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# Seventh Day Baptist Historical Society

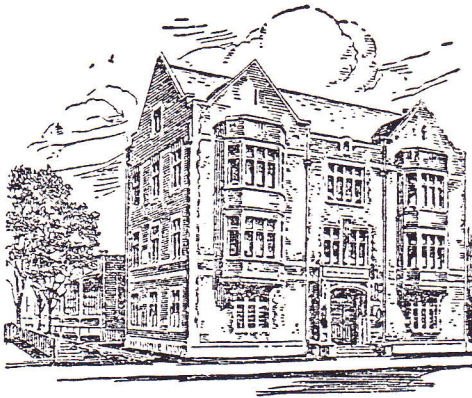
(Incorporated, State of New Jersey, 1916)

Rev. Albert N. Rogers, President

Rev. C. Harmon Dickinson, Treasurer

Miss Evalois St. John, Librarian

Seventh Day Baptist Building, 510 Watchung Avenue, Plainfield, New Jersey  
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April 17, 1969

William T. Voyce  
3123 Bowdoin Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50313

Dear Mr. Voyce:

I am enclosing the following photocopies which you requested: --

S.D.B. Memorial, Vol. 2, page 121.

This is a portion of the history of the Piscataway Church, org. in 1705. An error has been made in copying or quoting apparently. The original reads -- The Church of Christ. It does not use the term Church of God. I enclose a copy of a page taken from the original records. Almost without exception each recording in the early days began with these words: -- "The church of Christ keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ living in Piscataway & Hopewell in the province of New Jersey being assembled with one accord. . . ." etc.

S.D.B. Memorial, Vol. 2, page 160.

You will find the phrase - ". . . take charge of the church of God dwelling in Shrewsbury. . ." The phrase or term "church of God" as used here does not denote or specify a specific denomination by that name. Rather it refers to a Christian Church.

History of S.D.B's in West Virginia, p. 19

The charge given Jacob Davis.

"I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, that thou take charge of the church of Christ dwelling at Shrewsbury, preach the Word in and amongst them..."

History of S.D.B's in West Virginia, p. 20

"The Church of Christ in Shrewsbury and Middletown in the observance of God's Holy Sanctified Sabbath. . ." You will find the phrase - church of God - in the last line. Again this does not indicate a denominational name.

S.D.B's in Europe and America, p. 163

This is a report or summary of what took place at the 1808 General Conference. Let me say that this letter was written by Conference to -- "To the Seventh Day Baptist Church residing on the west Fork of the Monongahela River." "The Elders, Messengers, and Brethren, composing the Sabbatarian General Conference, now sitting in Hopkinton, State of Rhode-Island, to the Seventh Day Baptist Church, on the west Fork of the Monongahela River, Harrison county, State of Virginia -- sendeth Greeting."

11

The "Baptists" mentioned in this letter of 1808 were not observers of the Seventh Day but were what we designate as First Day Baptists.

I send a photocopy of the letter as it appears in the old minutes of 1808.

Seventh Day Baptists in Europe & America, p. 175

This is a summary of the 1826 Conference. I do not know why this particular letter was chosen by Ambassador College. Perhaps it is the reference to the "Fanatical & unworthy observers of the Seventh-day" which is found in the last paragraph. Perhaps the complete letter will make this clear. Dr. Burnside lived in England.

You mention Dr. Meade's book. We have had correspondence with Dr. Meade in the past. He and others have used as their source material on the Church of God (Seventh Day) a government pamphlet -- Census of Religious Bodies: 1936, volume 11, part 1, U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 1941. The article on the origin and history of the Church of God (Seventh Day) found in this pamphlet was furnished by A.N. Dugger. The Census Bureau has confirmed this fact. This is the source of all the confusion. The research Department of Encyclopedia Britannica have used this article in the past, also.

I believe I have already told you the following. I repeat it here, however.

A.N. Dugger was an active worker in the Church of God (Adventist) whose headquarters were at Stanberry, Mo. At one time he was editor of their paper - Sabbath Advocate. He was an "overseer", president of their conference, and also at one time treasurer. A quarrel broke out in that group and Mr. Dugger with some others withdrew. They left Stanberry and in 1933 set up what they termed "headquarters" in Salem, W. Va. That was in 1933. Now the Seventh Day Baptists had a church in Salem, W. Va., since 1790, at least. The old Shrewsbury church had moved as a church body to Western Virginia in 1789. They settled in western Virginia and called their settlement "New Salem". We have the original record book in our archives. There is a college in the town or city of Salem which was established by Seventh Day Baptists in the 1900's. It was first an academy (organized 1889). In the article he prepared for the Religious Census of 1936, he calls this early Shrewsbury Church a Church of God. In fact he takes over Seventh Day Baptist history, and some Seventh Day Adventist History.

The Seventh Day Adventists first called our attention to this article, and representatives from both denominations sent letters of protest to the Census Bureau. They were assured that corrections would be made in the next census which was to be taken in 1946. However, no pamphlet has been published by the Bureau since then.

In 1961 I came across a history of the Church of God (Seventh Day) which it was stated - was prepared by the Research Department of Britannica. I immediately wrote to them, as well as to the Census Bureau. I also notified the editor of "Review and Herald." He made a personal visit to Britannica. I enclose a copy of a letter which he sent me in August, 1961.

III

I have had no correspondence with Herbert Armstrong. He may have been a minister in the Church of God (Seventh Day). I have no reason to doubt his word. I do know, however, that the denomination known today as Church of God (Seventh Day) or Seventh Day Church of God was not in existence as a distinct denomination by that name when the first Seventh Day Baptist Church in America was constituted in Newport, R.I., in 1671. I also know that the phrase or term one finds in the Bible - church of God, or church of Christ - even if written Church of God or Church of Christ - I know this term does not stand for specific denomination as we know denominations today. It stands for the Christian Church out of which have come Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, etc.

You say you have the Year Book of Churches. I send you a copy of page 11 and page 12 for 1923. Read what it states concerning Church of God, Adventist. Note the name of A.N. Dugger. Note the paragraph under History.

The minutes of our General Conference do not indicate any opposition to the term or name "Seventh Day Baptist General Conference." Previously it had been written- Sabbatarian Baptist Conference. Our churches are first of all "Baptist" churches. We are distinguished from other Baptists, or the Body of Baptists - by the observance of seventh day as our Sabbath. All but two members of the first Seventh Day Baptist Church on America - were members of First Day Baptist Church in Newport - generally spoken of as "Dr. Clarke's Church."

A great many of our S.D.B. churches have in their official name -- the phrase -- The Seventh Day Baptist Church of Christ.

Very truly yours,

*Evalois St. John*  
(Miss) Evalois St. John

P.S. The old S.D.B. Church of Piscataway, N.J., organized in 1705, used the name -- The Sabbatarian Church of Christ, or sometimes we note The Church of Christ in Piscataway keeping the seventh day for a Sabbath.