

THE SABBATH SCOOP

VOLUME 28

DECEMBER 2015

NUMBER 9

Stephen & Ann Mumford: The First Known Sabbath-Keepers in America

The first people we know for sure kept the Sabbath in the New World were the Mumfords.

Did they find freedom of religion in the New World—or were they still persecuted for keeping God's Sabbath?

By Gregory Dullum

As the 17th century approached its midpoint, more and more Englishmen began keeping the seventh-day Sabbath. To avoid persecution, the Sabbath-keepers met quietly in private. It was not until 1640—20 years after the Pilgrims landed in America—that Sabbath-keepers in Tewkesbury, England, formally organized into a church—the first *official* Sabbath-keeping Church of God in England (*The Incredible History of God's True Church* by Ivor C. Fletcher, 1984, p. 191).

By 1646 there were seven Sabbatarian congregations in London.

Stephen and Ann Mumford of Tewkesbury were a young couple attending a Baptist church when they came to realize the Sabbath should be kept instead of Sunday. Based upon their future actions, it's likely that they learned about the Sabbath from Sabbath-keepers who met with their Sunday-keeping Baptist church.

In about 1660, the Mumfords quit attending the Baptist Church and began attending the Bell Lane Church, one of the seven Sabbatarian churches in London ("Free at Last—History of the Church of God" by Ronald Kelly, Part 10, *Plain Truth*, October 1991, p. 18).

Moving to America

In 1665, the Mumfords decided to leave England for America with their young son, Stephen Jr. Why?

"When [Oliver] Cromwell came to power [1653], there was much greater freedom of religion, and the congregations of Sabbath-keepers flourished.



Photo by Greg Dullum

This is the very first Seventh Day Baptist Meeting House in America. It was built in 1730 and is now part of the Newport Historical Society in Rhode Island. Inside this church is a plaque honoring the Mumfords and five others who formed the first Sabbatarian church in the New World in 1671.

After Cromwell died, the crown went to Charles II in 1661. Because of much plotting against the new king, Charles felt that the dissenters were against him, so he cracked down on religious freedom, enacted into law several acts of parliament. This was one of the main reasons why Stephen and Ann Mumford emigrated to the New World, arriving at Newport, Rhode Island, in 1665" ("Stephen and Ann Mumford," <https://family-search.org/photos/stories/10216437>).

Why did they go to Rhode Island? The colony of Rhode Island was founded on the principle of religious freedom and people of *all beliefs* flocked there. Those who clung to the *traditional* beliefs of the Church of England or Roman Catholicism

had a LOW OPINION of Rhode Island. "Rhode Island, like the Isle of Ely, became the New World's 'Island of Errors.' ... The colony, least liked of any so far settled, was now the home of Separatists, Seekers, Gortonists, antinomians, Anabaptists, and just plain heretics, and it soon won the dubious honor as a place to dump Quakers who had been run out of Massachusetts, Plymouth, and New York. Because of its toleration of anyone in those years, it had become the 'Latrina of New England,' as a couple of Dutch domines indelicately put it" (*Religious Enthusiasm in the New World* by David S. Lovejoy, 1985, pp. 79, 122-123.)

The Mumfords settled in Newport, Rhode Island, a bustling seaport village, where Stephen (Sr.) became a successful businessman and built one of the most impressive homes of the day ("History of the Church of God," part 10, by Ronald Kelly and Jimmy Franks, *Plain Truth*, October 1991, pp. 18-20).

Meeting With Baptists

There were two established churches in Newport. One was a Quaker church on Farewell Street. The other was the First Baptist Church, which overlooked the harbor. The Mumfords felt more comfortable meeting with the Baptists, because they had been former Baptists themselves, and the Baptist beliefs more closely matched their current beliefs. While other churches practiced infant baptism by sprinkling, the Baptists and

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Sabbatarians believed in adult baptism by immersion.

The Mumfords kept the Sabbath by themselves at home and then met on Sunday with the Baptists. Why did they both-er to meet with the Baptists at all?

