth no more!

Dr. Belcher was born in Birmingham, Eng., April 5th, 1794, while yet the sainted Pearce, pastor of the Baptist church in Cannon street, was moving there as in an orb of the purest light and glory. Our departed friend may be said to have drawn his first breath in a missionary age and atmosphere; for the Baptist India Mission had

its origin in Kettering, near Birmingham, not two years before, and the influence of its spirit was felt all around him. He was early thoughtful and serious on the subject of religion, but it was not until 1814, when near twenty years of age, that he fully yielded his heart to Christ, was baptized, and united with the church. He was connected with the jewelry business, but had improved diligently his opportunities for study at home and at school, from an early age. His public spirit, gifts, and attainments marked him out for the Christian ministry, and in 1815 the church called him to preach on trial. In 1819 he was ordained and settled as a pastor at Somersham. Afterwards he settled with the Whit, Oakham, and Missenden churches; then at Folkestone, for nine years. He spent five years in Chelsea, and nine in Greenwich, both in the suburbs of London. In that city he founded a church, and erected a house of worship called "Bunyan Chapel," which is still flourishing, and where he ministered till the beginning of 1844. He was also active in the London Religious Tract Society, Editor of "The Revivalist," and founder and secretary of the London Baptist Union.

In 1844 Dr. Belcher came to this country. He spoke in April of that year, at the last meeting of the Baptist Triennial Convention, in Philadelphia. After preaching several months in Philadelphia, New York, and Boston, he accepted a call to settle with the Baptist Church in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Three years later he returned to Philadelphia, and took charge of the Mount Tabor Church, in the northern part of the city, for two years. He afterwards was pastor in Rockland, Me., and at Battle Creek, Michigan. Finding the climate unfavorable to his health, he returned with his family the second time to Philadelphia, in 1852, and devoted himself to preaching as an occasional supply, and to writing for the Press. Thus employed, the last seven years may be regarded, all things considered, as among the most useful of his long and active life. Here he fell asleep in the Lord, Sunday, July 10th, 1859, at the age of 65,



leaving his wife, and a large family of children (seven sons and two daughters,) to lament his loss. But the loss was not limited to his family circle, or to his personal friends. The cause of Christ generally suffers in his removal, for he was a diligent worker in his Master's vineyard to the very last.

From memoranda found after his death, it appears that in the course of his ministry of forty-four years, he preached 6501 sermons. They were usually well-studied, sound in doctrine, evangelical in spirit, and delivered with animation and effect. How many souls he had been the honored instrument of turning to righteousness, will only be known in that day when the Lord shall make up his jewels.

But it will perhaps then appear, that useful as he was personally in the pulpit, his chief usefulness was through the pen and the press. He kept no record of the number of his productions. Perhaps it was impossible, to one who wrote so much, and in so many forms. For a great part of his life he was an Editor as well as an Author. Among his editorial labors may be mentioned the Complete Works of Andrew Fuller, and the subsequent small volume, entitled the Last Remains of Andrew Fuller—the gleanings of Dr. Belcher's reading and diligence, and like filings of gold, too precious to be lost. He also edited the fourth volume of Hall's Works, and many smaller publications for the American Baptist Publication Society. Among his own works are many which he allowed to be published without his name. Of those to which he affixed his name, we may mention his History of Religious Denominations—a noble volume. He excelled as a Biographer. His lives of Carey, of Whitfield, and of the Haldanes, have never been surpassed in their interest and usefulness. His Life of Robert Raikes was one of his recent contributions to Sunday School Literature—the last, if not his best. Many of our best periodicals were also enriched by the labors of his pen.

Dr. Belcher was a man of social as well as literary habits. Though he loved his

study, where he had collected around him a large and noble selection of books, yet he was ever ready to leave it for the enjoyment of his family circle, and for more extended intercourse with society. His manners were easy, animated, and affable. His conversation was full of instruction and wisdom, as well as sprightliness. His store of facts, anecdotes, and illustrations, was inexhaustible. His knowledge of men and books was far more extensive than is usual, owing to his position in England, as well as in the United States. With England he kept up a constant correspondence. He abounded in useful suggestions. Not only was he always ready to work himself, but he stirred up others to work. In our Associations and Ministers' meetings, in the American Baptist Historical Society, (of which he was a founder, and Chairman of the Board of Curators till his death,) he was invaluable. The Tri-Jubilee Sermon of the Philadelphia Baptist Association, will long remain a monument of his diligence in promoting useful knowledge in the Churches. He took an active part too, in founding and framing the Constitution of the North Philadelphia Baptist Association last year, and was appointed to write the Circular Letter for this year.

Dr. Belcher painfully felt that he was not perfect. His natural temperament was warm, and he was quickly and strongly excited. He was not free from temptations to vain-glory. But his resource was faith and prayer. He sought from his Redeemer a strength superior to his own. And those who knew and loved him best, thought they could trace with delight, the growth of self-discipline, humility, meekness, and love, in his habitual deportment during the last years of his life. This was touchingly exhibited in his last illness. His active spirit did not easily give up the hope of recovery, for the sake of the work he had planned and hoped to execute. Yet he suffered with patience his distressing complaint, as it slowly wrapped its coil about his heart, and when it was decided that his Master called him, he was ready to depart.

