

# RECORD

OF THE

# PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: General

EMBRACING THE

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY OF PHILADELPHIA, FROM A. D. 1706 TO 1716:  
MINUTES OF THE SYNOD OF PHILADELPHIA, FROM A. D. 1717 TO 1758:  
MINUTES OF THE SYNOD OF NEW YORK, FROM A. D. 1745 TO 1758:  
MINUTES OF THE SYNOD OF PHILADELPHIA AND NEW YORK, FROM A. D.  
1758 TO 1788.



PHILADELPHIA:

PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF PUBLICATION.

JAMES RUSSELL, PUBLISHING AGENT.

1841.

The letters to Dr. Cotton Mather, Mr. Wade, and the people of Woodbridge, were written and approved.\*

Ordered, That Mr. Andrews preach next Presbytery on the 11th verse of the first to the Hebrews, and Mr. McNish on the 12th.

\* To Dr. Cotton Mather.

September, 1712.

Rev. and Dear Brother :

You are not altogether unacquainted with the troubles that have been long at Woodbridge, by reason of the difference between Mr. Wade and a great part of the people there, which have occasioned much exercise and perplexity to us from year to year at our anniversary meetings, not only since his admission into our society, but also diverse years before. We hoped when he became one of us, we should have been instrumental of putting an end to those unhappy jars and feuds, but to our great sorrow, we have found ourselves miserably disappointed, for the contention increased rather than decreased presently thereupon, and has done so ever since. At our Presbytery last year, diverse of the people of Woodbridge appeared, some for and others against Mr. Wade; and grievous scandals were charged upon him, against which he made the best vindication he could, but not so good, but that we thought convenient to advise him to demit his pastoral relation to the whole people of Woodbridge, which advice he readily acquiesced in.

That the place might not be altogether destitute, it was thought expedient to make him their supply till another could be procured, to the satisfaction of the Presbytery and people. Mr. Wade, with tears in his eyes and trembling hands, declared he would be no longer a bone of contention there, which was matter of great rejoicing and satisfaction to us, expecting this would undoubtedly tend to the comfort and quiet of that miserable town; in which also our hope was frustrated to our great concern and lamentation.

Notwithstanding of such a free resignation of his charge made by him, he no sooner returned home, but he told the people, with ostentation, that now he was more firmly fixed in Woodbridge than ever he was before; and instead of complying with his demission so solemnly made, and joining with the people to get another minister, as he had promised to us; when the town came together to consider of that matter, he declared that he stood as fair to be voted for as any man, and contended that a vote should be first past with respect to himself, fallaciously and falsely pretending private instructions from diverse members of the Presbytery so to do; thereby overturning and misapplying all that was done at the Presbytery, to the breaking up of the meeting once and again *re infecta*, and to the further confusion of the town, which constrained the people to send a messenger to a coram of our number for explication of our letter, which was very plain of itself. Moreover he had the confidence in his letter to those, not only to claim an interest in a part of the people still, as his church, but to recant that expression, wherein he had declared, that he would be no longer a bone of contention, thereby virtually renouncing his demission he had so formally made; which recantation, by the best information we can get, he hath effectually complied withal, by his continuing to be the miserable bone of contention there. For it plainly appears to us, that it is his industrious endeavour to prevent the happy settlement of that place in another minister, either by setting up himself again, or keeping up the contention, or both.

We hoped that when Mr. Gillespie came there, (a gentleman recommended with an excellent character, and of so laudable a carriage,) that he should have been the happy instrument of uniting that people, especially when his management there was to universal satisfaction. And it is our opinion it had been so, if Mr. Wade had concurred with the people in it. But when he returned from Boston with your letter, (which, we doubt not, was with a sincere intention to promote the good of Woodbridge,) giving encouragement concerning one Mr. Wiswall; the town became divided betwixt Mr. Gillespie and Mr. Wiswall, which division we fear is too much owing to Mr. Wade, there appearing all likelihood of agreement in Mr. Gillespie before, which mistake we conclude to flow from misinformation, as your last letter to some in Woodbridge intimates.