“What we see in the actions of Stephen Mumford was that he was merely following an evangelistic practice that was already extant in England, that of fellowshipping with Sunday observing Baptists and then winning some of them over as converts to Sabbath worship. ... So Sab-atarians fellowshipping with Baptists didn’t make them a part of the Baptists. It made the Baptists a target of Sabbatarian evangelism, and this is what we observe first hand taking place in Newport, Rhode Island” (“Sabbatarian Churches of God in Rhode Island,” www.unityinchrist.com/history/cog/cog1prt.htm, pp. 4-5).

Before long, fruit was born. Samuel and Tase Hubbard began keeping the Sabbath with the Mumfords in 1665. The Hub-ard children followed in their parents’ footsteps. Notice Samuel Hubbard’s com-ment from his *Journal*:

“My wife took up keeping the Lord’s holy 7th day Sabbath the 10 day March 1665. I took it up 1 day April 1665. Our daughter Ruth—25 Oct. 1665 Rachel—Jan. 15 day 1666—Bethiah—Feb. 1666. Our son Joseph Clarke—23 Feb. 1666” (*Samuel Hubbard’s Journal Circa 1633-1686* by Samuel Hubbard, 1940, pp. 9-10).

Some Brethren Fall Away

Within four years, this small group of Sabbath-keepers had grown to 11 mem-bers. Their Sabbath-keeping upset the Baptist ministers, who preached that Sab-ath-keepers “had gone back to Moses.” Four Sabbath-keepers went back to Sun-day worship and persecuted the remain-ing seven Sabbatarians.

On July 3, 1669, Mr. Hubbard wrote to the Church of God in Bell Lane, London. He wrote that brother Wylde and his wife, and brother John Salmon and his wife “have forsaken this truth & us, & turned back to full communion with this church.” He described Wylde as an “old disciple” and his wife as “a knowing woman.” But now they not only had left the Church of God (as these Sabbath-keepers would call themselves) but had babbled foolishly and written pamphlets against the truth.

It was not easy for their small congrega-tion to lose four upstanding members. Wrote Hubbard, “It is a very hard exer-cise to us, poor weak ones to loose four so suddenly out of 11 of us here.”

Hubbard was troubled by their falling away. And his own weakness scared him. “Alas, I am so weak poor feeble creature, not able to bear these small things, what will become of me, if fiery tryals should come!”

He concluded, “But this is my comfort, my God is al-sufficient and mighty to save & will deliver, I trust” (Hubbard, pp. 40-41).

Church Faces Dilemma

The Church of God in Newport faced a dilemma. The brethren had no problem fellowshipping with the Sunday Baptists who had never acknowledged the sev-enth-day Sabbath. But it was not accept-able to fellowship with the four who had accepted the truth and now rejected it (Mat. 18:17, 2 Thes. 3:14-15).

Letters were written to the Bell Lane Church in England for advice.

On March 6, 1670, Edward Stennett replied:

“MY DEAR FRIENDS,—As for those that have drawn back from the Sabbath to profaneness, after light and establishment therein, yourselves must not take pleasure in them, but must withdraw yourselves from them as sinful and disorderly per-sons; and if the church will hold commu-nion with those apostates from the truth, you ought then to desire to be fairly dis-missed from the church; which if the church refuse, you ought to withdraw yourselves, and not be partakers of other men’s sins, but keep yourselves pure, with all humility, meekness, and broken-ness of heart” (*The Seventh Day Baptist Memorial* Vol. I, pp. 27-28, as quoted by Kelly and Franks, Part 10, p. 20).

William Hiscox, Stephen Mumford and Samuel Hubbard wrote back to Stennett Sept. 4, 1670:

“Your good counsel we have pondered well, & have taken some steps in, but we have no hopes of help from them, but they are encouraging them that are drawn back from the Lord’s holy Sabbath, and he is become a speaker more than ever before. And dear brother, your desire is to know our standing (we that is) we of this church are very loth [loath] to leave all for some; we being very few here, but 5, & weaklings also, beside brother Stephen Mumford & his wife.

