

AMERICAN  
PRESBYTERIANISM

ITS ORIGIN AND EARLY HISTORY

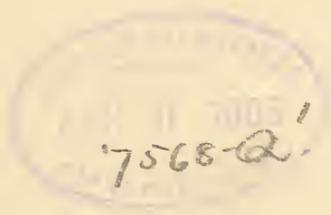
*TOGETHER WITH AN APPENDIX OF LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS, MANY OF WHICH HAVE RECENTLY BEEN DISCOVERED*

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WITH MAPS



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## VI.

## ORDER FOR THE REINSTATEMENT OF THOMAS HARRISON.

*To the Governor of Virginia.*

*Sir:*

We are informed by the petition of some of the people of the congregation of Nansemond in Virginia that they had long enjoyed the benefit of the ministry of Mr Harrison who is an able man and of unblamable conversation who hath been banished by you for no other cause but for that he would not conform himself to the use of the Common prayer book. Wee know you cannot be ignorant that the use of the Common prayer book is prohibited by the Parl. of England And therefore you are hereby required to permit the same Mr Harrison to return to his said congregation to the exercise of his ministry there unless there be such sufficient cause as shall be approved of the Parl. or this council when the same shall be represented unto us. Of your compliance herein we expect to receive an account from yourself of the first opportunity. Whitehall Oct 11. 1649.

*(Letter Book Council of State. Rolls Office. Domestic Interregnum No. 115, pp. 482-3.)*

## VII.

## MATTHEW HILL'S CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION.

“For as much as the Lord Jesus Christ, the great apostle of our profession, has judged it meet that there should be a succession of pastors and teachers, in his church, even unto the end of the world, for the edifying of his body, until it come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of his fulness; and hath deputed the care of the continuation of this ministerial office, unto such as have been already called thereunto, requiring them to commit the things they have received unto faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also: We the ministers of Christ, who are called to watch over part of his flock in the city of York, with the assistance of some others, that we might not be wanting to the service of the church in this its necessity, having received credible testimony under the hands of divers ministers of the gospel and others, of the sober, righteous and

godly conversation of Matthew Hill M. A. and preacher of the gospel at Helaugh, as also, concerning his gifts for the ministry, have proceeded to make further tryal of his fitness for so great a work; and being in some good measure satisfied concerning his piety and ability, have upon the 23rd day of June. A D. 1652 proceeded solemnly to set him the said Matthew Hill apart unto the office of a Presbyter and work of the ministry, by laying on our hands with fasting and prayer: By the vertue whereof we do esteem and declare him a lawful minister of Christ, and hereby recommend him to the church of Christ and more especially unto the people of Helaugh aforesaid, that they would receive him as a minister of the gospel, loving, honouring, and obeying him in the Lord In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands, this 24 day of June 1654 Nathaniel Jackson, Edward Bowles, Thomas Calvert." (*Calamy, Account of the Ministers, Lecturers, Masters and Fellows of colleges and schoolmasters who were ejected or silenced after the Restoration in 1660.* London, 1713; 2d edition, vol. II., p. 832.)

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 VIII.

MATTHEW HILL'S LETTER TO RICHARD BAXTER, 1669.

MARYLAND, CHARLES COUNTY,  
*April 3, 1669.*

For the Rev. Mr.  
 Richard Baxter at  
 his home in Acton near London.

*Honored Sir*

I should not have made so bold with your precious time designed for better uses than the perusal of so mean a paper as this, but that I could not furnish myself with any other means of testifying the due thankfulness that I bear within my breast for your singular kindness and consideration to one of my meanness. I cannot but acknowledge that your bounty found me under a great deal of misery as well as meanness and hath been instrumental in putting of me into a capacity of living comfortably and as I hope serviceably too: the Lord I hope will place it to your account. I am sure that the blessing of him that was ready to perish doth reach you though at this distance, what you have lost in your purse I hope you will regain in a better place. Sir I

am afraid to trouble you with any discourse concerning myself. Only I cannot but judge it my duty to be accountable for what I either am or have to sue from whom I have received the means of my new life and livelihood and particularly to yourself. Divine goodness hath been pleased to land my foot upon a province of Virginia called Maryland which is a province distinct from the government of Virginia, of which the Lord Baltimore is proprietor and governor. Under his lordships government we enjoy a great deal of liberty and particularly in matters of religion. We have many that give obedience to the church of Rome who have their public liberty, our governor being of that persuasion; We have many also of the reformed religion who have a long while lived as sheep without a shepherd though last year brought in a young man from Ireland who hath already had good success in his work. Divine providence hath also cast my lot amongst a loving and a willing people and we enjoy our public opportunity with a great deal of freedom, that which, as I hope, will make my work the more successful, is, the people are not at all fond of the liturgy or ceremonies. In so much as I have not yet heard any one with whom I have to do, to speak a word for them. The people called Quakers have gained a great many proselytes in this place, but their doctrine or devise rather hath lately decayed, very much of itself and is now quite dead and buried. Their very liberty hath been their ruin. We have room for more ministers, though their encouragement as I judge cannot be altogether as great as ours who are already settled; because we are where the people and the plantations are the thickest. It is judged by some that are acquainted with the state of the people better than myself that two or three itinerary preachers that have no dependence upon the people for maintenance would be eminently instrumental among them, though the people themselves, if I mistake not, are naturally of free dispositions and kind to their ministers and would take off that charge from such as should be willing to undergo it in a very short time. How many young men are there in England that want wages and work too. We cannot but judge it their duty to come over and help us. Sir I hope your own inclination will be advocate enough to plead the cause of this poor people and engage you to improve your interest on our behalf with some of our brethren in the work of the Lord. As to myself I have not yet done begging. My books when I was in England were too few to buy

me food ; and as we have not the opportunity, so I cannot but acknowledge I have not the ability as yet of purchasing such books as are useful and necessary for my work. I humbly beg of you that you will please to supply me with a few of such as you judge meet for my use ; and if that be any argument, I dare plead that after this time, I hope I have done begging. The young gentleman, the bearer hereof, is also to give you a full account of our country and the state of our affairs, whom I have engaged to wait upon you with this, and to attend your commands if you shall be pleased to honour me with what returns you shall think fit to give to my request. He is kinsman to Dr. Whitchcote and of the same name. I was much beholden to Mr. Davy and his good lady for their bounty towards me at my coming from England, which I could not but make mention of, because your letter to them and interest in them, was so successful an advocate for me to my no small advantage. I may justly say, I came with my staff only over the great waters ; and now the Lord hath blessed me with more than my heart durst wish, for which, as I desire to bless the Lord first, so I cannot but acknowledge my humble and hearty thankfulness to your self as mainly instrumental in my present liberty and livelihood. So I humbly entreat your favorable interpretation of this my freedom, which I assure you my present necessity enforces me to. My hopes of outward maintenance, or of being able to purchase any thing that I want of myself not being likely to be accomplished until our harvest for tobacco which is the only current money of our province. I hope your goodness will give your poor orator the freedom of begging from you the favour to represent my condition to some of your brethren or friends to whom God hath given ability and hearts to help those that stand in need of their help. I dare give you no further trouble, only by acknowledging myself honored Sir

Your humble servant and unworthy fellow laborer in the work  
of the gospel

MATTHEW HILL.

The above letter was discovered by the author in the summer of 1884, in Dr. Williams' Library, London, among the *MS.* Correspondence of Richard Baxter.