Bound by Print: The Baptist Borderlands of Maine and the Canadian Maritimes, 1770-1840

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BOUND BY PRINT: THE BAPTIST BORDERLANDS OF MAINE AND THE CANADIAN MARITIMES, 1770-1840

By

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Asynchronous communication was essential for the development of the cross-border and
global identities of Baptists in Maine and the Canadian Maritimes between 1770 and 1840.
Religious print, especially published association meeting notes and periodicals, extended the
reach of itinerant preaching and molded a cross-border community in the Northeast Borderlands
between 1790 and 1810. It allowed Baptists to discuss theology, share news about local
churches, and expand their community. American Baptists formed international institutions
focused on the spread of Protestantism after the War of 1812, and Maine Baptists actively
engaged this more global community through financial donations to the new institutions and by
engaging with their periodicals as readers and contributors. Maritime Baptists in the post-war
period did not pivot to this expansive community as quickly due to economic and political
constraints, and their efforts prioritized local churches and domestic missionary efforts into the
mid-1820s, after which they participated more actively in the international benevolent
movement. Both Maine and Maritime Baptists published their own periodicals by the 1820s.
Baptists in both parts of the Northeastern Borderlands had joined the broader Protestant reform
movement by the late 1820s, but in doing so the former close ties between Maine Baptists and those in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia were no longer as vital.

Print played a critical role in the transition from cross-border to global identity by offering a medium for discussion. Baptist culture was not homogenous and growing commitments to foreign missions were challenged by some. Print provided a space to debate values and to reshape Maine and Maritime Baptist identities. A study of asynchronous religious print culture is especially important to understand how laypeople engaged this process. Print particularly enriched women’s expression as an influential tool to engage fellow Baptists throughout the Northeastern Borderlands and beyond. Religious print culture was a vital form of social networking that shaped community formation. It helped build cross-border and global religious identities and connected isolated individuals to a larger Baptist community. Then, as now, asynchronous communication has a powerful impact on individuals’ sense of self and place in the world.
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INTRODUCTION

Asynchronous communication through printed material was essential in the development of the cross-border and global identities of Baptists in Maine and the Canadian Maritimes between 1770 and 1840. Religious print culture provides a powerful lens to evaluate how readers engaged with and contributed to what they read. Religious print was first used to foster a fledgling cross-border community in the region based on shared religious beliefs between 1770 and 1812. Religious print culture would be just as vital to how these Baptists became global Protestants after 1812. Magazines, newspapers, printed meeting minutes, and other types of print reinforced theology, provided updates about missionaries, shared local and international news, and offered space to discuss controversial topics. Baptists in the Northeastern Borderlands of Maine, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick honed their sense of self through the proliferation of print.

Synchronous communication is essential in most forms of organized religion. In the Protestant tradition, one is generally expected to attend religious functions and listen to speakers, engage in discussion with fellow adherents, seek advice from pious professors, and pass along one’s own wisdom to others. Many everyday religious practices are conducted through in-person sermons, meetings, and conversations. However, synchronous communication is not always possible, especially when adherents are physically isolated from one another as was the case in the Northeastern Borderlands of North America in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Religious print provided opportunities to engage in discussion, learn about and empathize with others, and form relationships with fellow community members that would otherwise be impossible.

Asynchronous communication for the Baptists in this study was largely defined by printed association meeting notes and periodicals. Correspondence can also be considered
asynchronous communication. However, since it often remained a personal and private expression, it is largely excluded from consideration here, unless shared with a wider audience, as letters printed in periodicals were. Theological pamphlets were printed and shared between religious leaders, but how widely they were read by laypeople is unclear. Printed meeting notes and periodicals, by contrast, were widely distributed, and their topics were accessible to laypeople. These asynchronous communications had a large readership and were especially important for the institutional expansion of the Baptist community. As a result, printed meeting notes and periodicals are the core primary source evidence for this dissertation.

This project analyzes how religious print molded the cross-border and later global identities and communities of Baptist readers in Maine and the Canadian Maritime provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia between 1770 and 1840. This project particularly investigates the ways in which asynchronous communication was a key component of community and identity building and the methods laypeople employed to shape this dynamic identity. Religious print could be used to connect individuals and communities throughout the world, but at other times reinforced more local identities. Religious print also reflected its readers’ interests and offers an opportunity to analyze how readers engaged with the content of periodicals. This study investigates how religious print reveals readers’ self-understanding of their position in the world and their relationship to others.

Previous studies of the Maine and Maritime Baptists have tended to focus on ministers and missionaries. Our current understanding of the Baptists in the Northeastern Borderlands is therefore largely based on the perspectives of religious leaders. Existing studies of religious print primarily analyze the views of publishers or editors and the large benevolent organizations that distributed them. Historians have therefore studied the motivations of the creators but have paid
less attention to readers. Several Maine and Maritime Baptist leaders were prolific authors, and it is easier to uncover their priorities than those of the people they hoped to reach. We have what editors and publishers supposedly believed on paper, but it is more challenging to trace the reactions of readers. An examination of various forms of religious print provides a more complete picture of how laypeople engaged print and used it to inform their own identities and communities.

There has been considerable debate about whether the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries marked a period in which Protestantism in the US became more democratic or whether its sources of authority merely shifted or even expanded. Historian Jon Butler argued that the complex evolution of American religion should not merely reinforce a narrative of a country becoming more democratic. He described the religious culture of the period as shaped by “republican hierarchicalism” in which authority flowed from the top of the social hierarchy to the bottom.¹ The importance of government-sponsored churches decreased, but ministers and other authority figures wielded a great deal of influence over laypeople. These authorities were not always successful, but they were far more influential than has often been recognized. Historian Nathan O. Hatch, by contrast, contended that the American Revolution created a power vacuum and subsequently an erosion of authority, tradition, station, and education. He noted that, “the Revolution dramatically expanded the circle of people who considered themselves capable of thinking for themselves about issues of freedom, sovereignty, and representation.”² Existing religious authorities were unsure about how to respond to these conditions, especially on the frontier, and charismatic leaders from rapidly expanding denominations, like the Baptists, rose to

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fill the void. Hatch therefore argued that the religious culture of the US early republic was marked by deep and lasting democratization.

Turning to religious changes in the period north of the US, historian George Rawlyk’s influential work *The Canada Fire: Radical Evangelicalism in British North America, 1775-1812* insisted that Canadian revivalism was not only radical, but more radical and democratic than the American Revolution. He contended that US revivalism focused on “civic humanism, republicanism, and the covenant ideal and possessive individualism,” while Canadian evangelicalism focused more deeply on spiritual matters that insisted upon more radical changes in the world.

It is debatable whether the Canadian Maritime Baptists were more radical than the Maine Baptists. Rawlyk argued that Canadian evangelicalism was largely defined by a focus on “regeneration.” However, church records of Maine Baptists indicate that regeneration was also a high priority for them. Aspects of Maritime Baptist theology were certainly very unconventional in the 1770s and 1780s. Nova Scotia New Light leader Henry Alline’s theology could be considered radical, and some followers and later leaders took his model to an extreme. However, his theology was by no means adopted wholesale by other Maritime Baptist New Lights, and Maritime and Maine Baptists ultimately accepted similar, though not identical, theology and local spiritual practices.

Maritime Baptists were also not more democratic than the Maine Baptists. Both groups formed and maintained congregations and church leadership in a comparable manner. Maine Baptists formed associations sooner than the Maritime Baptists, but Maritime Baptists were not

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5 As discussed in Chapter One of this dissertation.
far behind. The first Maine Baptist association was formed in 1787, while the first Maritime Baptist association was founded in 1800. Overall, Maine and Maritime Baptists shared similar theology, church structure, and everyday spirituality.

Religious print provided laypeople more occasions to share their opinions and advocate for their beliefs. It is clear that religious print was enjoyed by a variety of Baptist laypeople in Maine and the Maritimes. These readers had no qualms about making their preferences known. Baptist ministers and other authorities were important influences within their denomination and could serve as catalysts for change. Nevertheless, they could not force laypeople to part with their hard-earned money as periodical subscribers if the readers did not support the publications. There is considerable evidence that the causes promoted by ministers were not always equally supported by laypeople. Laypeople ultimately determined and directed the priorities of the denomination.

The Northeastern Borderlands provides a rewarding region to study the impact of asynchronous communication on Baptist community and identity formation. The Maine Baptist denomination formed throughout the 1760s and 1770s due to the efforts of Baptist missionaries from southern New England. These missionaries especially traveled along the Maine coast where they preached, baptized converts, and set up churches. The Maritime Baptist denomination was inspired by New Light minister Henry Alline’s preaching in the 1770s, who had immigrated to Nova Scotia from Rhode Island as a child in 1760. Both Maine and Maritime Baptists faced challenges during this initial period. Maritime “New Lights” in the late eighteenth century argued over who could receive communion and join their churches, while Maine Baptist missionaries frequently traveled to communities where they faced criticism or rejection.\(^6\)

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\(^6\) Maritime “New Lights” would become Baptists around 1800. See D. G. Bell, ed., *Newlight Baptist Journals of James Manning and James Innis, Baptist Heritage in Atlantic Canada* (Saint John, New Brunswick: Acadia Divinity
Maritime New Lights were particularly divided over “New Dispensationalism,” an extension of Alline’s theology that rejected various practices of formal religion. Many Maritime “New Lights,” however, discouraged New Dispensationalism in favor of a more unified and traditional theology.

Maine and Maritime Baptists did not yet rely upon print for connection in their earliest decades. Ministers and laypeople sent personal correspondence to one another, churches kept record books for local use, and missionaries wrote down their experiences in private journals. Maine and Maritime Baptists were generally isolated had little external support through the 1780s.

Baptist religious print blossomed in the region in the 1790s and provided significant opportunities for connection and growth. Maine and Maritime Baptists formed “associations” of local churches between 1787 and 1810 to reinforce their fledgling communities. These organizations brought together congregations and laypeople within a specific geographic area to resolve theological debates, provide support to disconnected churches, and to unify the Baptist denomination. The associations’ key unifying element were their printed meeting notes. They used printed association notes to discuss questions of church structure, church discipline, and interpretations of scripture. These printed association meeting notes were distributed by “messengers” who visited other associations across the borderlands as well as by missionaries who traversed Maine, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. Churches wrote to the associations about their failures and triumphs and asked theological questions that helped to define local and regional practices. Maine and Maritime associations eventually opened up a formal correspondence with one another and further extended these discussions. Small groups of

College and the Baptist Historical Committee of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces, 1984), see, especially, Bell’s extensive interpretive introductions, 1-99, 172-215.
isolated Baptists dotted the Maine and Maritime frontier, and religious print eventually connected these like-minded laypeople together.

Baptists in the Northeastern Borderlands began printing religious periodicals in the first decade of the nineteenth century. These periodicals continued to offer intercommunal connections, solidified theology, and built the base of Baptist believers. They included letters from missionaries that highlighted their successes, accounts of revivals, and reports about the formation of new churches. Printed association meeting notes remained an important source of asynchronous communication and were further supplemented by periodicals that highlighted strong Maine and Maritime Baptist fellowship.

The Maine and Maritime Baptist identity during this period was defined by their support of full immersion baptism of adults, closed communion that was limited to full church members, and a strict Calvinism. This identity particularly solidified during the decade before the War of 1812 as more churches formed and joined associations. Maine and Maritime Baptists considered themselves part of a cross-border community with a shared culture and theology. This community expanded and was strengthened by the missionaries who traversed the border and by religious print.

This relationship transformed during and after the War of 1812 as the war prevented cross-border communication. Maine Baptists instead started to focus their attention on the global missionary societies created by American Baptists during the war. They increasingly invested in these organizations and their identity was increasingly defined by their contributions to them and other voluntary societies. They connected to Protestants throughout the world by adding to existing publications and starting their own newspapers that highlighted the international work of
Baptists as well as other Protestant groups. Periodicals and printed association meeting notes promoted foreign missionary organizations and other benevolent institutions.

Maritime Baptists did not initially join these global organizations due to local political and economic challenges. The religious print they produced instead worked to strengthen their community within the Maritimes until they had the economic means and personnel in the late 1820s to contribute to international organizations. Their ability to contribute to global institutions coincided with the publication of their own periodicals.

By the 1820s, Maine and Maritime Baptists increasingly shed their cross-border identity in favor of one that linked them to an even broader pan-Protestant movement. Maine and Maritime Baptists maintained their belief in full immersion baptism, closed communion, and Calvinism. However, their identities by the late 1820s were also defined by a strong commitment to benevolent movements, especially foreign missions. Their sense of community now expanded to all Christians throughout North America and Europe who also participated in these organizations. Some regional connections persisted, especially among founding members of the Maine and Maritime Baptists, but younger generations were more deeply linked to the international Protestant community.

Maine and Maritime Baptist religious print reflected and guided this transition and directly connected Baptist laypeople to global Protestant institutions. They could read about these organizations’ plans and actions and monitor monetary contributions made to advance their work. They most significantly used religious print to share their own beliefs about these institutions. Leaders of local benevolent organizations wrote to periodicals and associations about the formation of local groups, their monetary contributions, and the ways in which they valued benevolent movements. Religious leaders certainly supported benevolent movements and
provided some connection to them, but religious print offered laypeople an opportunity to
directly associate themselves with these organizations without ministerial mediators. Baptist
laypeople also wrote directly to periodicals to voice their opinions on a variety of topics ranging
from the support for foreign missions to questions about the value of colonization societies.

Maine and Maritime Baptists increasingly linked themselves to a wider Protestant
community, but their identity was by no means homogenous. Print was the main medium
through which internal tensions were resolved or escalated. Maine and Maritime Baptists
originally used religious print to discuss their distinctive understanding of baptism and
communion. By the 1820s, they instead debated the importance of domestic and foreign
missions, education, temperance, and even abolition in periodicals and association meeting
notes. Maine and Maritime Baptist leaders and laypeople frequently disagreed on the importance
of these topics and such discussions were visible in print. These debates reveal how laypeople
developed their self-understanding and the terms on which they engaged the world beyond their
congregations.

Religious print was especially important for women’s more public roles in Baptist
communities. Association meeting notes and periodicals featured updates about women’s
donations to benevolent societies and occasional letters from the secretaries of female voluntary
societies and other organizations. They included letters from women about their theology and
work to support benevolent movements. Maine and Maritime Baptist women utilized print to
mold their identities and to engage with one another and later with the international Protestant
community.

Baptists in the Northeastern Borderlands initially used print to reiterate religious beliefs
and share news about missionaries and revivals during the late-eighteenth century. Like other
Protestants, most Baptists adhered to the theological doctrine of *sola scriptura.* Baptists viewed the Bible as directly inspired by God and that this collection of sacred texts was infallible. They also insisted that all human beings were sinners who transgressed against divine law. God, through the life, death, and resurrection of his son Jesus Christ, could pardon sinners. This justification could not be earned by being a “good person” but could only be received through *sola fide* or “faith alone.” Baptists believed that one became a “believer” when they gained awareness of their sin and begged God for forgiveness. Once a person became a “believer” they would be “sanctified” or start to evoke some aspects of God’s holiness.

Most Protestant denominations adhered to the above doctrines. However, Baptists were distinguished by their insistence upon adult baptism. Baptists contended that individuals were admitted into the Church, or community of believers, through the act of full immersion baptism. One was baptized after they had publicly professed their faith in Jesus Christ to the congregation they sought to join. They insisted that infants could not rightfully be baptized since they could not understand that they were sinful and seek salvation through God. Baptist theology was controversial, especially to the “Standing Order” of Congregationalists in New England and to the Church of England.

Baptized believers were also expected to participate in church government and policies, commune with fellow believers, and encourage others to join the Baptist denomination. Baptist churches were therefore composed of a small number of baptized “professors.” By contrast, many Congregationalists baptized the grandchildren of church members if their parents accepted the covenant of their church, while other Congregational churches opened baptism to all infants regardless of the faith of their parents. Methodists believed that baptism was a symbolic act

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7 *Sola scriptura* was one of the five main pillars laid out by Martin Luther in the sixteenth century.
rather than a weighty sacred one and baptized infants with no hesitation. Unlike Congregationalists and Methodists, Baptist numbers could not increase through childbirth and infant baptism. Baptist expansion required attracting converts to their cause, and this required networking, mobility, and promotion that could be advanced through Baptist print culture. Print was therefore uniquely necessary for Baptists as it provided a space for them to explain and support their theology and reach out to potential converts.