We being fully persuaded, after serious deliberation and consultation, that so long as there is any hopes of Mr. Wade's preaching in Woodbridge, those feuds and animosities will be endless, have ordained and appointed, in the name and fear of our great Master, that the said Mr. Wade do no longer exercise his ministerial office at that town of Woodbridge, or among the people thereof, unless hereafter allowed by the Presbytery. We were constrained to this appointment, though Mr. Wade were not personally present, as being the only thing we could propose, and the utmost we could do for the good of poor Woodbridge.

Now sir, our joint request to you is, that you will use your utmost endeavour for the

Next Presbytery appointed to be at New Castle, on the third Tuesday of September, 1713.

At a Presbytery held at New Castle, which began,

September 15th, 1713. *Post preces sederunt,*

Ministers: Messrs. Jedediah Andrews, George McNish, John Henry, James Anderson.

Mr. James Anderson was chosen Clerk, and Mr. John Henry, Moderator.

re-uniting of that people by persuading them and Mr. Wade to lay aside all former resentments and prejudices against one another, and peaceably acquiesce in the settlement of Mr. Gillespie, if he may be prevailed upon. And in case this proposal should fail, by Mr. Gillespie's removal, which we very much fear, that they may jointly agree in another suitable person, whom yourself with our other reverend brethren in Boston shall recommend, or that Providence may otherways provide. We the more earnestly desire the speedy settlement of that place, upon the advantages that other persuasions take from those divisions, to make parties among them. And we fear, that in case it be not soon done, we shall lose that town, which we look upon as a place of considerable consequence.

Thus having laid before you the miseries of that deplorable town, and the necessity of its speedy relief, we conclude, recommending you and your holy labours to the blessing of our glorious Lord, and rest Reverend Brother,

Your affectionate Brother in Christ.—[*Letter Book.*]

To Mr. Nathaniel Wade.

September, 1712.

Mr. Wade:

We have had our meeting according to appointment, and were sorry that your business could not allow your attendance; your reasons intimated in your letter were sustained. The continued feuds between you and the people of Woodbridge came again under consideration, and after mature deliberation, we drew up the following overture, as the determination of the Presbytery concerning yourself, which we here transcribe and send you, expecting your ready compliance therewith. And at the same time earnestly exhort you, in the name and fear of God, to be so far from countenancing any differences among the people, by being a *bone of contention*, that you do use your utmost interest in them for their mutual peace and concord, as becomes a minister of the Prince of Peace. We account it would be an honourable thing in you that you use your best endeavours, that the worthy gentleman now among you, Mr. Gillespie, may be retained, and not discouraged; and that the people that have hitherto adhered to you, may be advised thankfully to acquiesce in him. And in case these differences should drive Mr. Gillespie out of the town, (which we hope no man will dare to maintain for that purpose.) we expect you will conscientiously, what in you lies, labour with the people that the place may be settled in the enjoyment of some other suitable person whom Providence shall provide. In a word, we earnestly recommend to you, that you study the peace and quiet of the town, that they may become at length, if it can be, happy in the enjoyment of an established ministry, according to the present desires of the people, that so these quarrels may not be carried on *ad infinitum*.—[*Letter Book.*]

The Overture is in the book of minutes.

To our Christian Friends at Woodbridge.

September, 1712.

Christian Friends and Dearly Beloved;

We have again taken much pains and spent much time in deliberating upon the deplorable differences of your town, which have heretofore cost us so much perplexity and trouble. And after impartial weighing and considering all circumstances we came to this conclusion, that so long as Mr. Wade does or may preach in the place, the people will neither agree in him nor in any other. We have, therefore, in the name and fear of our great Master, ordained and appointed that he do no longer exercise his ministerial office at your town, or among the people thereof, unless allowed by the Presbytery hereafter, of which we have given intimation in our letter to him. We do earnestly exhort and intreat you, in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, that laying aside all prejudices and animosities among one another, you do study peace, love, unity, and concord, as you did solemnly engage not long since in a public meeting held among you. Divine Providence having