Surrounded by his friends and weeping

family, he calmly spoke of the strength of his Christian hope; and when inquired of by his eldest son, just arrived from Boston, "Father, is Christ precious to you now?" he roused himself to reply with energy, "Yes, ten thousand times more precious than ever!" Still, the general character of his feelings was rather calm and confiding, than rapturous. When a brother in the ministry said to him on Sunday morning, as the last hour drew nigh,

"Jesus can make a dying bed  
Feel soft as downy pillows are;

he added,

"While on his breast I lean my head,  
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Wearied, worn-out nature sunk gently to its rest in the bosom of Jesus. It was the Sabbath, a little after 11 o'clock, just at the hour he had long been accustomed to stand up in the pulpit to preach the Gospel of Christ to his fellow men, that his spirit passed from the work of faith, and the patience of hope, to the region of vision and fruition.

Impressive religious services were held at the First Baptist Church, where a large number of ministers and friends were assembled. The Scriptures were read by Rev. Thomas Winter, and a hymn by Rev. B. R. Loxley. Prayer was offered by Rev. John A. McKean. Appropriate addresses were made by Rev. J. H. Cuthbert, Rev. Thomas S. Malcom, and Rev. J. Newton Brown. The coffin was opened, and many took a last look of the form now cold in death. A concluding prayer was offered by Rev. J. H. Castle. His mortal remains were deposited in a conspicuous spot in the beautiful Cemetery at Laurel Hill. *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.*

**WARNINGS.**—The follies, vices, and consequent miseries of multitudes displayed in a newspaper, are so many admonitions and warnings, so many beacons, continually burning, to turn others from the rocks on which they have been shipwrecked.—*Bishop Horne.*

#### GEORGIANA ANDERSON.

##### A True Story of the Sepoy Rebellion.

Georgiana Anderson, who is about fourteen years of age, was born at Monghyr, of European parents, and consequently is quite fair. Her grand-parents live at Monghyr, and are in very comfortable circumstances. Her parents, brother, sister, uncle and others of her relatives, lived at Humirpur, which is eighteen miles above Cawnpore. In the beginning of last year (1857) she went to see her parents. On the fifteenth of June last, the native soldiers at that place mutinied, killing every European whom they could find. The Charkari rajah joined the mutineers, with two hundred men and two guns. Georgiana's father, being quite blind, and her mother, were cut down in her presence. A soldier attempted to kill her brother, eleven years old, but he kept back the sword that was to sever his head with his arm, and it cut his hand off. She also got three sword-cuts, one on the right side of her neck, another on the right shoulder, which severed the bones, and another on her back. She fell senseless to the ground; but during the night, recovered her senses, got up, and wandering about, she met the magistrate and the collector, and with them she went and hid herself under a bridge. Next morning she went to a native doctor, who cleansed her from the mass of blood with which she was covered, and bound up her wounds; but he was not skillful enough to set her bones: they are, therefore still separate, and she cannot move the arm from the shoulder to the elbow at all.

On the 19th of June the mutineers found out the hiding-place of her uncle, with whom was her younger brother, whose hand was cut off, and several gentlemen. All were taken and massacred by those blood-thirsty monsters; so that she is the only surviving member of a family, all of whom, nine in number—her father, mother, brother, two sisters, uncle, aunt, and their two children—were murdered.

Georgiana remained with the doctor for a whole month, during the day-time, and spent the nights in Indian corn fields. She

S Orris or Wm Orris

GENTLEMAN’S MAGAZINE AND HISTORICAL CHRONICLE, VOLUME 43, P334 OBITUARY 1855

At Somersham, aged 73, the Rev. Wm. Orriss, for 33 years minister of the Baptist chapel.  
Ian Thompson

Somersham Ministers

? CHURCH FORMED  
1812 BUILDING  
OPENED



Revd Coxe Feary  
Revd Joseph Belcher

1818-1819

A full account of the beginning of the church is found [here](#).

**BELCHER, JOSEPH (1794–1859).** English, Canadian, and, later, American Baptist minister, born in Birmingham, England. He was ordained to the **ministry** at **Somersham**, Huntingdonshire, where he served as **pastor**, 1819–1825. He then was minister at Folkstone (1825–1831); Paradise Chapel, Chelsea (1831–1834); and Greenwich (1834–1842). During his tenure as a Baptist minister in Britain, **Belcher** was a leader in denominational affairs. He was active in the **Baptist Home Mission Society** and the Baptist board charged him in 1832–1833 to collect statistics and a membership roster for Baptist ministers in the newly formed **Baptist Union**, of which he served as first secretary (1832–1840). In 1843, **Belcher** emigrated to North America, serving Granville Street (1845) and Salem Chapel (1846), both in Halifax, Nova Scotia; Mount Tabor, Philadelphia (1847); and East Thomaston, Maine (1849–1851?). In the United States, **Belcher** was a prolific author, writing biographies of George Whitefield (1714–1770), Robert Raikes (1735–1811), **William Carey**, and **Robert Haldane**, as well as editing the works of **Andrew Fuller**. Belcher’s ministry in Halifax, Nova Scotia, was cut short by a highly publicized schism in the church there, largely instigated by Belcher’s personality and his overly British perspective on matters of **polity** and the question of open communion.