Baptist churches tended to experience rapid growth after large revivals that served multiple purposes. It was an opportunity for existing Baptists to renew their commitment to their faith and for new converts to become baptized and join a congregation. The fervor of a revival could also encourage Baptists to invest in other methods of spreading God’s Kingdom. This would later include the formation of voluntary societies and donations for said societies. Baptists believed that revivals indicated that they were in God’s favor. They regarded revivals as a validating sign of their theology, church structure, voluntary projects, and overall passion. Periods with limited revivals, by contrast, could be interpreted as a time of decline and a signal that something was wrong. Most Protestant denominations valued revivals, but revivals were especially important for Baptist growth since children of members were not automatically part of the church through an infant ritual. As a result, Baptist print culture often highlighted any hint of local spiritual fervor. Revivals emphasized that the denomination acted in accordance with God’s will.

Baptist church structure also differed from its contemporaries. Baptists believed that churches should be autonomous, and their congregations were composed of believers that did not

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necessarily rely on ministerial leadership. The congregants governed themselves, raised their own funds, and lay members often preached their own sermons. Baptists often struggled to find an available preacher for their congregations, especially since Baptist ministers were not formally educated or funded at the end of the eighteenth century. One needed to be willing to subsist on one’s own meager funds, the generosity of congregations, or paltry reimbursements from a handful of missionary organizations. Methodists were well known for producing enthusiastic and well-spoken itinerants, but these preachers still needed to adhere to the rules and structure of the conference established in 1784. Congregational churches were self-supporting (often with the aid of state funds in Massachusetts) and governed by their own members. However, Congregational churches were expected to obtain a “settled” or permanent minister who had been educated at a seminary.

Baptist preachers in the Northeastern Borderlands in the late eighteenth century focused on traveling to new locations and setting up independent congregations. Baptists could not “physically” be born but could only be born again through individual religious beliefs that itinerants could assist. The missionaries traveled long distances, stayed for short periods, and visited the newly-founded congregations to offer guidance, perform baptisms and marriages, and bring news from other churches. Baptist churches were only able to consistently employ settled ministers in the Northeastern Borderlands by the mid-nineteenth century. Religious print frequently highlighted missionary journeys, particularly their success in initiating revivals and forming congregations.

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Baptists could not rely on ministerial leadership or natural growth to survive as the number of their congregations far outnumbered the available preachers. They needed to network with other believers to aid one another when conflict arose within a church, raise money for each other, and confirm each other’s spiritual beliefs. Religious print connected Maine and Maritime Baptists to one another for support. Historians Stephen Marini in *Radical Sects of Revolutionary New England* and Shelby M. Balik in *Rally the Scattered Believers: Northern New England’s Religious Geography* both argue that the parish system favored by denominations like Congregationalists had difficulty surviving in the frontier environment of Northern New England. This was even more the case in early Nova Scotia that also had scattered colonial settlements and where Baptists were seen as dissenters beyond the norms of the Church of England. Balik further noted that Baptists “structured themselves largely on the itinerant model, with centralized and geographically far-reaching hierarchies that oversaw doctrine and discipline, and itinerant networks to tie local communities together.”

Ministers and evangelists were not entirely responsible for forging community among Baptist congregations and laypeople. As this dissertation will argue, printed associational and other meeting minutes, correspondence, and, especially, periodicals connected Baptists throughout the Northeastern Borderlands in an initial phase of growth and then on an even larger scale as they increasingly joined a greater pan-Protestant community.

The Northeastern Borderlands region at the heart of this study consists of the current state of Maine and the current Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Maine, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick had growing Baptist populations throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Prince Edward Island and Cape Breton Island will not be included.

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since they did not have a substantial Baptist population until the very end of the period under study. Maine and Maritime Baptists were initially concentrated in Mid-Coast and Downeast Maine, the northeastern coast of New Brunswick, and the western coast of peninsular Nova Scotia. Early Baptists in the Maritimes were largely transplants from southern New England and their descendants. The New England “Planters,” in particular, settled Acadian land around the Bay of Fundy in the 1760s, and considerable new migration into Maine and Nova Scotia occurred after the American Revolution. The large wave of Loyalist migration to Nova Scotia in 1783 led directly to the creation of the new province of New Brunswick the following year.

Meanwhile, Maine’s English-speaking population boomed as waves of migrants headed east from longer-settled areas southern New England. A little over 96,500 people were recorded living in Maine in 1790, but by 1820 that number had tripled to nearly 300,000 people.\textsuperscript{13} The number of Maine Baptists reflected this population increase. In 1789 there were seven ministers, eight churches, and 470 baptized members. By the end of 1799, the number of ministers had doubled, while there were over 1,400 professed believers.\textsuperscript{14} Maine Baptists began to spread into the interior of the state and east of the Penobscot River after 1800, while the Maritime Baptists also expanded. By the 1830s, there was a Maine Baptist association as far north as modern-day Penobscot county and as far east as modern-day Washington County, while Maritime Baptists churches began to take shape in Prince Edward Island.

The western coast of peninsular Nova Scotia remained the heart of the Baptist Maritimes throughout the period under study. Its leading position was solidified by the foundation of Baptist-based Horton Academy in 1828, but there was increased Baptist activity in urban centers.

\textsuperscript{14} Henry S. Burrage, \textit{A History of the Baptists in Maine} (Portland, Maine: Marks Printing House, 1904); and, \textit{Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held at the Baptist-Meetinghouse in Livermore, August 28 and 29, 1790} (Portland, Maine: B. Titcomb, 1799).
such as St. John, New Brunswick, and Halifax, where large churches eventually arose. Nonetheless, the original Baptist base in communities first settled by Planters in the 1760s remained dominant.¹⁵

There was no single center of Maine Baptist activity in the eighteenth century. Congregations were scattered in small communities along the coast and moved inland on navigable waterways, like the rest of the English-speaking population in the Eastern District of Massachusetts. These congregations were often long distances from one another and were most easily connected by water-based travel. Some of the largest early congregations, such as churches in Readfield and Sedgwick, were separated by over one hundred miles. Maine Baptist activity in the nineteenth century increasingly focused on Portland, the state’s largest city, as well as the college towns of Brunswick and Waterville, especially with the founding of Colby College in the latter. As a result, Waterville and Wolfville, Nova Scotia, the home of modern-day Acadia University, which developed from Horton Academy, were somewhat comparable as both housed pioneering Baptist educational institutions created in the period under study.¹⁶ Portland, Maine, was likewise analogous to St. John and Halifax as large and diverse commercial centers with growing Baptist churches. Still, Maine Baptists did not have a clear core area in the same way as their brethren in the Maritimes.


¹⁶ Waterville College, now known as Colby College, was initially founded as the Maine Literary and Theological Institution in 1813. Horton Academy, founded in 1828, later became Acadia University. For more on Colby College, see Earl H. Smith, “Mayflower Hill: A History of Colby College,” M.A. Thesis, Colby College, 2006. For more on Queen’s College and Acadia University, which grew out of Horton Academy, see Memorials of Acadia College and Horton Academy for the half-century 1828-1878 (Montréal, Québec: Dawson Brothers, 1881).
Both Maine and Maritime Baptists maintained a relationship with Baptists in southern New England, particularly around the Boston area. They would occasionally send letters or representatives to associations or churches in Boston. However, this connection to southern New England could be tenuous and sporadic. Maine and Maritime Baptists initially created a Northeastern Borderlands community that was somewhat separate from the Baptist community in southern New England. They not only shared a similar religious and secular culture but understood one another’s “frontier” experiences as an important regional bond.

Maritime Baptists were surprisingly disconnected from English Baptists, who primarily concentrated on growing the denomination in Great Britain and missionary work in Asia and Africa. The Baptist denomination formed in the Maritimes largely separated from the English Baptists and connected more fully to fellow Baptists in New England, and especially in Maine. Maritime Baptists very rarely appear in English Baptist publications or meeting notes, other than two principal moments when they engaged with one another. Maritime Baptists contributed donations and set up auxiliary voluntary societies for English organizations during and shortly after the War of 1812 as their communication was cut off with Maine brethren during the war. The second moment was when the Maritime Baptists solicited donations for the foundation of Horton Academy in the late 1820s. They sent a representative to England and both Maritime and British Baptist periodicals published a few articles about the visit. The Maritime Baptist denomination had grown significantly by this period, felt more confident about their place within the British Empire, and urgently needed to fund Horton Academy.

Maine and Maritime Baptists were not alone in their adoption of a more global, pan-Protestant community in the early nineteenth century. However, this dissertation is unique in its

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examination of the ways in which religious print fostered the transition from a cross-border Baptist community to one that embraced a pan-Protestant global one. Print ultimately reveals how Baptist laypeople viewed themselves, their place in the wider world, and their overall beliefs.

This project builds upon existing scholarship about Baptists in the Northeastern Borderlands and the evolution of North American religious print culture. A flurry of publications between the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries celebrated the growth of the Baptist denomination. These works were largely published by Baptist ministers who celebrated and promoted the growth of their denomination. The most notable regional studies were Henry S. Burrage’s histories of both New England and Maine Baptists, Joshua Millet’s history of the Maine Baptists, and E. M. Saunder’s and George Edward Levy’s histories of the Maritime Baptists.¹⁸ These works must be read critically. They are biased in favor of the Baptist denomination and generally concentrate upon its leaders. Print is referenced minimally in them, usually just to confirm dates and events. Nevertheless, they remain valuable. They highlight how the local Baptist denomination viewed its evolution and the narrative they sought to convey. A study of religious print challenges these views by focusing on laypeople’s perspectives and the broadly shared culture within the cross-border denomination. Religious print also helps place the Baptists within a larger religious and trans-national context that is often absent from narrow denominational studies. Print highlights Baptist perspectives on global organizations.

There have also been more modern works that investigate Baptists in this region. Shelby Balik studied the built environments of the Maine Congregationalists and Baptists. Balik insisted that “because they covered more physical ground, the [Baptist] itinerant movements created

regional networks linked by ministers, correspondents, and conferences that rotated among distant towns.”19 Their growth benefitted from this flexibility. This dissertation expands upon Balik’s research by analyzing the larger print network that connected Maine and Maritime Baptists together. Religious print culture interacted with an itinerant ministerial system to expand the denomination in Maine as well as to enhance a cross-border relationship with Maritime Baptists.

Historian Alan Taylor’s work on settlement in Maine after the American Revolution insisted that agrarian resistance was fueled by evangelical denominations like the Baptists. He argued that Congregationalists and evangelicals battled for control on the Maine frontier. He remarked, “the Eastern Country’s religious contest pitted those who stressed the scriptural word against those who relied principally on the inner spirit.”20 He recognized the Maine Baptists’ “fluid denominational structures” and emphasis upon an “emotionally rich faith.”21 Nevertheless, Maine Baptists cannot be defined entirely by an emphasis on inner spirit and divine revelation. They generally valued piety over theological education in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries but encouraged reading and analysis of Scripture. They were deeply suspicious of any belief deemed not scripturally sound. Maine Baptists also eagerly formed into unifying associations during the period under study. Churches and laypeople could remain independent from the associations and those who joined associations carefully monitored their influence. However, most Maine Baptists ultimately found value in associations. Maine Baptists

19 Balik, Rally the Scattered Believers, 45.
21 Ibid., 140.
certainly were more evangelical than Congregationalists and they passionately defended their theology, but they were not “anarchic.”

Three scholars are particularly essential for understanding Maritime Baptists prior to 1840. George Rawlyk has been mentioned above, and Daniel C. Goodwin and D. G. Bell have also made major contributions. Goodwin, a student of Rawlyk, specifically examined the transition from the first to second generation of Baptist ministers in the Maritimes. Goodwin insisted that the second generation salvaged and even strengthened the movement by resolving some of the tensions that had surfaced during the initial revival. Formalism strengthened Baptists, formerly described as New Lights, and prevented extremists from gaining a significant foothold. In some senses, this institutional growth came with the loss of the radicalism of the earlier generation highlighted by Rawlyk.

D. G. Bell also analyzed this transition and contended that New Light identity was divided and fluid. Those who later became Baptists experienced periods of profound revival followed by fierce debates over a variety of theological issues. He argued that the intense and even chaotic spirituality of the New Lights was eventually squashed in Nova Scotia through the formation of the Baptist association in 1800 and the official adoption of closed communion in 1809, while the New Light tendency retained some momentum in New Brunswick and eventually found its institutional footing in the Freewill Baptist denomination.

All three historians primarily focused on Maritime Baptist leadership. Rawlyk in particular tended to view Maritime Baptist development through the lens of its ministers and missionaries. Their analyses are therefore based primarily on the motivations of these leaders. Maritime Baptist leaders were crucial in the denomination’s evolution, but no more so than

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22 Ibid., 134.
24 Bell, ed., *Newlight Baptist Journals of James Manning and James Innis*. 
laypeople. Bell and Goodwin’s analyses are not necessarily inaccurate, but they are incomplete. Laypeople ultimately participated in revivals, founded churches, joined associations, and outlined their identity and community. This dissertation evaluates the ways in which Maritime Baptist laypeople shaped their denominational identity through religious print. All three historians also tended to underplay the relationship between Maritime and Maine Baptists as well as the eventual connection to global, pan-Protestant organizations. This dissertation helps place Maritime Baptists in the larger context of eighteenth and nineteenth century Protestantism through an analysis of the key role of religious print in this process.

There has been little work conducted on the growth of New Brunswick Baptists. They are largely featured in local histories or more general works about the Maritimes. As noted above, D. G. Bell is one of the primary voices on the evolution of the New Brunswick Baptists. They are also incorporated in works by historians such as Hannah Lane and Ronald Baines. Both looked at the transnational relationship between Protestants in Maine and the Maritimes but focused on specific towns and individuals. These works raise significant questions about the overall relationship between Baptists in this region by using church records, sermons, and correspondence. This dissertation adds to the existing discussion by evaluating the importance of religious print culture as a social networking force that helped integrate the Northeastern Borderlands.

This work also expands the time period that has traditionally been studied. Rawlyk and Baines stopped their analyses in 1815, and Bell largely concentrated on the period from 1770 to 1810. There clearly was a strong Maine and Maritime Baptist relationship before the War of

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1812, but there is little sense in previous scholarship about how this relationship evolved after 1815. Adding the lens of religious print culture and expanding the period under study to include the 1820s through 1840s increases our understanding of dynamic changes in the Maine and Maritime Baptist relationship and the evolution of their values and sense of identity.

This project engages with the existing historiography on American and Canadian borderlands. Academics have largely focused on the influence of the United States and Great Britain upon the Canadian Maritimes and connections between American, Canadian, and British culture. Historian Francis Carroll contended that the border between Canada and the United States hardened as settlers competed for resources and looked to their respective governments to help defend their rights, while A.L. Burt argued that the Canadian border remained a point of contention between the United States and Great Britain but that Canadians themselves were under British political and economic control.26 Historians J.B. Brebner and Graeme Wynn insisted that Nova Scotia particularly remained part of a greater New England. Those in the Canadian Maritimes had strong familial and cultural ties to New England. American influence was far stronger than British influence upon Maritime communities and Nova Scotians remained, as stated by historian Graeme Wynn, “New Englanders at heart.”27

British Baptists had minor impact upon denomination in the Maritimes, where Baptists more often turned to the Maine for support and retained a connection to New England through the early nineteenth centuries. Nevertheless, Maritime Baptists did not merely mimic what they saw in the United States. They chose to concentrate upon their own domestic missions in the

1810s and 1820s instead of participating in foreign missions like their Maine counterparts. They did not have the resources to promote international institutions at the time and, even when they had the personnel and money to do so, continued to also promote their domestic missions. There is evidence that the Maritime Baptists, especially missionaries, influenced the development of Maine Baptists. Maritime Baptists were certainly part of a larger New England culture, but they pursued their own prerogatives.

J. I. Little in *Borderland Religion: The Emergence of an English-Canadian Identity, 1792-1852* argued that most borderlands studies emphasize “the dynamics of contact between distinct cultures.” 28 His work examined the Eastern Townships of Quebec where “a common culture [that] became differentiated on either side of an international boundary line.” 29 This dissertation analyzes the ways in which a common religious, cross-border culture formed and changed as Maine and Maritime Baptists joined a larger, pan-Protestant global community that iterated common values such as the importance of missionary work. The cross-border community lost vitality over time but was replaced by wider connections that religious print facilitated.

This dissertation also builds upon existing historiography of British Protestant missions and pan-Protestant benevolent movements. Historians debate whether or not missionaries were an extension of the British empire and overall British culture. Hilary Carey insisted that missionaries spread a concept of “greater Britain,” a Christian consensus that encouraged British expansion, while Jeffrey Cox contended that while missionaries benefitted from imperialism,

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29 Ibid.
they were more concerned about developing a “heavenly empire.”30 Others argue that the British empire had negligible impact upon missionary movements. A.N. Porter contended that British missionaries were a diverse group who often worked against the empire to spread the Gospel. Joseph Hardwick supported this argument and stated that “the colonial Church cannot be understood as a monolithic or monochrome institution.”31 Michael A. Rutz particularly noted that those who were not Anglican could especially fight against imperial policy that they believed to be immoral.32 The majority of these studies focus upon Anglican missionaries or those who traveled to North America from Britain.