“This is the very trouble to many of us, & having declared by one for all that we cannot have such full freedom of spirit with those that are fallen back from the truth once professed, most do not hold yet full communion in breaking of bread, & the rest of the ordinances with ’em. But this by grace we are helped to do, we in our measure endeavour to sanctify

God’s holy Sabbath by assembling our-selves, 7 of us to pray & edify each other, and no man disturbs us in any kind: blessed be God. Oh rich mercy! Oh that we might find the same effect as of old! When the churches had peace, were edi-fied and increased. O dear heart, O that the Lord would stir up some to come and help us poor ones! —At Westerly is brother Joseph Clark Junior & his wife, sister Ruth Burdick, and sister Maxon.—

“Farewell. From Newport on Rhode Is-land 4 day Sept. 1670, William Hiscox, Stephen Mumford, Samuel Hubbard” (Hubbard, pp. 60-61).

In a later letter to Mr. Stennett, Hubbard informed him that “he was alone in with-drawing communion on account of those he called apostates” (Hubbard, p. 61).

Later, all the Sabbath-keepers dropped communion but they continued attending the First Baptist Church. “On Sept. 10, 1671, Mssrs. Hiscox, Mumford & Hub-bard wrote to the church in Bell Lane, London & informed them that they had followed their advice in withdrawing from table communion though they still met with the church but did not propose to long” (Hubbard, p. 64).

The Baptist ministers went on the offen-sive against the Sabbath-keepers. Various ministers, including John Clarke, preached fiery sermons attacking the commandments of God, especially the Sabbath.

By this time, the Sabbath-keepers at-tended only sporadically with the Baptists. “They never made an uproar in the Baptist Church, and never created confusion in the Baptist Church. But none-the-less, this avoiding of the other 4 must have created some friction with the Baptist Church they fellowshipped with, for on December 11, 1671, Obadiah Holmes, assistant pastor of the Baptist Church in Newport, gave a ser-mon attacking the Sabbath. Ruth Burdick

The SABBATH SCOOP

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Cape Girardeau, MO 63701-3332

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PRINT CIRCULATION: 78 • COST PER ISSUE: FREE
<http://sabbathcoop.myfreesites.net>

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was the only Church [of God] member attending. ... She went directly to Stephen Mumford's house and told the others" ("Sabbatarian Churches of God in Rhode Island," pp. 2-3).

Finally, in December 1671, a hearing was called and the Sabbath-keepers were called before the Baptist ministers (Kelly and Franks, Part 10, p. 20).

Hubbard described the hearing in a Dec. 16, 1671, letter to his children at Westerly:

"So it was alledged because some keeping the 7th day or Sabbath, either they in an error or we etc. Then br. Hiscox began but they would not let him—everyone must answer for himself lest others led by him; so they named me, but I would not be first: then my wife laid down three grounds, then br. Hiscox, laid down his grounds, three also, then bro. Baster said Br. Hiscox hath spoke my mind, so said Rachel, then bro. Tory said, bro. Hubbard you may lay down your grounds if you will.

"I answered, I believe there is but one God, creator of all things by his word at first, & then made the 7th day & sanctified it & rested on it & was refreshed, never altering it[,] commanded it to be kept holy etc., that Christ our Lord stablished it, Mat. 5. The holy apostles stablished it, did not say it was holy, but is holy, just and good: & in the Revelation the dragon made war with the woman's seed, that kept the commandments of God, etc. Bro. Tory said they required not my faith. I said it was one ground for my practice (note br. John Clarke & Br. Tory writ what all said, or some of it)[.]

"Br. Weeden said its his grounds, therefore should be written or else not well etc. So I went on saying that the backsliding of some from what they said they had received of the Lord, & one on his bended knees to God gave thanks for the discovery of it etc. Another say if ever God had discovered his grace to her soul, then he had made this also.