Ordination on the 17th March 1819

1820  
1822-1852

Revd C Mckenzie  
Revd William Orriss (Not S Orris)

GENTLEMAN’S MAGAZINE AND HISTORICAL CHRONICLE, VOLUME 43, P334 OBITUARY 1855

At Somersham, aged 73, the Rev. Wm. Orriss, for 33 years minister of the Baptist chapel.  
1822-1855?

Tithe Map 1838



Thomas Wilderspin **Married** 10/02/1849 at Somersham, Hunts (MR) to [Lucy Abbott \(1822\)](#)



**1854-1858**

Revd Joseph Flory

Thomas, widower, carpenter, son of John, carpenter married to Lucy, spinster, daughter of John, labourer, both from Somersham, at the baptist meeting house by William Orriss (witnessed by James Wiles, registrar); witnesses Stephen Wilderspin and Jane Abbott

Flory, Joseph (Initials: ) Born: 1818 Died: 1906?

Obituary: B U Handbook 1908. Page 46?



The discussion at Cambridge on the question - "Is there no salvation without baptism?" between the Rev. Joseph Flory, Baptist Minister, Somersham, and the Rev. Elder Edward Harding, a Mormonite

**The earthen vessel and Christian record & review: Volume 10 1854 - Page 192**

**VALUABLE DIAMOND,**  
*versus*  
**INVALUABLE DIAMOND.**

A LARGE diamond—one of the largest diamonds known—was deposited on Tuesday, February 7th, 1854, at the Bank of England, by a London house, to whom it was consigned from Rio Janeiro. Its weight is 254 carats; and its estimated value, according to the scale, £280,000. It is said to be of the first water, and without a flaw; and was found by a Negro slave, who received his freedom as a reward.

By these facts, somewhat striking in several particulars, our mind has been involuntarily led to look at the striking adaptation to eternal vitalities. Christ is the Father's Diamond gift to the church, found in the great purposes and settlements of heaven. Predestinated for the release of the predestinated, and consequent salvation, he, the great Ransomer, in his Person, work, and righteousness, being without flaw, answers to law and justice. Law fulfilled! justice satisfied! each concur in the liberation of the worse than the Rio Janeiro slave. The Holy Spirit bears witness to the glorious reality; and now through the soul vibrates the animating truth,

“Ye slaves of sin and hell,  
Your liberty receive,  
And safe in Jesus dwell,  
And, blest in Jesus, live.”

And now the soul, favoured with such views of the dear Redeemer at first, vital fellowship with the Lamb, and all subsequent interviews to and from Jesus, exclaims, He is the Diamond of great price. How beautiful, and far more glittering to the soul's view and apprehension, than earthly pearls or diamonds! “Yea, he is altogether lovely.” Cant. v. 16. — “The chiefest among ten thousand”—verse 10. No flaw in his work or righteousness; transparent with holiness; making his spouse “without spot and blemish;” “because as he is, (Christ), so are ye” (1 John iv. 17) “in him complete.” Col. ii. 10. Completely justified! completely saved—completely. Holy, judicially, completely righteous, representatively; completely righteous regeneratively; and therefore saints come forth into the liberty of the sons of God;—“Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free.” Gal. v. 1. In the freedom of free, eternal, unconditional election, grace and mercy, salvation without money (of free-will, Popish, Arminian, Arian and Socinian sophisms) and without price of creature works and deeds. Such stand as the

witnesses of and for God and his blessed gospel word. "By grace are ye saved;" (Eph. ii. 8;) while those who never felt by the Holy Spirit's teaching the galling slavery of satan, sin, and the world, cannot, do not rejoice in Christ the Liberator, who, as the Diamond of great price, has more efficacy in his blood and righteousness to liberate, than sin, law, death or hell to condemn; and as such the election know their Saviour, "rejoice in him, and put no confidence in the flesh;" yea, "in the Lord put I my trust," is the united language and deep-felt sentiment of each heaven-born vessel of mercy—not in self, in any or all of its supposed capabilities, either in whole or part, for salvation. No, no; "In the Lord our Righteousness;" and here, by hope and faith resting, the soul exclaims, "I will be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." Isaiah lxi. 10. Now, now we behold more than ever the invaluable nature of the Diamond of great price, by which mediatorially and meritoriously is opened the kingdom of grace and gospel liberty, and finally, the kingdom of glory—liberation beyond the azure vaulted skies. Then fully the exiles, captives and slaves, shall, as the "ransomed of the Lord, return and come to Zion, with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Isa. xxxv. 10.

And now, my dear reader, how stands the case with thee? Dost thy soul desire to be found in Him, the great Redeemer, saying with the poet,

"I'll wrap me in his righteousness,  
And plunge me in his blood?"

Then I know you join the poet, and also exclaim,

"When thou, my righteous Judge, shall come,  
To fetch thy ransomed people home,  
May I amongst them stand!  
Shall such a worthless worm as I,  
Who sometimes am afraid to die,  
Be found at thy right hand?"

All hail! my brother!—my sister! No such cogitations unless thou wert a heaven-born, heaven-bound soul; and the Lord will most satisfactorily, in his own time,

"Assure thy conscience of her part  
In the Redeemer's blood;  
And bear the witness with thy heart,  
That thou art born of God."