Works that highlight the Canadian Maritimes, such as Judith Fingard’s *The Anglican Design in Loyalist Nova Scotia* or Vaudry’s work on Anglicanism in Québec, also emphasize Anglicanism.33 Maine Baptists no longer had an official place within the British Empire during the period under study, but the Maritime Baptists remained within the empire. Maritime Baptists have generally been studied in their local but not their global context.

This project draws especially from the exciting recent historiography of print culture in North America. Robert A. Gross and Mary Kelley’s, *An Extensive Republic: Print, Culture, and Society in the New Nation, 1790-1840* (volume II in the *History of the Book in America*) delved into the complicated nature of early American print in the US republic. Over thirty authors contributed chapters to this major project, which is unified by its argument that “the print culture

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of the new nation was at once local and cosmopolitan but hardly national, and it retained this character down to 1840.”

The work primarily concentrates on secular print, but there are two chapters on religious publications. David Paul Nord’s chapter builds upon his *Faith in Reading: Religious Publishing and the Birth of Mass Media in America*. He insisted that, “evangelism, in social reform as well as religion, idealized the power of print and made print central to the voluntary associations.” Nord analyzed the development of large benevolent organizations such as the American Bible Society and American Tract Society.

Mary Kupiec Cayton’s chapter about missionary Harriet Atwood Newell investigates the impact of missionary letters and memoirs. She contended that religious print was “an important vehicle for disseminating information of interest to evangelicals and shoring up their identity as part of a larger community of like-minded individuals.”

This dissertation builds upon the arguments advanced in Gross and Kelley’s *An Extensive Republic*, particularly Cayton’s chapter, but does so through the lens of religious periodicals and printed association meeting notes. It argues that Maine and Maritime Baptist print was initially centered on a cross-border identity but became more “local and cosmopolitan” throughout the nineteenth century. This dissertation analyzes the motivations behind this change. Maine and Maritime Baptist identity became based on connections to larger, pan-Protestant institutions that increasingly viewed themselves in a global context. Nord’s chapter concentrates on the influence and organization of larger institutions. He acknowledges that laypeople played a key role in the success of these organizations but does not elaborate further. This dissertation discusses the ways

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that laypeople participated in these organizations and their role in identity development.

Cayton’s chapter begins to dig into the connection between foreign missionaries and religious print. While Maine and Maritime Baptists frequently published about foreign missionaries, they also touched upon a wide variety of other topics. This dissertation offers additional analysis about how religious print fostered a “larger community of like-minded individuals.”

T.J. Tomlin’s work on almanacs contended that they contained important religious themes that resonated with readers. Almanacs especially favored “pan-Protestant sensibility” that largely ignored denominational divisions. Tomlin insisted that these themes were prevalent in almanacs between 1730 and 1820. Early Baptist print concentrated upon theology in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This may have occurred because Baptist periodicals’ target audience was initially Baptists, while almanacs sought the largest possible market through universal appeal. Nevertheless, a pan-Christian focus became apparent by the 1820s in Maine and Maritime Baptist periodicals. This project builds upon Tomlin’s work by examining another form of popular print and the themes within them.37

Heather A. Haveman’s ambitious work on nineteenth century American magazines argued that these periodicals united people with common goals. She remarked that magazines allowed “readers to receive and react to the same cultural messages at the same time and, in many cases, encouraged readers to contribute to shared cultural projects.”38 She concentrated primarily on this phenomenon’s relationship to the growth of capitalism. She included some religious print in her analysis, but her focus was mostly on other genres. She largely drew upon two large databases to analyze magazines; unfortunately, neither include Maine Baptist

periodicals or other Northeastern Borderlands publications. Haveman’s wide-reaching analysis was more concerned about categories of magazines than about their contents. She provides a cohesive overview of US magazines but does not address discussions within them. This dissertation evaluates the ways in which print could stimulate debate and encouraged readers to contest and mold their own identities.

Work on Canadian print culture in the period tends to focus on political and secular publications. For example, George L. Parker’s *The Beginnings of the Book Trade in Canada* highlights the rise of Canadian secular print, particularly its battle against the popularity and pervasiveness of American and British publications. Gwendolyn Davies’ chapter on New Brunswick Loyalist printers argued that the printers had “considerable impact on the fledgling Loyalist communities to which they migrated.” Both works address the important, and often neglected, evolution of Canadian print. However, both focus on non-Baptist printers. This dissertation, therefore, adds to our understanding of those who sought out a more distinctly religious print culture.

Scott McLaren recently examined the influence of the Methodist press in Upper Canada and the United States. He was concerned with books and ownership, “most importantly, how books make claims on the identities of those who own them.” He highlights the difficulty in understanding the impact of publications on readers, and much of his work focuses on printers and their battles to maintain their presses. Whereas Methodists in Upper Canada had strong links to their counterparts in the United Kingdom, Maritime Baptists did not have similar connections, and thus their print reveals an expression shaped with little direct influence by English Baptists.

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Furthermore, this dissertation concentrates less on the press and editors and more on the publications themselves as sources of information and as a medium for discussion. By studying the responses of readers, either indirectly through the printed association meeting notes or directly through letters to periodicals, we can determine how religious print “make claims” on identities, as McLaren contends.

Religious print can help us to better understand women’s changing concepts of identity and community during this period. Women sent letters to publications that outlined their beliefs and priorities. Maritime scholarship has primarily studied women’s provincial and Loyalist identities, while American scholars have analyzed US female voluntary societies, missionaries, and religious leaders.42 Works like Mary Kelley’s evaluation of women’s “world of reading” dig into the relationship between print and female identities.43 Women actively read and contributed to religious print. Their voices can particularly be heard through periodicals. Women initially conveyed their ideas and concerns through their voluntary society meeting notes, and also wrote letters directly to periodicals. These sources advance a fuller female perspective. This study of Maine and Maritime Baptist religious print reveals how women in the nineteenth century viewed their role in a global community and how they used print to foster this network.

This dissertation extends existing scholarship by evaluating how Baptist laypeople initially used asynchronous communication to form cross-border and later global identities. Print maintained connections between far-flung Baptist adherents, allowed them to shape their identity through discussion and debate, and increasingly conveyed a global Protestant vision. The

organizations that promoted the publications and the publishers who produced them certainly played a role in this development. Nevertheless, the periodicals ultimately reflected the commitments and identities of writers and readers.

This dissertation has five substantive chapters. Chapter One examines the development of the Maine and Canadian Maritime Baptists prior to the War of 1812 through printed meeting notes of associations of local churches and the exchange of “messengers” between associations. Printed association meeting notes molded Baptist identity through reiterating religious beliefs, informing readers of events in other areas, and providing space to share experiences among distant churches, individuals, and missionaries.

Chapter Two highlights the development and content of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine and the Maine Baptist Missionary Register, and how they reflected relationships among Maine and Maritime Baptists. The magazines provided further space to discuss theology, connect Baptists with one another, and celebrate revivals. The magazines highlighted the close relationships among Baptists in the Northeastern Borderlands who relied upon one another for financial and moral support through the exchange of association messengers and minutes as well as missionaries.

Chapter Three analyzes the Baptist Northeastern Borderlands during the War of 1812 through existing periodicals and association meeting notes. Communication was cut off between Maine and Maritime Baptists during the war, and the foundation of institutions like the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions in 1814 pushed Maine and Maritime Baptists apart. The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine increasingly highlighted news from foreign missionaries and a growing number of Protestant benevolent organizations instead of updates from local missionaries and congregations. Maine Baptists used printed association meeting
notes and magazines to link themselves to this growing, pan-Protestant community after the war. Maritime Baptists did not have the resources to contribute to the foreign missionary movement and instead concentrated on domestic missions. Their printed association meeting notes and letters to periodicals emphasized the importance and success of their domestic missions.

Chapter Four evaluates the first Baptist newspapers in Maine and the first Baptist magazine in the Maritimes. Maine Baptists adopted newspapers which could quickly print and distribute information, while the Maritime Baptists maintained a more traditional magazine that published less frequently. The *Maine Baptist Herald* and *Waterville [Maine] Intelligencer* and the *Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick* offered a space for news, discussion, and debate. Maine Baptists invested in foreign missions, ministerial education, and other benevolent causes, but the new commitment to voluntary societies was contested. Maine Baptist newspapers allowed its readers to share their opinions and priorities directly through letters to the newspaper and indirectly through association printed meeting notes. Maritime Baptists increasingly supported foreign missions and denominational religious education by the mid-1820s as the magazine title announced. It featured a Maritime Baptist identity that was increasingly connected to a larger Protestant community, but some Maritime religious leaders feared that domestic missions would be abandoned as a result. Maritime Baptists used the magazine to discuss these concerns and, ultimately, to advance a more globally-oriented identity.

Chapter Five concentrates on the second wave of Maine and Maritime Baptist newspapers that were printed in the late 1820s and 1830s, *Zion’s Advocate* and the *Eastern Baptist* in Maine and the *Christian Messenger and Repository of Religious, Political, and General Intelligence for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick*. Maritime Baptists now fully embraced shorter but more frequently published newspapers. Maine and Maritime Baptist newspapers
featured updates from international, pan-Protestant benevolent organizations and the part local Baptist organizations played to advance them. There was also an increased proportion of articles written by female authors, many of whom held leadership roles in voluntary societies. Both Maine and Maritime Baptist periodicals remained vibrant mediums to dispute and resolve prominent issues. The content of these newspapers show that Maine and Maritime Baptists increasingly viewed themselves as members of both local and global communities.

Asynchronous communication in the form of religious print culture was vital in cross-border Baptist identity formation in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century. It also fueled a strong pan-Protestant self-understanding in the three decades after 1815 that positioned Northeastern Borderlands Baptists in a more global setting. Analysis of religious print culture reveals how readers engaged and influenced the development of this community and the ways that print shaped identity formation.
“RELIGIOUS CORRESPONDENCE IS ONE OF THE GREATEST BLESSINGS ENJOYED IN THIS BENIGHTED WORLD”: THE ORIGINS OF BAPTISTS IN MAINE AND THE CANADIAN MARITIMES

The Baptist denomination in Maine and the Canadian Maritimes formed in the late eighteenth century. Asynchronous communication such as religious print fostered the relationships necessary for the denomination’s growth. Printed Baptist association meeting minutes were particularly important for the fledgling denomination in their opening decades. The Baptist identity was contentious and fragile. Baptists disagreed over theological concepts such as closed communion, felt discouraged by the small size of their denomination, and sought affirmation that the decisions they made followed God’s will. In sharing these printed meeting notes, they established a shared Baptist identity through reiterating religious beliefs, informing readers of events in other areas, and providing space to share experiences among distant churches, individuals, and missionaries. Association minutes particularly sought to resolve theological and organizational issues and encourage despondent Baptists with news of God’s blessing through revivals. Maine and Maritime Baptists formed a cross-border religious community in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. They developed a shared religious and cultural region that encompassed the eastern coast of Maine, the western coast of Nova Scotia, and the eastern coast of New Brunswick. This cross-border community provided support through the proliferation of asynchronous communication.

Foundations of Maine Baptist Churches

Maine was sparsely populated and detached from New England population centers in the final decades of the eighteenth century. Any Baptist church in Maine therefore needed to survive based on local commitments rather than a distant support network. Baptists were also unable to enjoy the financial and political support that the “Standing Order” of Congregationalists were
entitled to through law. The colony of Massachusetts passed an act in 1692 which stated that towns must tax their inhabitants to support a church and “able, learned orthodox minister.”¹ This act was amended several times, but its overall purpose continued to support Congregational churches and ministers.² Baptist evangelicals were largely uneducated and as such Baptist churches did not qualify for this financial support. The Massachusetts government passed a law in the 1730s that allowed individuals to apply for exemptions. However, these exemptions were temporary and required reapplication every five years. Dissenters such as Methodists and Baptists fought against ministerial taxation and advocated for religious freedom throughout the eighteenth century.³ Geographic isolation and taxation battles likely hindered the development of stable Maine Baptist churches in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The fate of the Maine Baptists changed between the mid to late eighteenth centuries. A handful of Baptist churches were founded in Maine shortly before and during the American Revolution. The First Great Awakening caused the blossoming of the Baptist denomination in southern New England, and some of these Baptists were eager to convert those in more far-flung locations like Maine.⁴ These early Maine churches were largely formed with the aid of Rev. Hezekiah Smith of Haverhill, Massachusetts. He spent much of his time preaching and forming congregations throughout New Hampshire and southwestern Maine throughout the mid-to-late

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1760s. These churches included congregations in Maine towns such as Berwick, Sanford, and Gorham.  

The denomination experienced significant growth after the American Revolution despite the continued existence of ministerial tax laws. Baptists in Maine benefitted from an influx of migrants from southern New England. A little over 96,500 people were recorded living in Maine in 1790, but by 1820 that number had tripled to nearly 300,000 people. The number of Maine Baptists reflected this population increase. In 1789 there were seven ministers, eight churches, and 470 baptized members. By the end of 1799, the number of ministers had doubled, while there were over 1,400 professed believers.

However, the growth among Maine Baptists was not merely dependent upon population increase. Several historians have contended that the American Revolution created a religious power vacuum. Historian Nathan O. Hatch noted that “the Revolution dramatically expanded the circle of people who considered themselves capable of thinking for themselves about issues of freedom, sovereignty, and representation.” Historian Stephen A. Marini further argued that Congregational ministers after the American Revolution were unable to recruit enough ministers to send to northern New England and therefore primarily concentrated on existing churches already within their religious control. He argued that this distant region was ripe for picking by “radical sects” since it was still relatively isolated, marginally part of the economic system, and

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6 Ibid., 28-46.

7 The act would not be abolished in Massachusetts until 1830. The law was not part of the Maine Constitution in 1820.


Congregationalists were unable to maintain the traditional parish system.\textsuperscript{11} A few Congregational churches had dotted the Maine coastline for several decades. However, their reach had been rather limited. Congregationalists therefore had some control over the towns in which their parishes existed but could not exert much influence outside this range. This system struggled to expand as the population of Maine increased and dispersed.

Any professed Baptist could form a church due to the Baptists’ lack of reliance upon educated settled ministers and church buildings. Many of the Baptist churches in Maine were founded by a missionary and a small group of local believers. A handful of Maine Baptist missionaries were essential in the formation of many Maine Baptist congregations. One of the most popular and beloved of these missionaries was Rev. Isaac Case. Born in Dighton, Massachusetts, Case became friends as a young man with the famous Rev. Isaac Backus. Case preached at churches in southern Massachusetts and eastern Rhode Island, including Backus’ church in Middleborough. Backus eventually read a letter he had received from Rev. Job Macomber aloud to Case. Macomber was also originally from Backus’ church but had chosen to evangelize in Maine. He became the settled minister of the newly-formed church in Bowdoinham in 1784 and encouraged others to follow his example. Case was “so impressed by the need of more laborers in that destitute field, that in the autumn of 1783, after having been ordained, he made his way into the District of Maine.”\textsuperscript{12}

Case originally focused his efforts on southern Maine. He became the settled minister of the East Readfield Baptist Church in 1792, but later resigned to become a full-time missionary in 1800. He was often absent from his church for several months to preach to far-flung


communities in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and the Canadian Maritimes. He was a founding member of the Maine Baptist Missionary Society and a major influence on the Baptist Convention of Maine. It is believed that he baptized over 1,000 people during his lifetime.\(^\text{13}\)

One of the churches Case visited both before and after retiring to become a full-time missionary was the Eden Baptist Church on Mount Desert Island. This church exemplifies the growth of fledgling Baptist churches in Maine, the importance of cross-border missionaries, and the need for a dedicated core of laypeople. Such churches would eventually embrace religious print and their early origins demonstrate their relative isolation without it. The Eden Baptist Church was formed in July 1799 under the guidance of Elder James Murphy. Murphy was a missionary from the Canadian Maritimes who spent much of his time in towns along the Passamaquoddy Bay and parts of modern-day Downeast Maine.\(^\text{14}\)

Eden Baptist Church was disconnected from other Baptist churches in Maine. Mount Desert Island was formally settled by the English in the early 1760s, but it would several decades before the population significantly increased.\(^\text{15}\) There would not be another Baptist church on Mount Desert Island until 1816 nor on the nearby mainland until 1806.\(^\text{16}\) The nearest Baptist churches would have been located in mid-coast Maine and north of the island and would have been mostly accessible by boat.