"They replied fiercely: it was a tumult. J. Tory stop[p]ed them at last. Br. Hiscox my wife & Rachel witnessed it. Another



Photo by Greg Dullum

This tombstone marks the grave of Stephen Mumford.

ground was Ob[adiah] Holmes saying we had left Christ gone to Moses etc." (Hubbard, pp. 65-66).

During the next five days the Baptists intended to interrogate the Sabbath-keepers individually. Hiscox was called in first. Samuel and Tase Hubbard listened to the first two days of the interrogation of Hiscox, and "seeing how things went to catch us, we drew up our result, appointed br. Hiscox to declare for us all in God's name and ours, an admonishment for preaching down God's holy 10 commandments say all done away, & upholding those apostates & standing by Ob. Holmes preaching an untruth (or we) in God's name—.

"Those who joined in this act were Mr. Hiscox, Hubbard & his wife, & daughter Rachel with R. Baster" (Hubbard, p. 67).

On Dec. 16, the Sabbatarians met with the Baptist minister, John Clarke, and Obadiah Holmes, and asked, "What should be done to rectify this problem?" They were told, "Reject the Sabbath or you can no longer commune with us." Finally Tase Hubbard spoke up, saying, "This is what I say, we must keep God's seventh-day Sabbath no matter what the consequences" ("Sabbatarian Churches of God in Rhode Island," p. 3)

First American Church of God

On Dec. 23, 1671, the seven Sabbath-keepers separated from the Baptists to form a new church—the first congregation of the Church of God in the New World. A plaque in the old Sabbatarian meeting house in Newport, Rhode Island, commemorates this event. It reads in part:

"To the memory of Wm. Hiscox, Stephen Mumford, Samuel Hubbard, Roger Baster, Sister Hubbard, Sister Mumford, Sister Rachel Langworthy. Who for greater freedom in the exercise of religious faith in the observance of God's Holy Sabbath—the Seventh Day of the Week—reluctantly severed their connection with the parent church, the First Baptist Church of Newport, and entered into a church covt. the 23rd day of Dec., 1671."

William Hiscox became the first minister for this congregation. They chose not to give their church an official name because that would mean state recognition, which they felt was unnecessary. In the earliest record of minutes available from this congregation, they called themselves "the Church of Rhode Island and Westerly." At other times the church is called "the Congregation" and the "Church of God." The most commonly used name was "The Church of Jesus Christ Keeping the Commandments."

Unity and harmony were maintained by continual communication with the Church of God congregations across the ocean in England.

Beliefs of This Church

"The doctrines of this church were, not surprisingly, very closely related to those of the Apostolic Church and the other 'True Christians' ... throughout the Church's history.

"They kept the Ten Commandments. They believed in the immersion baptism of adults and did not baptize children. They believed in the 'laying on of hands.' They practiced the footwashing described in John 13:3-16. They did not refer to ministers as 'Reverends,' since they believed only God should be revered. They were a pacifistic people who opposed war, slavery, and secret societies. They did not believe in the trinity. They believed the Holy Spirit was the 'Power of God' " ("The Times of Stephen Mumford" by James McGeachy, <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/SDB/2009-05/1243527900>, p. 2).

Mumford Visits England

Stephen Mumford sailed from Boston to England Jan. 14, 1675. It took him six weeks to sail the wintery Atlantic. The first three weeks he had "a comfortable time & fair wind." But then the ship ran into a cross wind which kept it at sea three weeks more.

When the ship finally landed near

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Know Your Bible

By Charles Nenninger

1. Who asked, "What have I done unto you that you have smitten me these three times?"?
2. Which tribe of Israel had no inheritance of land?
3. Who was Adam's first son?
4. What is the spiritual symbol for being buried?
5. Who was God's chosen people?

(Answers on page 5)

You Shall Not Covet

The tenth commandment condemns coveting. Is it wrong to desire more than we need? What is coveting? Why is it wrong?

By Gregory Dullum
Part 15

Humans are different from animals. “It is true that human nature desires more than it needs. Lower animals and plants function automatically to take from the environment what they basically need to survive and reproduce. There are clear limits to their acquisition, and these limits are dictated by instinct. In other words, lower animals are hardwired to stop wanting when their needs are met” (*The Ten Commandments* by Dr. Laura Schlessinger and Rabbi Stewart Vogel, 1998, p. 298).