But oh, my reader, if unacquainted with Christ, the Diamond or Pearl of great price in his invaluable blood and righteousness, living and dying without hope and trust in him, no liberation—held in life a captive and slave of sin and satan, "Die you must the death that never dies," and hear at last the awful denunciation, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." O, that the unconcerned reader of the EARTHEN VESSEL may be led to consider the interrogation, "Who shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Some will. "These shall go away into everlasting

fire." Will you? Yes; without converting grace prevent. Think not to fortify yourself with, "If I am elected, I shall be saved, if not, I shall be lost:" such sentiments discover the destitution of the real knowledge of your awful state. You remind me of the mariner—asleep on the main top! How perilous his state! but infinitely more so your's. The elect are a praying, seeking, thirsting people; crying for pardon from sin felt; crying that mercy may be manifested; seeking for the salvation of the soul; thirsting to know the Son of God in the triumphs of his cross, and peace by blood revealed. Such are a blessed people, collectively and individually. But you answer not the characteristics of the election; you know somewhat of election, but only to fortify yourself in sin and error. You now are in league with satan; and so living and dying, to you in life—in death, and for ever, this is your portion, "Upon the wicked, he (the Lord) shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." Psalm xi. 6. "For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness: his countenance doth behold the upright." (Verse 7).

Hoping the Lord will comfort his own, and arouse the purchase of a Saviour's blood, my soul crieth unto God the Holy Spirit for his blessed power to accompany these few thoughts, to the divine glory.

JOSEPH FLORY.

*Somersham, Huntingdonshire.*

THE GOSPEL HERALD—OR POOR CHRISTIANS MAGAZINE  
VOL XXV—III NEW SERIES P207 1857-1862

#### SOMERSHAM.

The little church in Somersham held their Annual Tea Meeting, September 14th, when about fifty-five persons sat down to tea. After tea sung, and Brother Poock offered earnest prayer, and with Mr. Last, Mr. Roots, and Mr. Webb, addressed the meet-

ing. We trust the Head of the Church was there. We feel thankful to our brethren for their presence and kind assistance on the occasion. On the following day the newly formed school, containing fifteen scholars, united with many more in the place, and took tea together in the chapel. This was also a happy day with us. We would render all praise to Zion's King for the revival of this little cause.

1861-1863

Rev'd J Crampin

The Rev. J. Crampin entered on the pastorate of the church at Somersham, Hunts, the first Lord's day in November (1861) (*The Church January 1862*)

1866-1875

Rev'd J Willis

Willis, Joseph (Initials: ) Born: 1828 Died: 1887? Obituary: B U Handbook 1888. Page 123?

**1884-1888**

Revd J B Lamb

Lamb, James Howard (Initials: ) Born: 1870 Died: 1940  
Obituary: B U Handbook 1941. Page 337

**1895-1900**

**1902-1904**

**1905-1906**

**1907-1909**

**1910-1914**

**Revd G Sneesby**

Revd John W Lee

Revd R Glynn

Revd J R Hewison

**Revd H G Baker**

**1915-1916**

**1917-1923**

Revd H E Jessop

**Revd W R Ponton**

Lamb, John (Initials: ) Born: 1853 Died: 1940  
Obituary: B U Handbook 1941. Page 337

Sneesby, George (Initials: ) Born: 1867 Died: 1923  
Obituary: B U Handbook 1924. Page 302

Baker, Henry George (Initials: ) Born: 1875 Died: 1955  
Obituary: B U Handbook 1956. Page 321

Ponton, Walter Roe (Initials: ) Born: 1862 Died: 1943  
Obituary: B U Handbook 1944-46. Page 322

**1924-1928**



**Revd Cyril Seymour King**

Born 19/05/1890, started Boys Brigade, was a good Bible teacher. He left SBC to become a prison visitor and was chaplain of Holloway prison for a time, later to become a rector in Northamptonshire. Died 21/10/1957 in Co Durham. His wife, Elsie, (Ruth) born 07/08/1895 and died 27/02/1982 in Devon.

**1931-1939**

**Revd H R N Cross**

Cross, Henry Richard Harrop (Initials: ) Born: 1868 Died: 1939  
Obituary: B U Handbook 1940. Page 333

**1941-1945**

**Revd E C Kearsley Starling**

Starling, Etherington Charles Kearsley (Initials: ) Born: 1913 Died: 1980  
Obituary: B U Directory 1981-82. Page 298

**1946-1949**

**Revd G Wilfred Nash**

Nash, George Wilfrid (Initials: ) Born: 1891 Died: 1961  
Obituary: B U Handbook 1963. Page 372

**1950-1953**

**Revd F Whitaker**

Whitaker, Frances (Frank) (Initials: ) Born: 1894 Died: 1976  
Obituary: B U Directory 1978-79. Page 317

**1954-1959**

**Revd Ralph J Stephens**

**1960-1962**

**Revd Garret Powell**

Powell, Garnet (Initials: ) Born: 1898 Died: 1972  
Obituary: B U Directory 1974-75. Page 293

**1963-1965**

Revd Ian Thompson

**1966-1970**

Revd Len England

Shared with Chatteris  
England, Leonard Watkin (Initials: ) Born: 1907 Died: 1995  
Obituary: B U Handbook 1996-97. Page 333  
Shared with Bluntisham