\(^\text{13}\) Dale Potter-Clark, Rev. Isaac Case: 1761-1852, Readfield, Maine (Printed by Author, 2013), 8.
\(^\text{14}\) One example of Murphy’s influence was noted in Elder James Manning’s diary. He stated on August 18, 1801, “next morning Brother E. Brooks. Came in from Passamaquoddy and his countenance plainly showed that he felt the sunshine of the gospel. He brough good news. He informed us how many of the dear children of God came forward and were baptized and how Brother Murphy felt his chains fall off him,” in D.G. Bell, ed., Newlight Baptist Journals of James Manning and James Innis, Baptist Heritage in Atlantic Canada (Saint John, New Brunswick: Acadia Divinity College and the Baptist Historical Committee of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces, 1984), 103.
\(^\text{15}\) E.H. Dodge, Mount Desert Island and the Cranberry Islands (Ellsworth, Maine: N.H. Sawyer, 1871).
\(^\text{16}\) “Record of the Baptist Church of Mount Desert, 1816-1834;” and, “Rev. Benjamin Lord, the First Baptist Minister of Ellsworth,” The Bangor Historical Magazine, June 1892, 58.
Eden Baptist Church relied upon a stream of missionaries to help administer the Lord’s supper, baptize candidates, and preach sermons. Murphy settled at the Baptist church in Eastport, Maine, in 1800 but continued to visit the Eden Baptist Church on missionary tours that occurred several times a year. Case was also a frequent visitor during his Eastern Maine missionary journeys after 1800. Eden Baptist Church regarded missionary sermons as an important event and always recorded the topic and Bible verse that had been discussed during the sermon. For example, it commented on November 13, 1799, “a Lecture preached by Elder Case from the 1st Book of Samuel 12 Chapter & 24 verse. Only fear the Lord and serve him in truth with all of your Heart: For consider how great thing he has done for you.”

The Church may have been further isolated by tension between itself and the existing Congregational Church in Southwest Harbor. This church noted in September 1799 that “Captain Davis Wasgatt came forward and wanted to be re-baptized, and although he had been a church member above twenty years, he declared that he never was satisfied with his infant baptism, although he had all his children baptized.” Wasgatt asked the Southwest Harbor Congregational Church to rebaptize him several times throughout 1799 and 1800, but they refused to do so. He reportedly instead went to be baptized at the Eden Baptist Church in October 1800. This incident was not reported in the Eden Baptist Church records but appears to have caused contention at the Island’s congregational church. It was not until the 1830s that the two churches collaborated with one another through benevolent groups like tract societies.

Eden Baptist Church attempted unsuccessfully during this period to obtain a settled minister. Benjamin Downs, a member of the congregation, preached several times at church meetings throughout 1800 and 1801. He was ordained as minister of the Eden Baptist Church on

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18 “Transcript of the Southwest Harbor Congregational Church.”
19 Ibid.
June 15th, 1801.20 His ordination was attended by Case and Rev. Samuel Woodward of Brunswick, Maine. However, Downs requested a dismissal less than two years later and the church was then without a settled minister for fifteen years. It turned again to missionaries until they settled a minister in November 1818.21

Nevertheless, the church endured without a minister. The congregation met every few weeks to worship with one another, examine potential candidates for baptism, discuss church business, and resolve any disagreements that had come between members. It sometimes met in a “meeting house” and other times at the home of a church member or deacon. Candidates were only baptized if a missionary visited the church, and much church business was conducted by deacons and members. Male church members would occasionally preach if they felt called and received permission from the congregation to do so. The church eventually participated in denominational organizations like associations, despite not having a settled minister. Eden Baptist Church survived through the early eighteenth century due to strong local commitments, the support of missionaries, and the flexible structure of their denomination. Self-sufficiency with a high degree of autonomy was a common theme among Maine Baptists throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Maine Baptists primarily concerned themselves with attracting members and avoiding criticism. Congregational leaders especially questioned the Baptists’ insistence upon full immersion baptism. This is evident in the case of Captain Davis Wasgatt of the Southwest Harbor Congregational Church as mentioned above. A few personal accounts also exist of the tension between the Congregationalists and Baptists. Elder James Potter, a Maine Baptist missionary, wrote about his personal conversion experience in a memoir. He became a Protestant

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20 “Records of the Eden Baptist Church.”
21 Ibid.
in 1781 and originally sought out the Congregational church in his town. However, he claimed that the church “made him feel empty” and was disheartened by their rejection of full immersion baptism. His own conversion was shortly followed by a revival in which “young converts hearing our disputes about baptism were enlightened, and embraced the idea of believer’s baptism, and the controversy came to an end.” Potter’s conversion experience ended with his dedication to a missionary life. He reported throughout his tenure that he continued to experience opposition to his preaching from other ministers. It was therefore essential for Maine Baptists to create a medium through which they could reiterate their theology and unite their denomination.

**Foundations of Maritime Baptist Churches**

The Maritime Baptist denomination was also small and isolated during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries along the western shoreline of modern-day peninsular Nova Scotia. This area was primarily occupied by “New England planters” or Southern New England settlers who migrated to the Canadian Maritimes after the Acadian deportation. Most of the New England Planters were Congregationalists. However, as in frontier Maine, Congregationalists struggled to flourish there. Historian Daniel Goodwin argued that “the religion which they had in common was unable to provide societal stability because New England Congregationalism itself was far from being uniform in 1760.” Congregational churches were independent institutions that were not part of any broader organization like those accepted by Anglicans. Furthermore, the Planters in Nova Scotia would have been disconnected.

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22 James Potter, *Narration of the experience, travels and labors of Elder James Potter, Minister of the Gospel, and Pastor of the Baptized Church in Bowdoin, Commonwealth of Massachusetts: Published by request of many of the friends of Zion* (Boston, Massachusetts: Printed by Lincoln & Edmands, 53 Cornhill, 1813), 15.
23 Ibid., 17.
from unifying institutions that existed in southern New England. This system would have experienced challenges among the overspread farms and towns of western Nova Scotia. The Canadian Maritimes experienced its own “Great Awakening” in the late eighteenth century, largely led by Henry Alline. He was born in Newport, Rhode Island, and was part of the migration of New England Planters to the Canadian Maritimes. Like many New England Planters, he was raised a Congregationalist. However, he experienced a “New Light conversion” in 1775 at the age of 28. Alline began preaching through western Nova Scotia and his motivating preaching inspired the creation of what would become seven Baptist churches in western peninsular Nova Scotia. Others who followed Alline’s teachings later evangelized in other parts of Nova Scotia and into New Brunswick.

Alline himself did not self-identify as a Baptist. He was primarily interested in personal piety, devotion, and the significance of having experienced a “New Birth.” Historian George A. Rawlyk noted, “in particular, the New Light-New Birth emphasis provided a new and powerful spiritual relationship between Christ and the enlightened and redeemed believer in a world in which all traditional relationships seemed to be falling apart.” Alline and his followers especially pushed for individuals to embrace emotional “impressions” that they believed were received from God and to passionately share their faith with others. His beliefs about baptism especially differentiated him from Baptists elsewhere in North America. Historian Robert T. Reid noted, “Henry Alline’s insistence upon the inward light and regenerative experience of

28 Ibid., 86.
Christ led him to repudiate all outward props of religion, including the practice of baptism.”

Alline was initially indifferent to baptism, but eventually argued that “such emphasis upon water baptism was a return to fallen Adam, who tried to hide himself with an external fig leaf.” He contended that disagreements over the ordinances of baptism, the Lord’s supper, and church membership were merely a distraction from true piety. He differed from Maine Baptists who argued that one needed to experience a “believer’s baptism” to be saved. They also insisted that only those who experienced a full immersion baptism could become church members and participate in ordinances like the Lord’s Supper. He made no such argument. He was also ambivalent about the value of formal religious institutions including churches.

Alline’s preaching was popular but highly contentious. Even those who would have identified themselves as “New Lights” were incredibly divided and disagreed over basic theological principles. Historian D.G. Bell claimed that there were multiple “sectarian tendencies” within the New Light Movement and “New Dispensationalism” was the most radical of these tendencies. “New Dispensationalism” was an extension of Alline’s emphasis upon new birth. Followers “rejected the Bible as ‘a dead letter’ and condemned ‘Church Rules.’” They did not follow any of the ordinances, such as baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and instead neglected “all Protestant duties except when they [felt] the Spirit.” Followers were encouraged

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30 Ibid.
31 For more on Henry Alline, see J.M. Bumsted, Henry Alline, 1748-1784 (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 1971).
33 Bell, ed., The Newlight Baptist Journals of James Manning and James Innis, 15.
to give into emotions, including sexual desires. They were supposedly convinced that conversion had “freed them from obedience to the rules of moral and religious conduct.”

A series of events occurred in the late 1790s that brought New Dispensationalism to its knees in Nova Scotia. Lydia Randall, a member of the New Light Church in the Horton, scandalized fellow church-goers in 1792 by declaring that “all orders of the Church [are] but outward forms and Contrary to the Spirit of God.” She attracted a group of supporters who threatened to dissolve the existing church. Two New Dispensationalists, including a minister, were accused of sexual immorality in 1796.

New Dispensationalism remained popular in New Brunswick throughout the first decade of the nineteenth century, but its supporters became less vocal after 1809. New Dispensationalist Amos Babcock murdered his sister Mercy Hall. He claimed that Hall was “reprobate” and that he was told to murder her through “communications from heaven.” Bell argued that the murder of Mercy Hall was the true death blow to New Dispensationalism and overall, to Allinism.

New Lights who tended to be more conservative sought out greater church organization and more defined theology, even before the murder of Mercy Hall. Historian J.M. Bumsted noted that “the average Nova Scotian responded positively to Alline’s evangelical pietism… [but were] repelled or confused by his doctrine.” Many believed that New Dispensationalism was symbolic of what happened to individuals who shunned the Bible and completely rejected any form of formalism. Alline was ambivalent about the value of formal religious institutions, but most of those who experienced a “New Birth” under Alline’s ministry were not ready to completely throw out such fundamental religious organizations and practices.

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34 Ibid., 16.
36 Ibid., 183.
37 Bumsted, Henry Alline, 1748-1784, 81.
New Lights especially debated the value of “closed communion.” Closed communion is the practice of only serving the Lord’s Supper to members of good standing within the church. New Lights disagreed upon who qualified as such a member. Some argued that a person simply needed to accept Jesus Christ as their savior, while others insisted that only those who experienced a full immersion adult baptism could participate in the Lord’s supper. Most of the Baptist churches in the Maritimes would eventually adopt closed communion by the beginning of the nineteenth century, but not before causing several rifts in the late eighteenth century.

Horton Baptist Church ordained Alline as an evangelist but eventually refused him fellowship in their church. It stated in 1781 that they intended to “admonish our Brother Henry Alline in the first place for paying no regard to the Request of the Church and for publishing erroneous principles in print in hopes that we might be a means to convince him of his error.”38 Horton Baptist Church was likely appalled by Alline’s published sermon Two Mites on Some of the Most Important and much disputed Points of Divinity. 39 This was the first of five large works Alline published from 1780 to 1784. This anti-Calvinistic treatise rejected “notions of unconditional election, irresistible grace, and limited atonement.”40 Alline also frequently denied the importance of any form of baptism in his works. Calvinistic beliefs would have been part of many New England planters’ religious upbringings, and some had started to argue against Congregationalists’ justifications for infant baptism. As Bumsted stated, “Nova Scotians were willing to accept a certain undefinable deviation within traditional values, but not an open attack

on the value system itself.” Alline launched a war against traditional religion and the New Lights he originally inspired fired back.

Alline turned to print to spread his theology outside of western Nova Scotia. He recognized that his ministry would have a limited reach if he did not publish any theological works. Horton Baptist Church likewise recognized the significance of print. Readers would likely associate the churches in Nova Scotia with Alline’s theology unless they publicly repudiated it. Horton Baptist Church’s admonition of Alline was unsuccessful as he did not personally repent. He left for a missionary tour of New England in 1783, where he would die of tuberculosis in Northampton, New Hampshire, in 1784. However, their stance against Alline was essential in beginning to unite the church under a Calvinistic Baptist theology that would allow them to connect with other like-minded churches.

Maritime Baptists also faced some opposition from the government, especially in New Brunswick. Alline did not necessarily encourage resistance against authority. Nevertheless, he preached that all could choose to accept Jesus Christ as their savior, regardless of their background and he typically denounced the necessity of formal institutions. The Church of England in the Maritimes regarded these beliefs as a threat to their authority.

Anglicans Rev. Jacob Bailey and Bishop Charles Inglis were some of the most vocal opponents of the diverse evangelical passions spearheaded by Alline. Bailey authored a poem in 1784 titled “Verse Against New Lights” that criticized Allinites for their supposedly uncontrolled enthusiasm. Inglis preached several sermons and wrote letters to ministers within his diocese about the “evils” and “fanaticism” of the New Light philosophy. Inglis stated, “men

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41 Bumsted, Henry Alline, 1748-1784, 81.
of an enthusiastic cast... transgress the rules of Order and disseminate their wild notions; to the injury of society, and rational piety.”

Both Bailey and Inglis were based in Nova Scotia. They criticized the growing New Light congregations but did not actively persecute them. Ministers technically needed a license to be able to preach in the Maritimes, but Inglis and other authorities largely ignored New Light ministers unless they made a ruckus. Inglis was far more concerned about establishing and supporting Anglican institutions than chasing down New Light ministers. Bell remarked that Inglis, “readily conceded that using the force of law to oppress dissent would serve only to inflame its zeal.” Legal authorities recognized that it would be difficult to completely silence New Light ministers and laypeople. Colonial religious laws were instead intended to “warn preachers... to take care not to offend the colony’s essential political and religious constitution.”

There were a few minor confrontations between British authorities and New Light ministers in Nova Scotia. For example, Judge Joshua Upham of Hampton, Nova Scotia, wrote a letter to New Light minister James Innis warning him against denouncing the Church of England in his sermons. Conflict between New Light ministers and British authorities in New Brunswick was more common than it was in Nova Scotia. The population of New Brunswick was largely Loyalist and the colony enacted laws that would ensure the authority of Great Britain and the Church of England. They quickly passed the Act for preserving the Church of England in

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46 Bell, ed., Newlight Baptist Journals of James Manning and James Innis, 209.
47 Ibid.
1786. Its intention was to “signal unequivocally that New Brunswick was to be an Anglican colony in which Dissenters would merely be tolerated on good behavior.”

New Light ministers were challenged repeatedly in New Brunswick’s early years. Missionaries Rev. Henry Hale and Rev. Isaac Case were dogged by the local magistrate during their 1806 visit to St. Andrews, New Brunswick. Case noted being confronted by a local magistrate who demanded by “what authority we came into that kingdom to preach … he forbid our preaching in that kingdom; and told us if he found us there when he returned, we might expect to suffer the consequences of it.” Case and Hale did not face any repercussions at the time, but their predecessor had. Rev. Thomas Ansley from St. John had “met with some opposition, being apprehended, and a young man with him, for preaching, and put under keepers for two days, but by some means they were let go, without receiving much injury.” Case also noted that those who had been converted to Baptist theology by Ansley had been harassed by authorities. He claimed that one young woman in St. Andrews had rebuked a sheriff who attempted to quiet her after she had berated the local Anglican minister for his shortcomings.

Baptist ministers also faced persecution under New Brunswick’s 1791 Marriage Act, which declared that “the solemnization of marriage was to be the prerogative of clergy of the Church of England.” There were a few exceptions to this rule, but none of them included the New Lights. New Light preachers fought against this law for several years but were unable to escape the conflict entirely unscathed. New Light minister James Innis was arrested in August

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48 “An Act for Preserving the Church of England, as by law established in this province, and for securing Liberty of Conscience in matters of Religion” (1786), British North America Legislative Database, University of New Brunswick
49 Ibid.
51 Ibid.
1810 for having married a couple in St. Martin, New Brunswick, the previous year. Henry Hale almost met a similar fate. Henry Hale was based in Sedgwick, Maine, but spent the majority of his time preaching in Maine and the Canadian Maritimes. He had also reportedly married various couples without permission from the government. However, unlike Innis, Hale was able to avoid imprisonment. He attempted to apply for a preaching license once he realized that the authorities wanted to arrest him. Major-General Martin Hunter, the authority responsible for granting such licenses in 1810, refused to do so. Hunter instead told Hale to wait until he received an update. There is no indication that Hale ever heard from Hunter again, and he continued to preach and marry people throughout the Maritimes.53

Baptist ministers were rarely arrested in the Maritimes, but the threat loomed large. Maine Baptists battled for authority in their towns and control over their taxes. However, there was no institution that could control the Maine Baptists in the same way that the government could influence Maritime Baptists during the late eighteenth century. As noted above, Inglis and others were reluctant to interfere in Baptist affairs. Nevertheless, authorities would act if they believed that Baptist ministers flagrantly challenged their authority. These legal issues emphasized a need for collaboration and support amongst the Maritime Baptists. Greater connection could secure their position within the region and allow them to grow with less interference.