Humans have the ability to want more than they need. This can be a good thing. Schlessinger and Vogel continue, “no lower animal dreams of conquering a wilderness, saving children in distant lands, gathering millions for charitable causes, committing their lives to research for a cure for communicable diseases, or cooperating to build an inspirational gathering place to worship and study” (ibid.).

The ability to want more than we need can be put to a positive use. Pushed by this desire, we have created a better world in which to live, with electricity, heat and air conditioning, time-saving modern appliances, safe and comfortable modes of transportation and instant communication. In fact, it is our desire for more than what this physical life offers that makes us long for another life—a future existence—eternal life. But we don’t know the way to eternal life unless God reveals it to us (Eccles. 3:11).

God wants us to desire things in our heart and to fulfill those desires. “Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart” (Ps. 37:4). David further said to God, “You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing” (Ps. 145:16).

It is not wrong to desire things we do not have. But not all desiring is proper, for it is against this backdrop that God gives us the 10th Commandment: “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”

Is it wrong to desire a house, a wife, a servant, farm animals, or acquiring things in general? No. God told the Jews who went into Babylonian captivity for 70 years, “Build houses and dwell in them” (Jer. 29:5). In the future, after Christ re-

turns and rescues Israelites from captivity again, they are will build houses, “And they shall dwell safely there, build houses, and plant vineyards...” (Ezek. 28:26). It’s not wrong to want a house in which to live. God inspired Solomon to write, “He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD” (Prov. 18:22). It’s not wrong to desire a wife. In the Millennium, people will be blessed with cattle, oxen and donkeys (Isa. 30:23-24). Wanting these things in itself is not wrong. When does wanting these things become a sin? When those things *already belong to someone else*.

The commandment is not a prohibition against desiring a house or other items that are FOR SALE, or seeking a SINGLE woman for a wife. The commandment prohibits coveting things that already belong to our neighbors. We should NOT desire our neighbor’s house—we should build our own. We should not desire our neighbor’s wife—we should find our own wife. We should not desire our neighbor’s animals or transportation or belongings. We should desire instead to purchase our own that we find for sale in the marketplace.

Emphasized in this commandment by repetition are references to *our neighbor* who OWNS these items: “your neighbor’s,” “your neighbor’s,” “his,” “his,” “his,” “his” and “your neighbor’s.”

The things themselves are not wrong to own, and it’s not wrong to desire these things if they are available in the marketplace. It is wrong to desire these things if they already belong to our neighbor.

What Is Coveting?

Let’s now examine what it really means to covet. This is not a verb we use in our daily conversations. To covet means MORE than to *desire* or *want* something.

Covetousness is described as “Inordinate desire to possess what belongs to another, usually tangible things” (“Covet, Covetousness,” *Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Chad Brand, Charles Draper and Archie England, general editors, 2003, p. 360).

A footnote in *Nelson’s NKJ Study Bible* (1997) further explains, “Covet means ‘to have a strong desire for.’ Coveting was not merely an appreciation of something from a distance, but an uncontrolled, inordinate, selfish desire. This tenth command governed an internal matter: the

sin of covetousness occurred in the mind. This demonstrated that God intended the Israelites not only to avoid the actions named in the previous commands, but also to turn away from the evil thoughts that led to those actions” (p. 136).

The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary gives us some additional understanding about the word “covet”: “An inordinate desire for what one has not; in NASB this word is translated ‘greed’; its basis lies in discontentment with what one has. It has an element of lawlessness and is sinful because it is contrary to the command, ‘Being content with what you have’ (Heb. 13:5), because it leads to trust in ‘the uncertainty of riches,’ to love the world, to forgetfulness of God, and is idolatry (Col. 3:5), setting up wealth instead of God. It ranks with the worst sins (Mark 7:22; Rom. 1:29). Our Lord especially warns against it (Luke 12:15), as does Paul (Eph. 5:3; etc.). ...