**1970-1976**



**Revd Wilfred Chapman**



**1977**



Shared with Bluntisham

**1982**

**1986: BI-CENTENARY**



Shared with Bluntisham

**1998**

**1998 – 2001**

**2001- 2007**

**2009- 2017**

Revd Brian Durkin  
Revd Malcolm J Egner  
Revd Richard Hetherington  
Revd Bruce Danials

## 1813 General review of agriculture



The Farming Community  
1813

*A survey was carried out for the Board of Agriculture in 1813 which encapsulates the way the land was farmed in Somersham just after the enclosures. If at times it is a bit factual, it does give a clear picture of the farmer's lot at the start of the 19th century.*

A general View of the Agriculture of the County of Huntingdon (for the consideration of the board of agriculture)

By R. Parkinson, 1813

Except where noted otherwise, all entries below are those that appear in the survey for Somersham Parish

Soil

1,000 acres clay

200 acres gravel

200 acres are sandy

1,400 acres fenny

#### Estates

Messrs Farmer, Ansell, Ibbott, Leeds, Ilett, Wilson, George Thompson, Bishop of Llandaff

#### Tenures

All the fenlands are freehold and some of the uplands, the remainder copyhold.

#### Principle Houses

George Thompson Esquire

#### Buildings

Somersham

Farm Houses 40

Dwellings 80

Cottages 120

Repairs By landlord

#### Pidley

Farm Houses 6

Dwellings 30

Cottages 15

Repairs By landlord

#### Colne

Farm Houses 12

Dwellings -

Cottages 50

Repairs By landlord

#### Size of farms

Ranging from 50 acres to 500-600 acres

Rent per acre

15s Fenland

25s to 30s highland

#### Implements

At Somersham and other parts of the county, besides the ploughs which I have described at the beginning of this section, the Mole Plough has been used for draining.

#### Rollers

Square rollers made of very light wood are used in Somersham.

#### Thrashing Mills

At Somersham there is one made by Yellowley, a person named Spalding had one of these machines in agitation, which had a very promising appearance.

Winnowing machines

There are some on a very improved principle at Somersham and very superior to most in general use, made by Wilson of Lynn Regis.

#### Enclosures

Somersham is enclosed in the highlands by quick hedges and in the fens by ditches, into fields from 10 to 30 acres.

#### Ploughing

By 3 horses abreast and a driver, plough 3 times for fallow.

#### Fallowing

Summer fallows are not necessary

#### Course of Crops

Pare and Burn, then cole or rape seeds, oats then ray grass (two bushels per acre). Then take up (and start) again.

#### Manures

Somersham ♦ yard dung, paring and burning is very much practised and approved.

#### Seed and produce (in bushels):

##### Somersham

Wheat 25

Barley -

Oats 48

Beans -

Cole Seed 24

##### Pidley

Wheat 20

Barley 28

Oats 36

Beans 16

Cole Seed -

##### Colne

Wheat 20

Barley 28

Oats -

Beans 20

Cole Seed -

### Artificial Grasses

Somersham ♦ Ray grass

Pidley ♦ red clover and ray grass

Colne ? none

### Gardens and Orchards

About 10 years ago the late Jonathan Ilett Esq. planted a fine orchard on fenland with most sorts of the best fruit trees and they thrive and prosper much and bear well. And so they would in all the Fens now they are well drained.

In the year 1806, William Margetts Esq. planted on his estate in the Parish of Somersham an orchard of 16 acres of land with all sorts of the choicest fruit trees: apples, pears plumbs(sic) and cherries; on the outside of which there is a border of red filberts(hazelnuts) mixed with orlean(probably a reference to a French apple) and greengage plumbs, and the western side is planted with swan egg pears to preserve the orchard from being injured with the west winds. In a close adjoining to Mr Margetts orchard, in that same year 1806 the Rev. John Ingle, a dissenting minister planted an orchard of 18 acres with all sorts of the choicest fruit trees which are bordered round in the same manner; the trees are very healthful and promising. The soil is loam and unless the substratum is unfavourable, there is no fear of their thriving.

### Paring and Burning

Mr John Ilett (son of Jonathan referred to above) of Somersham approves of paring and burning fenland once in six years, taking the following course of crops:

After paring and burning sow rapes. If they prove strong and good eat them off by sheep and let them stand for seed. Then take oats, then barley sown with 14 lbs of red clover, some also sowing five bushels of hay seed per acre but others with one or two bushels of ray grass instead. These seeds are generally eaten off by sheep during the whole time the land lays in that state, though some mow them in the first year and then keep them for 3 or 4 years after which they pare and burn again.

Mr Ilett is of the opinion that 2 years is long enough to let the fens lay in grass, as when it lays longer it is very apt to get full of grubs. Some in that case fallow the land all summer for the purpose of giving the roots an opportunity to destroy the grubs. Some also sow the fenlands, when infested with grubs, very late; finding that the late sown crops are not so much injured by the grubs as the early ones especially, if the wind should have remained any length of time in the North. The late sowing, it is very probable, may be a means of preventing the devastation occasioned by the grub which, as I have mentioned already, springs from a fly. It may therefore get into the fly state before the sowing begins, or at least the greater part of them may. As to the observation respecting the north wind, that can only affect them in that they may not work about so freely in such cold weather as they do in hot sunny days.