New Lights were inspired to strengthen their group due to legal challenges, theological debates, and desire to distance themselves from New Dispensationalism. Alline may have been one of the leaders of the Great Awakening, but he was not truly the founder of the Baptist denomination in the Canadian Maritimes. The denomination instead was formed and led by

Allinite followers who fully adopted Calvinistic Baptist theology. Many of these followers were missionaries who frequently traveled throughout the Canadian Maritimes and Maine to spread their religious beliefs and laypeople who formed into Baptist congregations.

One of the most influential leaders of this founding generation was Rev. Edward Manning. He was born in Ireland in 1766 and migrated to Falmouth, Nova Scotia, sometime between 1769 and 1770. There is little information about his early life, but he was deeply impacted by the ministry of his neighbor, Henry Alline. Manning eventually joined a New Light Congregational church in the Horton-Cornwallis area in 1789 and began preaching the next year. He embraced New Dispensationalism in 1791 and communed with New Dispensationalist leaders like Lydia Randall. His practices ostracized him from his adopted congregation. He eventually turned away from the movement in the mid-1790s and instead claimed “that the sole authority for the life of the believer was the ‘Scriptures.’” He was ordained a minister in 1795 by the Cornwallis New Light Congregational Church. This church would become a Baptist church in the 1807, and Manning would remain its minister until his death.

Like Case, Manning often traveled throughout the Canadian Maritimes and Maine. He traveled by himself and occasionally with companions from Maine. Case noted in one letter about a missionary tour that he had “sat out in the company of Elder Edward Manning from Nova-Scotia, to travel and visit the poor and destitute inhabitants upon the eastern shores… where we found a number of young people very anxious about the salvation of their souls.” Manning was frequently in contact with friends and colleagues in New England and actively subscribed to Baptist publications when they became available. He retained strong ties to New

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54 Baines, “Separating God's Two Kingdoms: Regular Baptists in Maine, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, 1780 to 1815,” 120.
55 Isaac Case, “Extracts from Elder Case’s Missionary Journal, dated Readfield, April 16, 1811. Addressed to the President of this Society,” The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, June 1812, 166.
England Baptists throughout his life and was offered a leadership position at Waterville College, a Baptist college based in Maine.\textsuperscript{56} He was essential to the development of the Maritime Baptist associations and later Baptist organizations like their missionary society and theological institutions.

Horton Baptist Church offers an example of the development of the Baptist denomination in the Maritimes during the late eighteenth century. It was formed in 1778, but there is some speculation that it was a Congregational church prior to being re-covenanted as a Baptist church.\textsuperscript{57} Notwithstanding these murky origins, it is certain that residents of modern-day Wolfville, Nova Scotia, were deeply influenced by Alline’s ministry. As noted above, they eventually rejected Alline’s theology and transformed into a Calvinistic Baptist Church throughout the 1790s.

The congregation was initially quite small. It therefore often united with nearby congregations on Sunday mornings for worship that alternated among Horton, Cornwallis, Falmouth, and Newport each Sunday. There were few other Baptist churches in the Maritimes at the time.

The church reviewed at least five candidates to be their minister before settling on Thomas Handley Chipman in 1791. Chipman was a well-known evangelist throughout the Maritimes and was frequently on long missionary tours that required the Horton Baptist Church to hire temporary substitutes. For example, in [add year] the church asked, “Brother Theodore S.


Harding to preach to use for the term of six months and for the money we would contribute to his support.”

The church was plagued by controversy even when Alline was not present. The Cornwallis Congregational Church requested to share communion with the Horton Baptist Church in 1779, but the Baptist church refused. There was a brief respite in 1780 when the Baptist Church voted to allow “Congregational Brethren which are Sound in the Faith to sit… occasionally at the Lord’s table.” However, this break from the conflict was short-lived. The Baptist Church contended in 1781 that the Congregational Church and Henry Alline, “[held] some principle which we think to be unscriptural and erroneous.” There was no further discourse between the two churches after this time. Two candidates were denied ordination by the Horton Baptist Church because they were not baptized as adults and did not believe that such a baptism was necessary to be a Protestant. Discord eventually became so prevalent that the church voted in 1783 that “not Controversy [nor] dispute should [be] brought into the Church when met to renewed Covenant on Saturday before coming to the Lord’s table.”

Horton Baptist Church would eventually adopt many of the practices that defined Calvinistic Baptist churches such as closed communion and adult baptism. Their records are representative of the theological uncertainty that pervaded the Maritimes during the eighteenth century. Many of these disagreements were eventually resolved by communication and discussion through associations and print in the nineteenth century.

Maine and Canadian Maritime Baptist Associations

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58 “Wolfville Baptist Church Records, 1778-1995.”
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
Both Maine and Maritime Baptists formed unifying associations between 1787 and 1800 to address issues of isolation, resolve theological disagreements, and provide a medium for discussion and encouragement. Many of the new congregations were still quite small and lacked leadership or guidance. Missionaries could only provide occasional and temporary aid. As such, the churches found themselves craving the advice and support of like-minded institutions.

Bowdoinham Association was formed in May 1787 by delegates from the churches in Thomastown, Bowdoinham, and Harpswell. It was the first Baptist association in Maine. The only other associations in New England were the New Hampshire Association and Warren Association based in Providence, Rhode Island. A handful of Baptist leaders from Maine had occasionally visited the Warren Association, but it was too distant for most Maine Baptists to attend regularly. Some Maine Baptist churches participated in the New Hampshire Association, but these churches straddled the modern border between New Hampshire and Maine. The new churches in mid-coast towns like Thomaston, Bowdoinham, and Harpswell wanted their own local association to assist their growing churches.

Bowdoinham Association’s main purpose was to “establish a medium of communication relative to the general state of religion; recommend such measures, give such advice, and render such assistance as shall be thought most conducive to the advancement, power, and enlargement of the Redeemer’s kingdom in the world.”62 This Association grew so rapidly that it split into additional associations several times in the early nineteenth century. Several churches in mid-coast Maine from the Bowdoinham Association formed the Lincoln Association in 1808. This organization would eventually include the aforementioned Eden Baptist Church which voted to send a letter from their congregation with two of their deacons.63 Bowdoinham Association split

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63 “Records of the Eden Baptist Church.”
again in 1811 and the churches west of the Androscoggin River formed into the Cumberland Association. The remaining Baptist associations in Maine formed after the War of 1812 as the population of Maine continued to expand.64

Several New Lights in the Canadian Maritimes gathered for their first Baptist Association meeting to better outline their beliefs. The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association, formed in June 1800, was the first Baptist association in modern-day Canada. It originally consisted of ten total churches, many of which had originally been founded under Henry Alline’s ministry. The purpose of the association was primarily to resolve the theological debates that had plagued the Maritime churches. These churches adopted many practices that Alline had considered irrelevant. The association’s charter stated that ordinances such as baptism and the Lord’s Supper could not be ignored as they were “an institution[s] of God much owned by him.”65 The association’s covenant further stated that full immersion baptism was the only appropriate method and that Baptist churches should be committed to closed communion.66 John S. Moir noted that “Calvinism, antipaedobaptism, and closed communion become dominant.”67

The formation of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association was a watershed moment for the Maritime denomination. Their new charter more clearly defined a Baptist identity. Maritime Baptists were to be marked by a dedication to full immersion baptism and, eventually in 1809, closed communion.

Most Maritime Baptists welcomed the charter and association as it resolved key theological debates. New Dispensationalism and all the issues that accompanied it appeared to be left in the past. Nevertheless, there were a few that disagreed with the charter and refused to join

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64 The other Baptist associations formed prior to 1830 included the Eastern Maine, Kennebec, Oxford, Penobscot, Waldo, and York. The Eden Baptist Church shifted to the Eastern Maine Baptist Association in 1821.
66 Ibid.
the association. Rev. John Payzant was Henry Alline’s brother-in-law and minister of Liverpool New Light Congregational Church. He attended the association meeting, but his church ultimately did not join. Payzant was opposed to both full immersion baptism and closed communion. He was not personally baptized and did not encourage others to seek out baptism. His church administered the Lord’s supper to all, regardless of their standing within the church. They were the only “New Light” church that did not become a “Baptist” church.

Payzant had witnessed the rejection of his brother-in-law by the Horton Baptist Church. It is therefore unsurprising that Payzant maintained the principle of open communion. However, his stance ultimately isolated his church from the evolving Maritime Baptist community. Maritime Baptists now identified themselves through their embrace of full immersion baptism and closed communion. Any church that refused to accept these requirements was not considered Baptist by their standards. Payzant and the term “New Lights” are interestingly not mentioned again in the association meeting notes. The churches which signed the covenant identified as “Baptist.”

Historian D.G. Bell claimed that the formation of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association was a “Baptist coup” that attempted to squash any remaining Allinite tendencies in Nova Scotia. Bell blames ministers such as Edward Manning for the wane in Allinism. However, the records of the Horton Baptist Church demonstrate that it was New Light laypeople who ultimately sought greater theological unity. New Light leaders may have agreed with the same principles, but it was the laypeople who shaped and practiced them.

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69 Payzant is not mentioned in the association meeting notes, but Baptist minister William Chipman reportedly noted his presence. Saunders, *History of the Baptists of the Maritime Provinces*, 87.
70 Bell, ed., *Newlight Baptist Journals of James Manning and James Innis*, 25.
The association eventually split in 1821 to form separate Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Associations. These associations sent representatives to one another’s annual meetings, but largely remained separate entities. The associations split again between in the 1840s and 1850s into more regionally specific associations.

**Purpose and Structure of Baptist Associations**

Associations were the denomination’s first attempt at linking together far-flung congregations and laypeople. They were able to unify disconnected Maine congregations and begin to solidify a unifying theology for the discordant Maritime Baptists. Individual Baptist churches continued to operate independently, but they looked to these organizations for advice, financial aid, missionaries, and access to education and publications.

Associations met yearly for two-to-three days at a church within the association. The meeting would begin with a sermon, prayer, and an account of the churches within the group. Churches would typically send three to four local representatives who would bring a letter with the church’s experience over the year. The remainder of the meeting would address business. Preachers or evangelists were given missionary assignments for the coming year, various ministers and deacons were tasked with aiding a fellow church with an issue, and other leaders were assigned to committees to discuss problems or ideas that pertained to the entire association. The meeting would usually conclude with a sermon and worship.

The in-person association meetings primarily connected and benefitted the attendees. However, the asynchronous nature of the association printed meetings notes is what truly incorporated the laypeople more generally into a Baptist community. The discussions that dominated the meetings were brought into a more inclusive sphere through the notes. The church letters and the circular and corresponding letters written by the association are the most revealing aspects of the association printed meeting notes and are the mediums through which laypeople’s
voices were most clearly heard. The churches’ accounts included the number of members who were baptized, died, or who had left the church, the foundation of any new voluntary societies, debates within the church about theology and practice, news of revivals, and an overview of the emotional “state” of the church. Churches who had not experienced any religious revivals usually described the condition of their church as “low.” Revivals were regarded as a symbol of God’s favor and always mentioned by churches if they had experienced one. A lack of revivals was a sign of moral decline and motivation for laypeople to pursue even greater piety.

Bowdoinham Association remarked in their first association meeting notes that “the churches stand fast in faith and fellowship of the gospel; there have been considerable revivals among us, for which let the Lord be magnified.”

The associations’ circular letter was several pages in length and written in a format similar to a sermon. The letter’s intention was to address a particular theological issue within the association. The corresponding letter was a few paragraphs in length and was meant to provide a general overview of the condition of the churches within the association. The corresponding letter was especially used to show off any major revivals.

Printed association meeting notes were mediums through which Baptist identity could be debated and molded. For example, the Baptist church in Vassalborough, Maine, asked during the 1793 meeting how the association interpreted Romans 9:3 which states, “for I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.” The association answered that “the Apostle’s meaning is, that if it would be for the glory of God &

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71 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held at Harpswell, September 29th and 30th, 1790 (Boston, Massachusetts: Samuel Hall, No. 53 Cornhill Street, 1790), 8.
would forward the salvation of his brethren the Jews, he could be willing to suffer a crucified death.”

Bowdoinham Association’s response to this inquiry was essential in defining the theology, and thus identity, of the association. Romans 9 has frequently been used by Calvinists to argue that one’s salvation is predestined by God and there is nothing that one can do to impact one’s fate. The Vassalborough Church therefore essentially questioned whether or not the Bowdoinham Association was Calvinistic, as this was not something the Bowdoinham Association had explicitly identified with. John Calvin noted in his own commentary of the Bible that “it was then a proof of the most ardent love, that Paul hesitated not to wish for himself that condemnation which he saw impending over the Jews, in order that he might deliver them.”

The Bowdoinham Association’s response mirrored Calvin’s commentary and declared that their association was indeed Calvinistic.

The circular letter from the same association meeting notes further demonstrated God’s blessing upon the association and defined what it meant to be a Protestant. They noted that “multitude within these American climes” had converted to Protestantism. The letter nevertheless urged Protestants to remain vigilant and outlined directions for Protestant behavior. They encouraged members of their associations to pray, follow God’s commandments, be kind to others, attend and participate in Church, to “attend every talent, given to him by God,” and be “valiant soldiers of the Cross for Christ.” These actions would permit their members to “faithful servants of God” and eventually go to Heaven. The association meeting notes laid out a Protestant, and particularly Calvinistic Baptist identity, for their laypeople to rally behind.

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72 King James Bible and Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held at Readfield, August 28th and 29th, 1793, (Portland, Maine: Office of T.B. Waits, 1793).
Impact of Printed Association Meeting Notes

Association meetings provided Baptists an opportunity to learn about and connect with one another. However, their proceedings would only have been heard by word-of-mouth if the associations had not printed their minutes and sent “corresponding letters” to other associations. One minister was assigned to write one letter that would then be sent to all corresponding associations. Letters would either be mailed to a representative of the association, sent along with an assigned messenger to attend the other associations’ meetings, or handed over to missionaries. Letters were later read at the associations’ annual meetings and distributed among the associations’ churches.

Associations guaranteed that they always printed at least several hundred copies of their meeting notes. The 1792 meeting of the Bowdoinham Association is the first occasion where Samuel Woodward, the minister of the Baptist church in Harpswell, was chosen to lead the printing of the minutes. They also voted in this same meeting that Humphrey Purinton of Bowdoin would preserve their records.75 Maine associations hoped that its church members would contribute funds for the printed meeting notes, but rarely directly asked for money. The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association was far more direct in their approach to acquire the necessary printing funds. The Association voted in 1812 that “each Church belonging to this Council raise upon an average six-pence for each Messenger, to be sent to the Association, and put into the hands of the Treasurer Brother David Harris, for the purpose of defraying the expense of printing the minutes &c.”76 The number of copies of printed meeting

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75 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held at Bowdoin, October 3d and 4th, 1792 (Boston, Massachusetts: Edes and Sons, 1792), 5.
76 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia and New- Brunswick Baptist Association Held at the Baptist Meeting-house in Upper Granville, June 22 & 23, 1812; Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters (Halifax, Nova Scotia: John Howe & Sons, 1812), 6-7.
notes varied between 400 to 2,500 copies each year prior to the War of 1812. It tended to be one half to one third less than the number of members in each association. Not every church member would receive a copy, but it was expected that the printed minutes be shared or read aloud.

Baptist associations continually emphasized their desire for and the importance of communication. Meeting notes nearly always ended with a request for a “continuance” of correspondence both from the churches within the association and other associations. Bowdoinham Association noted in their Corresponding Letter for 1804 that their correspondences were, “a source of information and instruction, of gladness and joy.” Churches were chastised should they neglect their correspondence. Cumberland Association stated in their 1812 minutes that, “we very much regret the remissness of our Corresponding Associations, in not favoring us with Messenger as we hoped.”

A Baptist community and unified identity simply could not exist if the laypeople and churches did not participate in it. The Bible calls Protestants to be part of a greater body of Christ and thus part of one’s identity as a Protestant is to be connected to other like-minded individuals. Baptists would have likely been unaware of important theological discussions and news of revivals in other churches outside their immediate geographic proximity if the without asynchronous communication through association printed meeting notes. Baptist identity and

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77 Number of printed minutes gathered from the Bowdoinham, Cumberland, Lincoln, and Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Associations between 1790 and 1812.
78 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held at the Baptist Meeting-House in Readfield, September 26th and 27th, 1804.
80 There are several Bible verses that call for unity, but one example is Ephesians 2:19-22, “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”
community relied upon an exchange of news and debate that was primarily fostered by printed association meeting notes.