“The verb also is used in a good sense (1 Cor. 12:31, KJV, NIV, NASB, ‘but earnestly *desire* the greater gifts’)” (by Merrill F. Unger, 1988, p. 260).

It is not wrong to desire things to improve our station in life. That’s part of *being human* and is *encouraged in the scriptures*. It is wrong, however, to desire things that *already belong to someone else*, and have such a *burning desire* for them that we would want to take them from others.

We must also keep our priorities straight. We must seek FIRST the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Fulfilling our physical wants and needs must be SECONDARY (Mat. 6:33). Jesus tells us, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses” (Luke 12:15).

If acquiring wealth and things becomes first place in our lives, then we are guilty of coveting; we are putting those things *ahead of God*—and that is IDOLATRY! That’s why Paul instructs us, “Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and COVETOUSNESS, *which is idolatry*” (Col. 3:5, emphasis added).

The 10th and final commandment brings us full circle back to the first commandment: “You shall have no other gods before Me.” We have gone full circle, and thus conclude our study of the 10 Commandments. Let us now strive to keep them with all our heart.

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Portsmouth, Mumford took a wagon to London, about 75 miles to the north. Mumford described the brethren's reaction to his visit:

"I was received of the brethren in with much joy in some of them who had a great desire to hear of our place & people. Some of them talk of coming with me. The first Sabbath I was with them I heard Mr. Bam[p]field a Dorsetshireman, who now lives in London, who for his holiness of conversation and soundness of doctrine is renowned throughout the city. The last Sabbath I was at Mr. Sellers' meeting, who are a thriving hopeful people. Brother Davis lives in London & walks with them.—The brethren here are generally well: the meetings of all separates very great and numerous, but daily expecting another scourge; they [government officials] have begun to disturb some meetings already: several imprisoned at Bristol" (Hubbard, pp. 78-79).

Mumford Returns

By Sept. 4, 1675, Mumford had returned from London. He did not return alone; he brought with him "a brother and a sister" from the church in London (Hubbard, pp. 79, 81).

The "brother" was an assistant minister: "—he returned with a new assistant elder, William Gibson, of the Bell Lane church. Gibson was probably already ordained when he arrived, for he preached at New London, and eventually settled at Westerly. Gibson worked effectively against the Rogerine sect, and upon Hiscox's death, he became full pastor" (*Sabbatarian Baptists in America* by R. C. Nickels, p. 7, as quoted by Fletcher, p. 199).

Brethren Corrected

On July 16, 1678, letters were sent to two brethren to correct them for improper behavior. A letter signed on behalf of the church by William Hiscox, William Gibson, Samuel Hubbard, Stephen Mumford, John Maxon, John Read, Roger Baster and John Thornton was sent to John Rogers for carrying a burden on the Sabbath and other improper behavior.

Apparently the letter to John Rogers did no good.

On Sept. 15, 1678, Samuel Hubbard reported there were 37 Sabbatarians in America: 20 in Newport, Rhode Island; seven at Westerly, Rhode Island; and 10 at New London, Connecticut. Unfortunately, a short time later, John Rogers left the church and carried off with him most

of the brethren in New London (*Westerly and Its Witnesses* by F. Denison, pp. 59-60, as quoted by Fletcher, p. 199; Hubbard, pp. 97, 32-33).

General Meeting Proposed

Francis Bampffield and his London Church wrote to Hubbard Feb. 12, 1679, to propose that a general meeting be held for the "general good" of the brethren in England, America and Holland. Howard Stennett added a postscript to the letter and suggested the meeting be May 14 of that year (Hubbard, p. 102).

The first General Meeting of Sabbathkeepers on American soil was held five years later on May 14, 1684, shortly after Pentecost. All of the brethren in New London, Westerly, Narraganset, Providence, Plymouth Colony and Martha's Vineyard were invited to attend. According to Hubbard, 26 or 27 people attended.