### Cattle and horses:

Somersham

Breeds Short horns

Cows 87

Stores 119

Calves reared 40

Horses

Breeds Cart  
Horses / mares 148  
foals 29

Pidley  
Breeds Yorkshire  
Cows 45  
Stores -  
Calves reared -  
Horses  
Breeds Cart  
Horses / mares 40  
foals -

Sheep and hogs  
Somersham  
Breeds Lincoln and Leicester  
Fleeces to a todd 4  
Number of sheep 1,000

Hogs  
Breeds Mixed  
number 90

Pidley  
Breeds Lincoln and Leicester  
Fleeces to a todd 4 to 5  
Number of sheep 1,000

Hogs  
Breeds Berkshire  very good  
number 200

Hogs  
At Pidley one farmer breeds many hogs, very good ones of the improved Berkshire breed: whilst I was there I saw one killed which had been fattened on milk and corn at a very early age and it proved uncommonly good; the store stock fed partly at the barn door, partly on tares and other green food and many of the breeding sows were by such means in very high condition; indeed fatter than they ought to be to be prolific, as when they are so fat they neglect their young ones at a very early period and take the boar, an almost unavoidable fault of this famous breed of pigs.

The Poor  
Workhouses are famed at Colne and Somersham, at the former at 2s per head per week and at the latter 2s 6d per head per week. Box clubs are much approved and therefore encouraged.

### Roads

In Somersham roads are very good, a turnpike (runs) through the parish.

### Price of labour

12s in winter and 15s in summer and two pints of beer; 17s per week and meat and drink in harvest.

### Fairs and Markets

Somersham: fairs on the 23rd June and 15th November chiefly for pleasure. Market weekly on Fridays not much attended.

Bluntisham cum Earith: Fairs for all sorts of cattle on the 4th May, 25th July and 1st November.

Ramsey: fair on 22nd July for pedlars ware. Market weekly on Saturday.

St ives: Fairs on Whitsun Monday and on 5th October for all sorts of cattle etc. and cheese; Market weekly on Monday for cattle corn etc.

## Somersham Census

*The following is a brief summary of the Census carried out in 1821 as part of the second major National census. The record is extracted from the returns books held at Huntingdon Record Office and in the British Library.*

### Census of 1821 for Somersham

Males 562

Females 664

Families 242

Inhabited houses 166

Uninhabited houses 6

Houses building 2

Families employed in agriculture 163

Families employed in trade 60

Other families 19

### Census for 1891

Total Population 1381

Males 714

Females 667

### Census for 1901

Total Population 1255

Males 635

Females 620

### Census for 1931

Total population 1417

Males 706  
Females 711  
Parish of Somersham acreage: 4516

Private families 402  
Population living in private families 1401  
Structurally separate dwellings 402

Census for 1951  
Total population 1317  
Males 640  
Females 677  
Parish of Somersham acreage: 4516  
Private families 436  
Population living in private families 1313  
Structurally separate dwellings 433

Census for 1961  
Total Population 1401  
Males 678  
Females 713

Census for 1971  
Total Population 1513  
Males 751  
Females 762

## **Portrait of a town 1830**

Portrait of a town  
1830

*During the 19th century the habit of drawing up lists and producing directories became fashionable. Pigot's Directory of Huntingdonshire of 1830 paints a picture of a thriving community in Somersham, full of shops and businesses and, in a time still pre dating the railways, with regular transport services to the world beyond. However if the Victorians had a passion for cataloguing, it did not necessarily mean they got everything right. The entry below refers to the Somersham market being on a Friday and as you can see in the Early Mediaeval section, it was in fact held on a Thursday.*

*Still its a very comprehensive list of the village amenities nonetheless!*

From Pigot's Directory of 1830

Somersham, a neat and small town in the parish of its name and Hundred of Hurstingstone is 64 miles from London, ten from Huntingdon and five from St Ives; situated in a very agreeable and fertile part of the county, well watered and abounding with Springs of purest and most transparent nature. It was formerly called Summersum and derived that appellation according to Mr Faux from a neighbouring hill that was the summer camp of the Romans. The only article that can be mentioned as manufactured here is that of rushes, for candles

called rush lights, the preparation of which gives employment to considerable numbers of both sexes and are sent all over England.

The living of Somersham is a triple rectory embracing the hamlets of Colne and Pidley cum Fenton: there is one church which is situated in the centre of the town and a Baptist chapel. There was once a market held here on Friday which has long been lost; here are still however two annual fairs one held in June the other in November. The parish contained by the last returns 1,166 inhabitants.

Post Office: Bartolomew Cox post master ♦ letters from St Ives arrive by foot post every morning at eight and are despatched by mail cart every evening at eight.

#### Gentry and Clergy

Rev Thos. Chas. Brown

Mrs Eliz. Corthorn

William Dare gent.

Mrs Edith Ibbott

George Jewson gent.

Francis Lowe gent.

William Mason gent.

Robert Moseley gent.

John Nix gent.

Rev. William Orriss

Mrs Lucy Royston

George Thomson gent.

Charles Warner gent.

Jno. Oaks Wilson gent.

Joseph Wilson gent.

Mrs. Cathrn. Wilson

#### Academies and schools

Somersham free school ♦ Thomas Orbell master

William Orriss (boys)

Rachel Smith (girls)

#### Bakers and Flour dealers

John Clifton

Samuel Freeman

John Parker

John Parker jun.