Exchange of Maine and Maritime Association Minutes and Messengers

Associational correspondence established a formal relationship between the Baptists in Maine and the Canadian Maritimes and provided laypeople with more information about their fellow Baptists. Lincoln Association was the first to open a “correspondence” with the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association. They voted in 1809 to send Rev. Daniel Merrill and Rev. Henry Hale, both of Sedgwick, Maine, as their messengers to the next association meeting across the border. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association noted the arrival of the messengers at their annual meeting in 1810 and “voted, that … Messengers from the Lincoln Association, take a seat with us.”

The following year the Bowdoinham Association also voted to correspond with the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association. Isaac Case, who had already spent several years completing missionary tours in the Maritimes, was chosen as the first messenger. The association “prepare[d] a special congratulatory address to the Nova Scotia Association on opening correspondence with them” and forwarded it to their next annual meeting. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association were delighted by the letter and quickly voted to correspond with the Bowdoinham Association.

Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association only corresponded with the Maine associations prior to the War of 1812. This collaboration may have been fostered by the difficulty in traveling to Southern New England and/or the existing relationship between Maine

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81 Minutes of the Baptist, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association, Held at Sackville in the County of Westmoreland, June 25 & 26, 1810; Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters (Halifax, Nova Scotia: John Howe & Sons, 1810), 3.

82 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held at the Baptist Meeting House in Livermore, September 26th and 27th, 1810 (Portland, Maine: J. M’Kown, 1810), 6.
and Maritime Baptists through missionaries. Missionaries were often joined by other evangelicals and Baptist laypeople who were not directly associated with domestic missionary societies. Rev. Isaac Case engaged in a missionary tour alongside fellow missionary Rev. Henry Hale in the summer of 1806. Their journey took them to Robbinston, Maine, just across the Passamaquoddy Bay from St. Andrew’s, New Brunswick. Case reported that he had met a man from St. Andrews who “informed us of a happy revival of religion which took place with them the winter past; and desired us to come over and help them. This looked like the call of divine Providence, we agreed to go with him the next day.”

This portion of New Brunswick was not originally part of their planned missionary tour. The encounter with a Baptist layperson encouraged them to add various small towns in New Brunswick to their route that may otherwise have received little to no attention from the denomination and to report about the state of these towns to the periodical. Missionaries also purposely sought out other evangelicals who could help them on their journey. Case noted that he and Rev. Edward Manning of Nova Scotia had set out together in the spring of 1811 to “visit the poor and destitute inhabitants upon the eastern shores.”

Rev. Henry Hale undertook a similar missionary tour through northeastern Maine and southeastern New Brunswick in the summer of 1807. Hale noted, “after meeting, came to East River, where I met with Brother Ansley, from St. Johns, and the day following heard him preach.” The missionary tours in far eastern Maine nearly always included a trip to nearby New Brunswick or an encounter with a Maritime missionary. These evangelicals worked together to

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84 “Extracts from Elder Case’s Missionary Journal, dated Readfield, April 16, 1811. Addressed to the President of this Society,” The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, June 1812, 166.
85 “Extract from the Rev. Henry Hale’s Journal, dated Sedgwick, Sept. 21, 1807, addressed to the Chairman of the Society,” The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, January 1808, 361. “East River” most likely refers to the “East Machias River” as Hale reports that he spent some time on the “Machias river” as well during this missionary tour.
baptize converts, preach sermons, and form churches. Many of the surviving churches in Downeast Maine and southern New Brunswick were founded with the aid of these missionaries.

The Eden Baptist Church once again provides an example of these strong cross-border ties. The church records noted that both Isaac Case and James Murphy visited the church several times between 1800 and 1803 and that there was at least once instance in which Case and Murphy attended the church together. Murphy preached the morning sermon on September 29th, 1799, while Case preached the afternoon sermon. Both baptized candidates and administered the Lord’s Supper together.  

Maine associations were initially eager to send their own individual messengers to the Canadian Maritimes. However, one messenger was eventually chosen to represent most of the Maine associations at the annual meeting of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association. This system began rather accidentally. Maritime Baptists reported in their 1811 minutes that the messenger from the Lincoln Association was “providentially prevented with meeting with us” and that they had consequently received the association’s minutes from another Maine messenger.  

This initial accident soon became formal policy. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association typically chose one messenger to attend the multitude of Maine Baptist association annual meetings. Harding was selected in 1811 to visit all of the corresponding associations in the United States. Bowdoinham and Cumberland Associations adopted a similar policy in 1820 in which they agreed to send on messenger on behalf of both associations.

Messengers were originally considered essential to maintain correspondence as they were one of the few ways that Baptists could guarantee that their own printed meeting minutes and

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86 “Records of the Eden Baptist Church.”
87 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia and New-Brunswick Baptist Association Held at the Meeting-house in Onslow, June 24th and 25th, 1811; Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters (Halifax, Nova Scotia: John Howe & Sons, 1811), 5-6.
88 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held At The First Baptist Meeting-House in Lewiston (Me.), September 27 & 28, 1820; Together with Their Circular Correspondence and Letters (Hallowell, Maine: S.K. Gilman, 1820).
circular letters reached brethren beyond their immediate vicinity. The synchronous conversations these messengers would have enjoyed with the associations amplified the messages in their asynchronous mediums. These letters were a concrete way to establish and maintain relationships with other Baptists. The associations frequently wrote of being “refreshed” by the updates they had received from churches within their association and corresponding associations. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association remarked at their 1811 meeting that, “your Letters and Minutes afforded us much satisfaction and consolation; and we were refreshed by the countenance of our Revd. Brother Isaac Case.”

Maine and Maritime Associations do not explicitly mention one another’s issues or resolutions. Their references to one another primarily celebrate their correspondence or rejoice in one of the messenger’s visitations. Nevertheless, it can be implied that the debates sparked in one church or association were discussed at the annual association meetings and shared with other churches and laypeople through printed association meeting notes. Later association meeting notes indicate that this discussion was prevalent.

Printed association meeting notes solidified the boundaries the Baptist community. Maine and Maritime Baptists were previously informally tied together through missionaries and the news those missionaries would share. Printed association meeting notes created a more formal Baptist region which bound together the Maine and Maritime denominations. Printed association meeting notes guaranteed that at least of some of the discussions stimulated by one church or

89 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia and New-Brunswick Baptist Association Held at the Meeting-house in Onslow, June 24th and 25th, 1811, 13.
90 The Maritime Baptists especially commented on the Maine Baptists’ dedication to voluntary societies. For example, the Nova Scotia Baptist Association noted that the Maine Baptists had set up funds for ministers’ widows. See Minutes of the Nova Scotia Baptist Association Held at Wilmot, N.S., June 26th, 27th, and 28th. Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters; Proceedings of the Missionary Society, &c. (St. John, New Brunswick: J.T. Younghead, 1826).
association would be shared with another. The connected associations would thus be brought into
this discussion and provided opportunity to debate and shape their identity together.

**Conclusion**

Printed association meeting notes were the first form of religious print that shaped the
Maine and Maritime Baptist fractioned and evolving identity. Ministers and missionaries helped
lead associations, but the associations were ultimately composed and impacted by laypeople.
Printed association meeting notes allowed laypeople, such as the members of the aforementioned
Vassalborough Baptist Church, to debate theology and share instances of God’s providence and
favor.

Printed association meeting notes linked the Baptist denominations in Maine and the
Canadian Maritimes. Minutes were easily distributed among the churches through official
messengers and missionaries. Nevertheless, the distribution of these meetings notes was initially
restricted to those who attended meetings and those in their churches and communities. The
denomination would truly gain a greater sense of community through the printing of the
association minutes in religious periodicals. These changes would ultimately transform the
Baptist denomination from a cross-border community with similar beliefs to a trans-national
community of believers.
CHAPTER TWO
“FROM A DESIRE TO PROMOTE THE DIVINE GLORY, AND THE GOOD OF SOULS, I HAVE THOUGH FIT TO MAKE A STATEMENT TO YOU”:
EARLY BAPTIST PERIODICALS IN THE NORTHEASTERN BORDERLANDS, 1800-1812

Maine and Maritime Baptists initially relied upon printed association meeting notes to communicate with one another and elsewhere in North America. Association meeting notes continued to remain relevant throughout the early nineteenth century. However, forms of asynchronous communication evolved throughout the first decade of the nineteenth century. The association printed meeting notes were supplemented by religious periodicals. Maine and Maritime Baptists did not originally publish their own periodicals. They initially sent letters to the blossoming religious periodicals published in southern New England.

Association notes were useful, but periodicals were longer, covered a greater variety of topics, and reached a wider audience. Maine and Maritime Baptists could send a single letter to an editor or friend of an editor and reach more readers than they could by printing and sending their individual association meeting notes. Printed association meeting notes squeezed the proceedings of their meeting as well as theological debates and updates about revivals into roughly ten pages. Periodicals tended to be between twenty and forty pages in length and therefore provided greater space to discuss theological issues, spread information about missionary work and other benevolent movements, and celebrate revivals. Periodicals published full-length letters from missionaries and laypeople and made it more possible for those individual voices to be heard. Periodicals thus offered lay Baptists a medium through which they could shape their identity more fully and a chance to expand their community. This was primarily accomplished prior to the War of 1812 through updates about missionaries, revivals, and other related intelligence.
Maine Baptists eventually published their own periodical but continued to send letters to periodicals in southern New England. Periodicals particularly highlighted the close relationship between the Maine and Maritime Baptists, and also served to connect the Maine and Maritime Baptists to a larger community. Periodicals would prove essential in the development of the Maine and Maritime Baptist denomination as they were able to highlight their needs and growth and learn from others.

Foundation of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society and *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*

The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society (MBMS) was founded on May 26, 1802, by the Baptist ministers around Boston, Massachusetts. The purpose of the society was to “promote the knowledge of evangelistic truth in the new settlements within these United States; or further if circumstances should render it proper.”\(^1\) The society collected one dollar per year from its subscribers. This money funded missionaries who were selected by a committee of the MBMS and the society’s eventual periodical. Missionaries were expected to give any money they received on their journeys to the MBMS.

Most destinations shared common characteristics. These locations were at least several miles from cities or towns, typically contained no established church or a very new church, and boasted few, if any, established ministers. Much of Maine and the Canadian Maritimes easily met these requirements. The number of Baptist churches and congregations in 1802 was growing, but still minor compared to southern New England. Bowdoinham Association reported that there were 41 churches and 754 members in 1802 concentrated on the southern coastline, while the Warren Association noted that there were only 39 churches but nearly 3000 members.

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\(^1\) *The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, May 1803, 6.
in Massachusetts and Rhode Island during the same year.\(^2\) There are no numbers from the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association from 1802, but their notes from later years indicate that their numbers lagged behind the southern New England churches.

Most of the existing or potential Baptist adherents were originally from southern New England or were descended from those who were. The MBMS was concerned that these migrants were “little removed from pagan ignorance, and are perishing for lack of vision.”\(^3\) They believed the situation of those who moved to more isolated areas away from southern New England to be especially tragic as they were separated from the Baptist religious community. Maine and the Canadian Maritimes were therefore prime destinations targeted by the MBMS. John Tripp of Hebron, Maine, and Isaac Case were even appointed missionaries to the Maritimes and Maine at the first meeting of the MBMS.\(^4\)

The first MBMS publication, the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, was published in September 1803.\(^5\) Its intention was to provide “an account of the design and progress of this institution; of the labors and successes of their missionaries; together with such other information respecting the general state of religion, as may be thought interesting to the community at large.”\(^6\) The less explicit purpose of the periodical was to encourage readers to donate money to the MBMS. The editors noted, that their “exertions in attempting to spread knowledge of the gospel, can only be in proportion to the means we possess.”\(^7\)

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\(^2\) Minutes of the Warren Association held at the Baptist Meeting-House in Wrentham, September 7 and 8, 1802 (Boston, Massachusetts, E. Lincoln, 1802); and, Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association, held at the Baptist Meeting-House in Bowdoin, August 25th and 26th, 1802 (Portland, Maine: Daniel George, 1802).

\(^3\) The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, May 1803, 4.


\(^5\) The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine was later referred to as *The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer*.

\(^6\) The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, May 1803), 3.

\(^7\) Ibid.
primarily relied upon the contributions of subscribers and donors outside of the institution and would cease to exist without them.

Psychologists, economists, and behavioral scientists have argued that individuals are more likely to donate to charitable institutions if these institutions demonstrate how the donations are used. Modern nonprofit organizations frequently rely upon social media, websites, and newsletters to inform their donors. The New England Baptists recognized that periodicals could serve a similar purpose. The content in the first number of the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* offered several examples of how the donor’s money would potentially be spent.

The MBMS also believed that it was beneficial to spread news about religious intelligence more generally. It was argued that religious news would encourage Protestants by demonstrating the influence and power of God. The magazine therefore also promised to incorporate, “information respecting the general state of religion, as may be thought interesting to the community at large.” It included examples throughout the work of the ways in which “the great Head of the Church is pouring out his spirit in many places” outside of the MBMS’ reach.

**Growth and Spread of the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine***

Religious periodicals were rather uncommon during the early nineteenth century. Booksellers preferred to sell religious material during the late eighteenth century like sermons and tracts. Historian Joseph M. Adelman noted, “religious topics dominated the non-newspaper

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9 *The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, May 1803, 3.

10 Ibid., 26.
imprints of early America and frequently proved lucrative for printers.” However, religious topics were significantly less common in newspapers. North American periodicals highlighted secular news such as new government laws and shipping intelligence and occasionally included a philosophical or moral essay.

There were a handful of English “theological journals and miscellanies” and missionary periodicals during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, but the majority of these publications were still in their infancy. Most English religious periodicals had only been developed a decade or two prior to the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine. The few that existed before this period tended to be short-lived and “more political than religious.” They commented on issues such as the Exclusion Bill which proposed that Catholics could not become English monarchs.

American missionary societies began to publish periodicals during the first decade of the nineteenth century. The purpose of these periodicals was to share missionary news, especially from the related organization. These periodicals were “magazines” rather than “newspapers.” For the purposes of this analysis, a magazine will be defined as a periodical publication that ranged between twenty and fifty pages long and was published anywhere from several times a year to monthly. Magazines were considered a “graver” publication than newspapers. Publishers, editors, and readers argued that magazines were more “timeless” than newspapers due to their

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13 Ibid., p. 28.
15 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Horton, County of King’s, on Wednesday & Thursday, 24th & 25th June, 1835 Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters, Missionary Notices, Remarks, &c., &c. (Halifax, Nova Scotia: James Spike, Granville Street, 1835), 22.
publication format and subject matter. Articles such as theological treatises could be read at any
time and retain their relevance.

American missionary societies did not jump into printing missionary publications without
any encouragement. There is evidence that there was some public demand for these kinds of
religious and missionary publications. Cornelius Davis, the editor of *The New York Missionary
Magazine and Repository of Religious Intelligence*, remarked in the first number of the work
that, “So much encouragement has been hitherto received in this work, that the publisher does
not hesitate to announce his attention to prosecute it with unremitting and increasing diligence.”\(^\text{16}\)
However, this was an experimental period for American publications and it was unclear how a
Baptist periodical would fare in the market when the MBMS entered it in 1803.\(^\text{17}\)

The editors of the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* did not know whether
their periodical would prove popular or flop. The first number stated, “we have only to add, that
we cannot at present determine whether we shall publish semi-annually, quarterly, or oftener,
until we know the success of this number.”\(^\text{18}\) It was therefore necessary to demonstrate to the
reader the effectiveness of their society and the benefits of missionary work.

The *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* enjoyed notable success as the
frequency of the publication increased over a fifteen-year period. The editors of the periodical
celebrated the increasing popularity at the beginning of their second volume in 1808. They
commented that they had printed one thousand copies of the first number of the first volume, but
quickly discovered that the demand for the periodical was greater than their supply. They

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\(^{16}\) Cornelius Davis, “Preface” in *The New York Missionary Magazine and Repository of Religious Intelligence for
the Year 1800*, 1800, 3.

\(^{17}\) “Missionary and Charity Periodicals, 1793-1902,” *American Antiquarian Society*,

\(^{18}\) Ibid., 4.
continued to sell out of each volume and printed over four thousand copies of the magazine by 1817.19

Copies of the periodical were sent to areas like Maine and the Canadian Maritimes through missionaries or through orders by interested ministers or laypeople. Rev. Edward Manning of Cornwallis, Nova Scotia, was a frequent buyer and distributor of the periodical. He ordered between ten and twenty-five copies of the periodical alongside any other religious tracts or books he believed would sell well in the Canadian Maritimes. The publishers sent orders in boxes to Deacon Aaron Hayden of Eastport or Stephen Jones of Moose Island, Maine. Hayden and Jones would either then send along the box with a ship that was heading toward Nova Scotia or would wait for Manning to visit the area during one of his missionary tours.