"The object of this meeting was to bring the members, so widely scattered together at a communion season" (*Seventh-Day Baptists in New England, 1671-1971*, Karl G. Stillman, p. 2, as quoted by Fletcher, p. 201).

The Newport church continued to grow. "There were thirty-seven members in 1678 and seventy-six by 1692" ("Our Own Thanksgiving Story" by Doug Ward, <http://graceandknowledge.faithweb.com/sdb.html>, p. 8).

Mumfords Die

Ann Mumford died in 1697/8. She was buried on a family plot in the Old Colonial Cemetery on Farewell Street in Newport. Her tombstone reads, "HERE LYETH YE BODY OF ANN MUMFORD YE WIFE OF STEPHEN MUMFORD DEC'D FEBRUARY YE 22ND 1697/8."

Stephen lived another 10 years or so. He died in 1707 and was buried next to his wife. His tombstone reads: "HERE LYETH BURIED YE BODY OF STEPHEN MUMFORD AGED 68 YEARS & DEPARTED THIS LIFE JULY 1707."

After the death of Stephen Mumford, the church at Newport began to water down the truth. (We saw the same thing happen in our day after the death of Herbert W. Armstrong in 1986.)

"After Stephen Mumford's death in 1707 there were many waterings down

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Know Your Bible Answers

1) Balaam's donkey. 2) Levites. 3) Cain. 4). Baptism. 5) Israelites.

Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS

The record number of hands shaken by a public figure at an official function was 8,513 by President Theodore Roosevelt at a New Year's Day White House presentation in 1907.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine L'Engle., Farrar, Straus and Company, 1964, p. 172.

All Things Work Together

"She had found her father and he had not made everyting all right. Everything kept getting worse and worse. If the long search for her father was ended, and he wasn't able to overcome all their difficulties, there was nothing to guarantee that it would all come out right in the end. There was nothing left to hope for. She was frozen, and Charles Wallace was being devoured by IT, and her omnipotent father was doing nothing..."

"Mr. Murry bent over her, massaging her cold fingers. She could not see his face. 'My daughter, I am not a Mrs. Whatsit, a Mrs. Who, or a Mrs. Which. Yes, Calvin has told me everything he could. I am a human being and a very fallible one. But I agree with Calvin. We were sent here for something. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.'"

Rom. 8:28

Quotable Quotes

"Whether you think you can or think you can't—you are right."

—Henry Ford

Memory Scripture

"And the LORD said to Samuel, 'Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them.'"

—1 Sam. 8:7

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and changes which started to take place in their fundamental beliefs. On March 2, 1708, they apparently changed their observance of Passover from the yearly Bible observance of it on the 14th of Nisan to a monthly or bimonthly event” (“Sabbatarian Churches of God in Rhode Island, pp. 7-8).

Church Continues to Grow

A second Rhode Island congregation that met in the town of Westerly was first called the Westerly Church, and later the First Hopkinton Church. It became the leading Seventh Day Baptist congregation in the United States, with 764 members by 1800 (Ward, p. 8).

“This Rhode Island church also spread to other areas, as the ‘Seventh Day Baptist Memorial’ chronicles.

“In 1703, a Sabbath-keeping congregation was started at Piscataway, New Jersey, and later at Shrewsbury, New Jersey, calling themselves the ‘Church of God’ and both are linked in this journal directly to the Rhode Island Church (Vol. 2, No. 3, pg. 121 and Vol. 2, No. 4, pg. 160)” (McGeachy, pp. 2-3).

“The Seventh Day Baptists are also indirectly responsible for the acceptance of the Sabbath by other groups of Christians. In particular, they helped introduce it to the Adventists of the Millerite movement. In 1841, Rachel Preston Oakes, a Seventh Day Baptist, joined a congregation of Adventists in Washington, New Hampshire, and convinced her pastor, Frederick Wheeler, to accept the Sabbath in 1844.

“Other Adventists soon adopted the seventh day Sabbath, and two Sabbatarian denominations—the Seventh-Day Adventists and the Church of God (Seventh Day)—soon came out of the Millerite movement.