William Peck

#### Blacksmiths

John Bodger

Joseph Sarjeant

#### Boot and shoe makers

William Aspinall

William Behague

Thomas King (dealer)

Thomas Mast (dealer)



Frederick Murfey  
Samuel Williamson

Bricklayers and plasterers  
James Ibbott

Butchers  
John Asplen  
Richard jas. Heckford  
Edward Hempsted  
John Papworth  
William Papworth  
John Pedley  
William Wheaton

China and Glass  
Thomas King  
Thomas Mast

Office Agents  
Royal Exchange (fire and life) Thomas King  
Suffolk and General County (fire and life) Thos. Mast

Grocers and Drapers  
Thomas King  
Thomas mast  
Sarah Wiles

Inns and Public Houses  
Black Bull - Js. Watson  
Crown and Punch Bowl ♦ John Darwood  
George Inn ♦ Jno. Bodger  
Red Cow ♦ Thomas Charity  
Rose and Crown ♦ Bartholomew Cox

Joiners and carpenters  
Francis Ibbott (cabinet maker)  
Joseph King  
John Leuton (also machine maker)  
Thomas Spriggs  
Daniel Watson

Millers ♦ Corn  
Isaac Green  
William Ibbott  
Robert Leeds

Milliners and dressmakers  
Ann Behague  
Francis Bird

Ann Pedley  
Elizabeth Stevens  
Mary Wright

Painters Plumbers and Glaziers  
Thomas ground  
Robert Metcalfe

Rush Dealers  
Thomas Aspinall  
Charles Darby  
John Hogson  
William Hodson  
Richard Wood

Saddlers and collar makers  
Robert Barlow jnr.  
John Marsh

Shopkeepers  
John Clifton  
Sarah Hobbs

Surgeons  
Edward Castle  
John Smith

Tailors  
William Bailey  
Joseph Briggs (also tailor)  
John Doe  
Sarah Gowler  
John Martin (also tailor)  
Henry Mitchell

Wheelwrights  
John Smith

Miscellaneous  
William Leuton ♦ Parish Clerk  
Anthony Spalding ♦ watch and clockmaker

Coaches  
To London ♦ ♦ The Day ♦ (from Wisbeach) calls at the Crown and Punch Bowl  
Somersham, every Monday, Wednesday, Friday, morning at ten and ♦ The Defiance ♦ calls  
at the Rose and Crown every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning at the same hour.  
Both go through St Ives, Cambridge, Royston and Hoddesdon.

To Wisbeach - ♦ The Day ♦ (from Wisbeach) calls at the Crown and Punch Bowl  
Somersham, every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoon at half past four and ♦ The

Defiance calls at the Rose and Crown every Monday, Wednesday, Friday, afternoon at the same hour. Both go through Chatteris and March.

#### Carriers

To London, St Ives and Cambridge Day and Co's Waggon every Monday and Thursday and Wallis and Gilby every Sunday and Thursday.

To St Ives Thomas Phillip's cart every Monday Wednesday and Friday morning.

To Wisbeach, Chatteris and March - Day and Co every Monday and Friday and Wallis and Gilby every Tuesday and Friday.

## Land Survey 1873

*The following list is of landowners in the parish of Somersham together with the amount of land they held. It is interesting to compare the number of farmers (we have a total of 68 names with that of the Edwardian tax lists. It seems for all the revolutions on the land, the impact had been less than we might have thought!*

George Barlow - - 6 acres 0 rods 3 poles  
J Leeds Barlow - - 52 acres 3 rods 7 poles  
Peter Barlow - - 19 acres 0 rods 9 poles  
Robert Barlow - - 11 acres 3 rods 20 poles  
Susan Barlow - - 13 acres 2 rods 36 poles  
William Barlow - - 16 acres 2 rods 20 poles  
John Bodger - - 4 acres 0 rods 26 poles  
Thomas Bodger - - 29 acres 0 rods 24 poles  
Henry Brickwell - - 18 acres 1 rods 0 poles  
Joseph Briggs - - 4 acres 1 rods 30 poles  
Thomas Bull - - 6 acres 0 rods 22 poles  
Charity Trustees Somersham - - 21 acres 1 rods 38 poles  
William Charter - - 11 acres 1 rods 6 poles  
Edward Childs - - 16 acres 1 rods 2 poles  
John Clark - - 3 acres 3 rods 24 poles  
Trustees of Club Somersham - - 7 acres 2 rods 21 poles  
Robert Darwood - - 16 acres 3 rods 3 poles  
Charles Dawes - - 8 acres 3 rods 3 poles  
Frederick Dinn - - 6 acres 1 rods 10 poles  
William Edwards - - 99 acres 2 rods 39 poles  
Joseph Gifford - - 3 acres 2 rods 3 poles  
Trustees of John Green - - 109 acres 0 rods 30 poles  
Thomas Grounds - - 1 acres 1 rods 3 poles  
John Harden - - 5 acres 0 rods 32 poles  
James Hempsted - - 137 acres 2 rods 5 poles  
John Inglet - - 8 acres 0 rods 39 poles  
Rev. Jeremie - - 205 acres 2 rods 5 poles  
Thomas Key - - 13 acres 2 rods 38 poles  
C J Leeds - - 3 acres 1 rods 36 poles  
E Leeds Executors - - 2 acres 2 rods 0 poles  
Thomas Leeds - - 28 acres 2 rods 36 poles  
Daniel Marsh - - 24 acres 1 rods 35 poles