Manning’s correspondence indicates that these boxes of reading materials were occasionally divided among ministers throughout the Canadian Maritimes. The publishing firm Lincoln & Edmands noted in several letters to Manning that they expected him to share the content of the box they were sending him with William Chipman, an ardent supporter of Manning’s church. They noted about one order that “Mr. Chipman wishes to have a part. They are all just [sent] to you and Mr. Chipman can settle with you for what he takes.”20

It would often take months for these orders to arrive to their recipients. Stephen Jones of Moose Island noted in one letter to Manning that he had “five packages of books many of which I have had in store a considerable time but being unacquainted with the people from your quarter have had no opportunity to send them.”21 It was not uncommon for recipients to read periodicals several months after they had been published and for it to take several months for their own

19 The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer, 1817, 5-6.
20 Lincoln & Edmands to Edward Manning, Boston, November 4, 1817. Chipman is surely a reference to Baptist minister Rev. Thomas Handley Chipman, who, like Manning, lived in Cornwallis Township (modern-day Wolfville), Nova Scotia.
21 Stephen Jones to Edward Manning, Moose Island, Maine, October 14, 1817.
letters to arrive. Nevertheless, this was often the quickest way for Baptists to exchange information and keep one another up to date.

The magazine appears to have had a wide geographic reach despite the limitations of the nineteenth century postal services. It received correspondence from Baptists throughout North America, including territories and newer provinces in the western United States and Canada. The first volume alone featured letters from missionaries, ministers, and laypeople in Maine, New York, Ohio, South Carolina, and India. The magazine typically printed correspondences from Baptists on the eastern seaboard of North America and English missionaries in India prior to the War of 1812. The number of states, provinces, and countries represented expanded in the nineteenth century as the magazine grew in popularity, the number of American and British missionaries increased in central and eastern Europe, Asia, and Africa, and as American and British settlers pushed further into the modern-day western United States and Canada.

It also eventually attracted a transatlantic audience with readers in the United Kingdom. These readers occasionally sent letters to the magazine. One such article was an address given by a group of English Baptists who attempted to create a Baptist seminary in London. The speech was addressed to “friends of religion” and solicited donations for the new institution.\(^2\) The magazine also received approval from the famous Rev. William Carey, a missionary with the English Baptist Missionary Society in Serampore, India. Carey wrote to the Editors that the periodical was “a very useful means of spreading religious intelligence and seconding the intentions of the Society. It will give me pleasure at any time to contribute to its promotion.”\(^3\)

\(^2\) “Address to the Friends of Religion on the Behalf of the Baptist Academical Institution, At Stepneys-Green, Near London,” *The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, June 1811, 44-7

The letters from the English Baptists were not the norm but demonstrate that the periodical had a wide reach.24

Content of *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine: Maine and Canadian Maritime Connections*

The first few numbers of the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* primarily focused on missionary tours, short theological treatises, and letters about revivals and the lives and deaths of devout Baptists. All of these were crucial in molding a unified Baptist identity and community. Maine and the Maritimes first appear chiefly in reference to their missionaries. The *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* printed a total of seventeen letters from missionaries who visited Maine and the Maritimes between September 1803 and September 1812. Unfortunately, the years 1809 and 1810 are largely missing, but this works out to a little under one missionary letter from missionaries who visited Maine and the Maritimes per number. This was a similar number to those by missionaries who visited northwestern New York and Pennsylvania or northern Vermont and New Hampshire.

Many of the letters were from missionaries employed by the MBMS such as Isaac Case and Henry Hale. They wrote about the difficulty or ease in traveling through their assigned region, the kinds of sermons they preached when they arrived at their destinations, the type of people they met along the way, and the success or failure of their missionary work. They particularly noted the religious fervor of the towns they visited and the number of baptisms they administered.

The letters highlighted several consistent themes. First, missionaries concentrated upon sharing a unified Baptist theology. Second, Maine and the Canadian Maritimes shared many similarities. Both featured nascent Baptist communities, but there were many areas within their

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geographic reach that were “destitute” of religion. Third, Maine and Canadian Maritime missionaries frequently collaborated together to enhance their community. Last, revivals symbolized the missionary’s success and were therefore always reported.

Missionaries were warmly received by many communities, but not by all. James Murphy of New Brunswick visited Beaver Harbor and remarked that the “they did not want to hear the word, looking up free-grace preaching as so many servants of the devil.” There were also several welcoming communities in which the missionaries nevertheless found erroneous doctrine. Isaac Case noted that one village on Deer Island, New Brunswick, “keep up the worship of God among themselves; but they are far from being regular, either in doctrine or practice.” He requested that the society send more missionaries to the island as he believed that the community could one day join their Baptist community.

Maine and Canadian Maritime Baptist shared theology was often highlighted in the periodical. Rev. Daniel Merrill of Sedgwick, Maine, visited the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association in 1810. He praised his “beloved brethren of Nova-Scotia and New-Brunswick, who have so lately emerged into gospel liberty, so expert in discipline, so determinate Protestant order and communion, so well marshalled in battle array.” Case reiterated a similar sentiment two years later. He remarked that the Maritime Baptists accepted open communion but instead adopted closed communion after they “gained further light into the apostolic doctrine and practice.” The Maine Baptists argued that the Maritime Baptists shared a similar theological identity and therefore were part of their growing community of believers.

26 “Extracts from Elder Case’s Missionary Journal, dated Readfield, April 16, 1811,” 167.
27 “Extract of a Letter from Rev. Mr. Merrill, to the Editor, Dated Sedgwick, August 17, 1810,” The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, June 1811, 38.
Maine and Canadian Maritime Baptist sought to bring areas which had been recently settled under their wing. The missionaries focused on areas where there were few churches and ministers. Murphy pleased for more missionaries to be sent to Downeast Maine and the southeastern coast of New Brunswick. He stated, “did you know how many poor farmers there are about amongst these islands and eastern coast, who are ready to perish for lack of knowledge, your benevolent hearts would melt with pity.” Case described this particular area in a comparable way and noted that there were numerous individuals who begged him to remain. He remembered one woman in St. Andrew’s, New Brunswick, who exclaimed, “we are famishing for the gospel, the same as children for want of bread.”

Missionaries were often joined by other evangelicals and Baptist laypeople. Isaac Case noted that he and Rev. Edward Manning of Nova Scotia had set out together in the spring of 1811 to “visit the poor and destitute inhabitants upon the eastern shores.” Hale undertook a similar missionary tour through northeastern Maine and southeastern New Brunswick in the summer of 1807. Hale noted, “after meeting, came to East River, where I met with Brother Ansley, from St. Johns, and the day following heard him preach.” The periodical allowed Hale to report on both his efforts and the efforts of other evangelicals. The missionaries shared a similar identity and thus were able to work together to expand their budding Baptist community.

No missionary letter was complete without a reference to at least one revival. One of the most notable revivals took place in St. John, New Brunswick in 1811. Hale set out on a missionary journey that took him up the coast of Maine and New Brunswick and stopped at St.

29 “Letter from Rev. James Murphy, to the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society,” 91.
31 “Extracts from Elder Case’s Missionary Journal, dated Readfield, April 16, 1811,” 166.
32 “Extract from the Rev. Henry Hale’s Journal, dated Sedgwick, Sept. 21, 1807, addressed to the Chairman of the Society,” *The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, January 1808, 361. “East River” most likely refers to the “East Machias River” as Hale reports that he spent some time on the “Machias river” as well during this missionary tour.
John along his way. A church of thirty-five members formed within a year due to the mixed efforts of Baptist missionaries. Hale reported that Rev. Joseph Crandall of New Brunswick baptized eight people and Rev. Thomas Ansley of Nova Scotia baptized another four. These converts inspired others to join their congregation and Hale noted during his visit that church appeared “to stand firm in the truth.”

There were also letters from ministers who largely evangelized to their local community and were not directly associated with the MBMS. Word had spread that the magazine was eager to print both instances of their success and the success of others in spreading Christ’s kingdom. These writers sought to demonstrate the ways in which they related to the greater Baptist community. For example, the magazine printed a letter from William Batchelder from Berwick, Maine, in its September 1805 edition. Batchelder was the minister of the local Baptist church and traveled to neighboring towns to preach. He wrote in this letter about a revival in the surrounding area and the number of people he baptized.

Thomas A. Chipman, the minister of the Baptist church in Annapolis, Nova Scotia, wrote a similar letter about his local efforts in Yarmouth and Argyle, Nova Scotia, where he assisted in baptizing over one hundred and forty new converts. Chipman concluded his letter with the statement, “I have not written half of what I wanted to; but cannot add. The Magazines have been blessed to many in these parts.” Chipman further noted that the congregation had previously accepted open communion but “have now entirely given it up, and settled upon the Baptist, or rather the gospel plan.” He implied that it was the church’s acceptance of sound

doctrine that sparked the remarkable revival. Rev. Harris Harding, the minister of the Baptist church in Yarmouth, sent a follow-up letter to the magazine. He also contended that it was the adoption of closed communion that had brought upon God’s blessing. He wrote, “it is wonderful to see how God has owned and blessed his sacred ordinance to conviction of sinners and comforting saints.”

The revival indicated to the Baptists that God indeed favored their theology and identity.

The first letter from a Baptist in Maine or the Maritimes who was not a missionary was published in September 1805. Rev. Daniel Merrill of Sedgwick, Maine, wrote to a “friend” about an ongoing revival in the area surrounding his home church. Merrill was an excellent person to help connect Maine Baptists to those in the Maritimes and southern New England. He studied to become a Congregational minister at Dartmouth College and became a settled minister in Sedgwick in 1793. There he experienced a conversion to Baptist theology after several missionaries visited his town in 1802. His congregation was equally impressed and overwhelmingly voted to “receive the Rev. Daniel Merrill as a town minister upon the Baptists platform.” Merrill was baptized and ordained by Baptist ministers Thomas Baldwin of Boston and Elisha Williams of Beverly, Massachusetts, in May 1805, and his church officially transitioned from Congregationalist to Baptist. He noted that there were at least 189 converts within the first weeks of the foundation of the Baptist church and his ordination. His letter about the experience in Sedgwick was published in the September 1805 number of the magazine. He argued that more people would accept full immersion baptism if others, especially ministers,

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38 Ibid.
openly embraced it. He remarked it was clear that his congregation “was blessed in every stride… a heavenly union was possessed by every communicant.”

Merrill was an active religious writer and familiar with the world of New England printing before his Baptist conversion. His first work, *Mr. Merrill’s answer to the Protestants*, featured his sermon when he first joined the Congregational church in Sedgwick and their confession and covenant of faith. His second publication was *The Constitution of a Society for Promoting the Education of Religious Young Men for the Ministry, and also for Sending the Gospel to the Destitute*. Merrill’s entry into the Baptist literary world came with his publication of *The Mode and Subjects of Baptism Examined, in Seven Sermons*, preached shortly before Merrill officially became a Baptist. The main purpose of these sermons was to justify his conversion and principles. Fellow Baptists found his arguments persuasive. Admirers included Isaac Case who reported in his journal,

> Mr. Mearil is [convinced] of Bible Baptism and hath preached five sermons upon the Mode and hath so clearly proved by scripture that [immersion] is the Mode that all of his Deacons are [convinced] and [a great] part of the Church. He hath taken very [prudent] measures to remove [prejudices] and to [search candidly] for themselves to see whether these things be so or no - there is but [a very] little disputing but Each searching his Bible to know Duty for him [self].

The work even elicited counter-arguments from Congregational ministers who feared its popularity. *Seven Sermons* was issued in ten editions within eight years by printers that ranged from Sedgwick to New York to Philadelphia. See Baines, Separating God's Two Kingdoms: Regular Baptists in Maine, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, 1780 to 1815, 242-58 for Congregational response to Merrill’s *Seven Sermons*.

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40 Daniel Merrill, “Mr. Merrill’s answer to the Christians, and other inhabitants of Sedgwick. Also, The confession and covenant of the Church of Christ in that place,” (Newburyport, Massachusetts: Edmund M. Blunt, 1801); and, *The Constitution of a Society for Promoting the Education of Religious Young Men for the Ministry, and also for Sending the Gospel to the Destitute* (Salem, Massachusetts: Joshua Cushing, 1803).
41 Daniel Merrill, *Mode and subjects of baptism examined in seven sermons. To which is added, A brief history of the Baptists* (Raleigh, North Carolina: Joseph Gales, 1807). Please see Baines for more about Merrill’s theology.
42 Isaac Case, Copy of “Diary,” November 6 and 7, 1804.
from Massachusetts to Georgia. Manning & Loring printed the tenth edition and included a brief history of the entire Baptist denomination as part of the celebration.

*Seven Sermons* had an immense impact on the New England and Canadian Maritime Protestant community. MBMS missionary Ezra Willmarth announced that the work had deeply influenced readers in central New Hampshire, even leading to the conversion of former Congregational minister Pelatiah Chapin. Willmarth stated, “about the same time Mr. Merrill’s *Seven Sermons* were put into Mr. Chapin’s hands; the perusal of which, it appears, was the means of establishing him in believer’s baptism by immersion only.” Chapin’s partner Sarah Chapin was also affected by Merrill’s work. She did not become a Baptist at the same time as her partner, but “was called anew to the subjects and mode of baptism, by reading the sermons published by Mr. Merrill on that subject.” Merrill’s work inspired her to read the Bible for clues about the nature of Baptism and ultimately persuaded her: “after stating to the church of which she was a member, her view on the subject, with Protestant meekness and fortitude, she went down into the water, and was baptized.” Merrill’s work had a similar effect in western New York. Missionary Rev. David Irish wrote that a former Presbyterian had turned to Merrill’s *Seven Sermons* when he had questions about the nature of baptism.

There is also evidence that *Seven Sermons* was popular in the Maritimes. Merrill served as the corresponding messenger from the Lincoln Association to the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association in 1810 and 1811. Shortly afterward, Merrill reportedly sent Rev. Edward Manning fifty copies of *Seven Sermons* and another forty copies in 1811. Manning requested several more copies in 1812 but Merrill responded that “none of them are, for the

44 “Extract of a Letter from the Rev. Mr. Willmarth to one of the Editors, dated Rumney [NH], June 14, 1806”, *The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, September 1806, 243.
45 *The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, June 1816, 330.
46 Ibid.
present to be obtained.” Additional copies were sent to the Maritimes after the close of the War of 1812.48

Merrill gave the Baptists of Maine and the Maritimes entry into the budding world of evangelical print. Maine and the Maritimes were slowly transforming from “backwater” destinations visited by missionaries to bastions of Baptist churches and associations. The Baptists argued in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century that one did not need to attend a theological institution to become a proficient minister. However, Merrill’s education certainly helped him write in a manner that sufficiently explained Baptist theology and appealed to members of “establishment” churches. It is unsurprising that many of his biggest “fans,” as noted above, were former Congregationalists and Presbyterians.

Merrill’s own conversion and the remarkable transformation of his church impressed many in Northeast, especially in the Baptist community. There had been baptisms and the formation of churches before in Maine and the Maritimes, but not quite on this scale or within an established Congregational Church. Merrill demonstrated that the Maine Baptists and their friends in the Maritimes were a force to contend. They believed it was clear that God favored their community.

There were six letters sent by Baptists from Maine and the Maritimes to the editors of the periodical after Merrill’s initial letter. Many of these letters began or ended with a statement which acknowledged that the writer did not personally know the editors of the periodical. Nevertheless, each of these writers assumed that the editors would be pleased to receive any news that highlighted the growth of the Baptist denomination, regardless of whether they were

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48 Daniel Merrill to Edward Manning, Eastport, Maine, November 17, 1810, Sedgwick, Maine, October 12, 1811, Boston, Massachusetts, June 2, 1812, and Boston, Massachusetts, April 17, 1816,” Edward Manning Collection, in Baines, “Separating God's Two Kingdoms: Regular Baptists in Maine, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, 1780 to 1815,” 251-2.
personally acquainted with the authors. Rev. Israel Potter of modern-day Upper Clements, Nova Scotia, remarked in a letter dated 1810 that “Though a stranger to you, I take the liberty to state something of what Zion’s God is doing here at this time.” Potter proceeded to describe a revival in which fifty people were baptized and formed into a closed communion Baptist church. He commented, “the multitudes of Adam’s lapsed family are flocking to Christ as doves to their windows.”