“Later, in the 1930s, Herbert W. Armstrong and others associated with the Oregon Conference of the Church of God (Seventh Day) started an independent ministry that led to the creation of the Radio Church of God, eventually to be called the Worldwide Church of God. Although the Worldwide Church of God is no longer a Sabbatarian organization, many of its members are Sabbath keepers, and it has a number of Sabbatarian offshoots” (Ward, p. 8).

We can be thankful for the faithfulness and hard work of the Mumfords as they brought the Sabbath-keeping Church of God to America. It was indirectly because of them that we keep God’s Sabbath today.



Migrant Crisis Strains European Unity

“After weeks of indecision, the European Union voted on Tuesday [Sept. 22] to distribute 120,000 asylum seekers among member states, a plan meant to display unity in the face of the largest movement of refugees on the Continent since World War II.

“Instead, the decision—forced through by a majority vote, over the bitter objections of four eastern members—did as much to underline the bloc’s widening divisions, even over a modest step that barely addresses the crisis.

“Nearly half a million migrants and refugees have arrived in Europe this year, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, a number that is only expected to rise....

“Leaders from across the 28-member bloc will meet in Brussels on Wednesday for further discussions on how to respond to the crisis” (“Plan on Migrants Strains the Limits of Europe’s Unity” by Steven Erlanger and James Kanter, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Sept. 22, 2015, p. 1).

Bible prophecy and an understanding of history tell us there will be a 10-nation revival of the Roman Empire in Europe before Christ returns (Dan. 2:40-45). Just as there are cracks in the European Union over migration, there will be cracks in the future union as well: “As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay” (Dan. 2:43).

Currently there are 28 nations that make up the European Union. The Bible speaks of 10 kings represented by 10 toes on the statue in Daniel 2. We can expect to see changes coming in Europe until a final 10-nation union emerges. This final world-ruling power will be crushed when Jesus Christ returns to this earth to set up God’s kingdom, which will last forever (v. 44).

Quake Hits Afghanistan

“A deadly earthquake hit northern Afghanistan and Pakistan on Monday afternoon [Oct. 26], causing heavy

damage and sowing panic across one of the world’s most impoverished and war-torn regions.

“At least 208 were reported killed, 131 or more of them in Pakistan, and that figure seemed likely to rise significantly, officials in both countries said. ...

“The quake, which struck at 1:39 p.m. and registered a preliminary magnitude of 7.5, was centered in the Hindu Kush mountain range, about 160 miles northeast of Kabul. The quake’s depth was reported at 132 miles, the United States Geological Survey said, and its effects were felt as far away as New Delhi” (“Earthquake Strikes Afghanistan and Pakistan, Multiplying War’s Woes” by Mujib Mashal and salmon Masood, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Oct. 26, 2015, p. 1).

“Earthquakes in various places” is one sign we are nearing Christ’s return (Mat. 24:3, 7).

U.S. Army Cut in Europe

“Less than three years after the United States Army sent home the last of its tanks that were permanently based in Europe, American commanders have been forced to rely on weapons shipped back temporarily or hardware borrowed from allies in the expanding effort to deter the latest threats from Russia with a fraction of the forces it once had deployed across the Continent. ...

“Mustering the necessary troops and equipment for the mission here can be a challenge, said Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, the Army’s commanding general in Europe. The number of permanently stationed soldiers on the Continent has dropped by 35 percent since 2012, and the Army has reduced some of its vehicles, weapons and support equipment or relocated it to other bases. ...

“‘The mission’s still the same,’ said General Hodges. ... ‘So we have to figure out how you make 30,000 feel like 300,000’ ” (“Despite Cuts, U.S. Army Prepares for Threats in Europe” by Emmarie Huetteman, *The New York Times*, nytimes.com, Oct. 18, 2015, pp. 1-2).

Because of our sins, God will break the pride of our power and weaken our military so it will lose wars (Lev. 26:14-15, 17, 19, 25, 33; Deut. 28:15, 25).