Henry Marsh - - 10 acres 0 rods 25 poles  
Alfred Mason - - 31 acres 0 rods 10 poles  
B Mason - - 32 acres 2 rods 34 poles  
C W Mason - - 36 acres 1 rods 17 poles  
Mrs F Mason - - 55 acres 1 rods 2 poles  
William Mason - - 16 acres 2 rods 15 poles  
John Massey - - 6 acres 2 rods 33 poles  
C Moseley - - 231 acres 2 rods 7 poles  
J Leeds Nix Jun. - - 2 acres 1 rods 1 poles  
John Nix - - 17 acres 1 rods 18 poles  
Miss Nix - - 36 acres 2 rods 17 poles  
Thomas Nix - - 84 acres 0 rods 34 poles  
William Nix sen. - - 266 acres 3 rods 5 poles  
William Nix Jun. - - 43 acres 0 rods 20 poles  
W H Nix - - 118 acres 2 rods 38 poles  
James Papworth - - 10 acres 3 rods 25 poles  
Parish Officers of Somersham - - 2 acres 2 rods 8 poles  
Saville Peaks - - 8 acres 1 rods 2 poles  
W Peaks - - 13 acres 0 rods 8 poles  
Mrs F Pentelowe - - 16 acres 3 rods 8 poles  
George Peters - - 9 acres 0 rods 29 poles  
Ann potto - - 7 acres 2 rods 2 poles  
W Powell - - 4 acres 1 rods 31 poles  
Louisa Royston - - 4 acres 3 rods 14 poles  
William Royston - - 1 acres 2 rods 36 poles  
Charles Ibbott Warner - - 305 acres 3 rods 25 poles  
Charles Watson - - 63 acres 0 rods 0 poles  
Clarke Watson - - 10 acres 3 rods 8 poles  
Rev. Westcott - - 212 acres 1 rods 13 poles  
James Wiles - - 50 acres 3 rods 16 poles  
WP Willson Executors - - 21 acres 1 rods 31 poles  
George and mary Wilson - - 143 acres 1 rods 11 poles  
Thomas Wilson - - 4 acres 0 rods 26 poles  
Solomon Woodroffe - - 5 acres 0 rods 0 poles  
Mary Woods - - 7 acres 1 rods 133 poles  
William Woods (Executors) - - 46 acres 0 rods 16 poles

## The Coronation of their Majesties George VI and Queen Elizabeth 1937



The coronation of George VI and Queen Elizabeth seems today like it belonged to a different era, an era of respect and deference where the coronation of a new monarch was a rare event to be celebrated. Every community across England had their own celebrations and the list below shows who was involved from Somersham. Of course no English social group from between the wars could think of organising anything without a committee and so below we have the list of organisers and committee members as well, somewhat more briefly, as the program of events for the great day.

**May 12<sup>th</sup> 1937**

**From the Huntingdonshire souvenir brochure**

**SOMERSHAM**

General committee

Chairman: Mr Charles Norman

Secretaries: Miss E K Gale and Rev. C J F Huggins

Treasurer: Mr E C Norman

Dr MS Double

Rev. JD Stewart

Rev HRH Cross

Rev CJF Huggins

Mr WCB Barlow

Mr HW Bush

Mr B Criswell (Procession Secretary)

Mr W Criswell (Torchlight Secretary)

Mr TH Goldsby

Mr WH Gotobed sen.

Mr H Lane

Mr S Medcalf

Mr EL Norman

Mr T Sewter

Mr W Smith

Mr FC Williams

Mr JE Rushworth

Mr E Darrell

Mr T Goldsby

Mr JE Rilett

Mr C Rowe

Mr F allen

Mr JH Knowles

Mr R Cox

Mr J Criswell

Mr C Redhead

Mr W Holmes (Sports Secretary)

Mr JA Bevor

Mr N Allen

Mr C Cannon

Mesdames

Mrs R Cox

Mrs T redhead

Mrs T Goldsby

Mrs M Ruff

Mrs WH Skipworth

Mrs JH Knowles (Joint Procession secretary)

MrsC Rowe

Mrs A Huckle

MrsR Brown (Tea Sectretary) W Smith

Mrs P Saint

Mrs MS Doubble

Mrs CJF Huggins

Mrs B Criswell

Mrs S Saint

Miss EK gale

Miss M Sarjeant

Miss M Johnstone

Miss J Saint

### **The Programme for the day**

Midday (approximately) Assembly at the Parks

1.00pm Open air service at the Parks

1.15pm Fancy dress Parade and Parade of Decorated cars, Lorries and Horse Drawn Vehicles

3.15pm Sports

4.00pm Children's Tea

9.00pm to 11.30pm Dance on the Cross (if wet in the Palace) to be followed by Torchlight Procession

Each child will be given a souvenir mug.

## **Population**

- Population in 1801 - 833.
- Population in 1851 - 1653.
- Population in 1901 - 1229.
- Population in 1951 - 1317.
- Population in 1971 - 1513.
- Population in 1991 - 3617.