The *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* highlighted the strong connections and evolving identity of the Maine and Maritime Baptists. They were developing a community based on their affiliation with a Baptist theology that emphasized full immersion baptism and closed communion. The periodical, combined with the association letters, linked these Baptists together into a community where missionaries spread this theology and revivals marked their success.

**Maine Baptist Missionary Register and the Maine Baptist Missionary Society**

Maine Baptists formed their own independent missionary society with a related publication in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The Maine Baptist Missionary Society was officially founded in September 1804 at a concurrent meeting with the Bowdoinham Association. The printed association meeting notes remarked, “In the afternoon a meeting was held for the establishment of a Missionary Society; a Sermon Preached; Society organized; and 130 dollars collected.” The Society’s primary goal was to send missionaries throughout Maine as “a great part of this district is Missionary ground.”

The associated *Maine Baptist Missionary Register* was the first Baptist periodical in Maine. It was published on behalf of the Maine Baptist Missionary Society between 1806 and

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50 Ibid.
52 *Maine Baptist Missionary Register*, August 1806), 4.
1808 by Peter Edes in Augusta. Number One, Volume One was printed in August 1806 while Number Two, Volume One was printed in August 1808. It appears that the society originally wanted the magazine to be published annually as the second number was supposed to be published in August 1807. However, it was delayed for an unknown reason and was not released until the following summer.53

The magazine’s main purpose was the same as the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*. The Maine Baptist Missionary Society argued that its missionaries could not financially afford to evangelize to those outside of their home churches if they did not receive some monetary assistance. The Society stated, “our freewill offerings are not intended to enrich anyone… but to give a moderate supply to the families of those who are thought measurably qualified, and shall actually engage in the labors and fatigues of the Missionary service.”54 The funds from the magazine were directed to the missionaries and readers in turn learned through the magazine’s articles how their donations were used.

The *Maine Baptist Missionary Register* reflected the priorities of the Maine Baptist denomination. The magazine served a similar purpose to the printed association meeting notes as it also connected Baptist laypeople together and offered a forum for news and discussion. The main difference between the magazine and printed association meeting notes was the inclusion of missionary letters and articles from other periodicals. However, both served as mediums through which the Maine Baptist identity was shaped.

The first number of the magazine featured five letters from missionaries engaged with the Maine Baptist Missionary Society and three letters about revivals. Two of letters about the revivals were contributed by unnamed laypeople. The second number of the magazine was more

54 *Maine Baptist Missionary Register*, August 1806, 5.
ambitious. It highlighted seven missionary letters from those employed by the Maine Baptist Missionary Society, two missionary letters from those employed by the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society, and several religious stories reprinted from other periodicals. The final number thus more closely resembled the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*.

The missionaries’ letters highlighted the isolated nature of many Maine communities and the Baptist’s need to build a connected community. The missionaries largely journeyed throughout Maine, with particular focus on newer settlements in modern-day Somerset, Penobscot, and Hancock county. These areas had small populations with very few churches or ministers. The missionaries thus focused on “opposing error and disorder, and in establishing the saints in the truth.” They continuously shared stories about reviving the faith of those who had “become dull to religion,” converting and baptizing new Protestants, and opposing those who joined or sympathized with other denominations. The missionaries therefore worked to broaden the Maine Baptist community and develop an identity based on a unified theology.

One of the most interesting letters in the magazine was by an unnamed missionary. This missionary was charged with evangelizing throughout southern Penobscot and Hancock county. He was particularly anxious when he entered Surry as he learned that several Methodists missionaries preached in the town. He concluded that, “the people would not want to hear from me,” but remained in town that evening. He was shocked to find he was welcome in Surry and preached three sermons. He commented that after his sermons he “found them so much better indoctrinated than I expected, that I was filled with astonishment, and could not help but give glory to God.”

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56 “Another of Our Missionaries Writes Thus,” *Maine Baptist Missionary Register*, August 1806, 6.
The presence of the Methodist missionaries is unsurprising as Maine was an ideal environment in which evangelism could bloom.\textsuperscript{57} It is also not shocking that the anonymous missionary was nervous about his reception. The Methodists supported infant baptism and full immersion baptism was now a strong marker of Maine Baptist identity. The Maine Baptists believed it was crucial for them to counter what they considered to be harmful theology. The unnamed missionary’s sermons therefore solidified Maine Baptist identity and potentially brought new members under its umbrella. The promotion of theological principles such as full immersion baptism was thus a key component in the formation the Maine Baptist identity.\textsuperscript{58}

The missionaries believed that they were doing God’s work and their faith was affirmed through the many revivals they fostered and witnessed. However, the letters from the anonymous laypeople about revivals are the most intriguing. One of the letters was from the Baptist Church in Livermore. The church was led by a minister, but the minister himself seems to have only played a small role in the revival. The revival was primarily fueled by the laypeople. A total of thirty-nine people were baptized, and the church reported, “we seldom had a lecture when there was not some careless sinner apparently arrested by divine grace, or some mourning soul set at liberty.”\textsuperscript{59} Revivals remained, especially for laypeople, a sign that the identity they adopted and community they cultivated were approved by God.

The Maine Baptist Missionary Society was understandably primarily concerned about spreading the gospel in Maine. However, there are several examples in which the sense of community included the Canadian Maritimes. First, the magazine published an excerpt from Isaac Case’s 1806 missionary journey in southern New Brunswick. He reported a major

\textsuperscript{58} “Rev. Mr. Low’s Letter to the Committee, dated New-Gloucester, Jan. 20, 1807,” \textit{Maine Baptist Missionary Register}, August 1808), 22.
\textsuperscript{59} “Extract of a Letter from the Church at Livermore, to the Bowdoinham Association, met at Mount Vernon, September 1805,” \textit{Maine Baptist Missionary Register}, August 1806), 14-15.
reformation along the St. John River in which Case observed a “happy revival of religion.”

Robert Low also briefly visited Maine-New Brunswick during his 1807 missionary tour. Rev. Robert Low of New Gloucester, Maine, wrote about a group of Protestants in the St. David’s parish in New Brunswick. The leaders of this group reportedly “pretended to know, who would be converted, and who were reprobates.” These leaders furthermore criticized baptism, the Lord’s supper, and other “institutions of the gospel.” Low preached alongside Isaac Case to the people in this area and reported that “their prejudices gradually removed, and many related what God had done for their souls.” Case had traveled to St. Andrew’s, but Low did not follow him there. He instead preached along the border to those he claimed were “very desirous I should stay, and preach to them a few days.”

Low ended his letters that the society send more missionaries to this area as the people were in “destitute circumstances” and would welcome any minister. The Maine Baptist Missionary Society likely did not yet have the resources to send most of their missionaries to the Canadian Maritimes. However, it is clear that there was an interest, and the Canadian Maritimes were regarded as part of the Baptist community and field of influence.

The Maine Baptist Missionary Society did not offer a lot of information about why they stopped printing the periodical, but it appears that it was not profitable. The Society reported in 1808 that there was generally a “scarcity of money” that forced them to reduce the pay of the missionaries from five dollars to four dollars. It is also possible that periodicals like the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* published similar, if not identical, material and reached a wider audience. The *Maine Baptist Missionary Register* published two articles, one

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63 *Maine Baptist Missionary Register*, August 1808.
from Isaac Case and another from a missionary who traveled to upstate New York, which had already appeared in the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*. The additional stories they printed were similar to the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* as well.

It is also possible that the editors of the magazine were simply spread too thin. There were few Maine Baptist ministers at the time and most served on several committees and had various roles to play. Sylvanus Boardman of Livermore and John Tripp of Hebron were responsible for editing the magazine and sending it off to the printers. They both not only needed to tend to the needs of their own churches, but they were also placed on a committee to determine whether the Cornville Baptist Church should be admitted to Bowdoinham Association. Tripp additionally attended the Warren Association’s 1806 annual meeting in Newport, Rhode Island, as messenger from the Bowdoinham Association. The biggest enemies of the first Maine Baptist publication were likely time and money. It would take at least another decade for Maine Baptists to publish a denominational magazine or newspaper.

Interestingly, *The Maine Baptist Missionary Register* does not appear to have been heavily promoted by Baptist associations in Maine. The *Register* was never formally mentioned in the association meeting notes during its existence and there are no references to it in the available Baptist church records. The *Register*’s geographic distribution seems quite limited. The Maine Baptist Missionary Society was closely related to the Bowdoinham Association, but they did not mention it during the magazine’s tenure. The Society’s annual meeting date and locations were announced by the Bowdoinham Association in their meeting notes in 1809 and 1810 but

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did not receive heavy promotion from others until the 1820s as the Bowdoinham Association did not habitually record the amounts or purpose of donations until after the War of 1812.

There was not yet a comparable missionary institution or periodical in the Canadian Maritimes. The first missionary society was not formed until the annual meeting of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association in 1815. It was decided at that time that the Association would be “considered a Missionary Society, and with them is left the whole management of the Mission business.” A specifically Baptist periodical was not published in the Maritimes until 1826. Several factors contributed to this slower start. Their association was founded slightly later than the Bowdoinham Association and did not experience the same rapid growth that occurred in much of Maine. As previously noted, the Maritime Baptists also faced direct hostility from their government that Maine Baptists did not encounter. A Maritime Baptist periodical was therefore likely a lower priority for the denomination.

Conclusion

The *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* and *Maine Baptist Missionary Register* were two of the first religious periodicals in the United States. Their content centered on advancing missionary efforts and the theology of the Baptist denomination. News about missionary tours and revivals were intended to convince readers that “it pleased God to pour out his spirit upon them” and to link the disparate Baptist churches and adherents into one larger community. The periodicals served to unify a Baptist theology that was frequently challenged. The periodicals thus created a distinct Baptist identity and community who viewed revivals as an

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67 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia and New- Brunswick Baptist Association Held at the Meeting-house in Cornwallis, June 1815; Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters (Halifax, Nova Scotia: John Howe & Sons, 1811), 5.
indication that they were following God’s will. Baptists in turn were eager to share their ways in which they were part of this evolving community.

The *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* especially highlighted and connected the Maine and Maritime Baptists. The periodical originally highlighted the combined missionary efforts in Maine and the Maritimes, the strength of the relationship of those Baptists, and the similarities between the communities. The magazine began to further share other ways in which the Maine and Maritime Baptists viewed themselves as their Baptists communities grew in size and reach. Periodicals would evolve over time but would remain essential forms of asynchronous communication to the development of the Baptist denomination. The *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* and *Maine Baptist Missionary Register* laid an essential base.
CHAPTER THREE

“THAT HE WOULD BE GRACIOUSLY PLEASED TO REMOVE THE DREADFUL CALAMITIES OF WAR, AND CAUSE A MORE GENERAL SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL”:

THE WAR OF 1812 AND GROWTH OF FOREIGN MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

Maine and Canadian Maritime Baptists fostered and bolstered their relationship through the publication of asynchronous forms of communication like association annual reports, exchange of association messengers, and publication of letters from periodicals including the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine and Maine Baptist Missionary Register. These various forms of communication revealed a strong cross-border community and provided a space where the Baptist identity could be shaped as the community expanded.¹

However, the War of 1812 tested this relationship by disrupting formal communication between the Maine and Maritime Baptists. Maine Baptists shifted interests toward the growing American foreign missionary movement during the war, while the Maritime Baptists concentrated on their domestic missions and attempted to contribute to English organizations. Maine and Maritime Baptists resumed communication after the war, but with an altered relationship. Maine Baptists now regarded themselves as members of a growing international Baptist community and iterated this identity through periodicals and printed association meeting notes. They sent updates about the foundation of voluntary societies and donations to larger benevolent organizations and letters that highlighted their missionary fervor. Maritime Baptists continued to provide updates about their associations and revivals, but they did not yet connect to this international community. Their letters instead reveal an identity focused on local denominational growth.

¹ Title is from the Minutes of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association Held at Sheffield, June 21 and 22, 1813. Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters (St. John, New Brunswick: William Durant, 1813), 5.
Maine and the Canadian Maritimes During the War of 1812

The War of 1812 was an intense period for those who lived in Maine and the Canadian Maritimes. The majority of New Englanders opposed the war, claiming it would cause irreparable economic harm and “waste the lives of New England’s sons.”\(^2\) Nova Scotians and New Brunswickers were not as vocal about their concerns with the war, but they were deeply worried about trade. The Maritimes had largely enjoyed a “mutually beneficial” economic relationship with the United States and the war threatened to undermine it.\(^3\) Maine and the Canadian Maritimes developed several ways to weaken the trading restrictions as both groups recognized that trade was essential to their survival. Historian Walter Ronald Copp noted that Halifax particularly became a “entrepôt for North American commerce, since a large part of the foreign trade of the United States passed through her ports.”\(^4\) Privateering was rampant along the Maine and Canadian Maritime coastlines and smugglers moved goods across the border during the war.\(^5\) Privateering could help transport necessary goods but could also be incredibly harmful. Popular opinion was mixed when the British laid siege and attempted to transform Maine into “New Ireland” in 1814.\(^6\) However, those who lived on the border of Maine and the Canadian


\(^4\) Ronald Walter Copp, “Nova Scotian Trade During the War of 1812,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 18, no. 2 (June 1837): 143.


Maritimes generally sought to maintain a “good understanding” between themselves. Both rejoiced when the war ended and their usual, legal trade could resume.

**Outbreak of War and Disruption of Communication**

The War of 1812 deeply disrupted the lines of communication between Baptists in the United States and British North America. The associations no longer sent messengers across the border to the annual meetings, and the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* printed almost no information about the Canadian Maritimes during the war. The formal relationship between the Maine and Maritime Baptists was effectively put on hold.

Baptists were aware a war was on the horizon at the beginning of 1812. Daniel Merrill wrote to Edward Manning shortly before the official declaration of war,

> I wish the differences between your government and ours may be so accommodated as to promote the good of both, and further Zion… But I fear a conflict is before us. However, the differences may be between the governments among men, be it our concern to be in obedience to God.8

Baptists in both Maine and the Maritimes still seemed optimistic despite the rumblings of war. The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association appointed Edward Manning its messenger to the Lincoln, Bowdoinham, and Cumberland Associations during the annual meeting in June 1812. Both the Bowdoinham Association and Cumberland Association assigned messengers to attend the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association as well.9 Nevertheless, there were no Maine messengers at the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association 1812 annual meeting, and there were no Maritime messengers present at any of the Maine Baptist Association 1812 annual meetings.

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8 Correspondence to Edward Manning from Daniel Merrill, Boston, Massachusetts, June 2, 1812.
9 *Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held in Canaan, September 23d, and 24th, 1812* (Hallowell, Maine: Printed by Nathaniel Cheever, 1812), 5.
Baptists were significantly less hopeful the following year. The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association voted, “that the Correspondence with the Sister Associations in the United States be dropped on account of existing difficulties.”¹⁰ Maine associations did not make any similar assertions in 1813, and they did not mention the Maritime Baptists at all until the end of the war, with one exception. Bowdoinham Association at their annual meeting in 1812 lamented the broken lines of communication. They complained,

We sincerely regret that the perils of war should prevent our speaking with our beloved brethren in the eastern board, with whom we have lately opened a correspondence, and it is our unceasing desire, and prayer to the Almighty God, that the obstruction may be speedily removed.¹¹

Neither the Maritime nor Maine Baptists offered a conclusive political opinion of the War of 1812. However, the Maine Baptists used print to prevent members of the local denomination from arguing with others about the war. Asynchronous communication was essential in keeping the Maine Baptist community together during this divisive period. Bowdoinham Association discouraged the laypeople within their association from “warm debates on political topics, which has been very injurious to the peace and prosperity of some churches.”¹² They further reiterated in their 1813 meeting notes that Baptists should spend less time reading secular newspapers and debating politics and more time praying, confessing their sins to other Baptists, and worshiping God. Cumberland Association expressed a similar sentiment in the notes of their annual meeting in 1813 when they warned members that they should not judge others’ faith by their political affiliations. They desired for the Maine Baptist identity to be defined by peace and repentance.

Maine Baptists also utilized print to iterate beliefs about the causes and consequences of the war. They claimed that the war was a result of their sin, particularly the sin of “pride.” Both

¹¹ Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held in Canaan, September 23d, and 24th, 1812, 8.
¹² Ibid.
the Bowdoinham and Lincoln Associations contended that their sin as a “nation” was responsible for the conflict. They especially argued that their nation had prospered and become too proud of their achievements and too ungrateful toward God. Lincoln Association wrote in their 1812 corresponding letter that, “our national sin is that of ancient Sodom; pride and fullness of bread, which always produce murmuring and divisions.”13 This sin caused the Lincoln Association to “have reason to fear that we have lost much of our favor, else there would not be such a general corruption through the land.”14 Bowdoinham Association expressed a similar opinion in their 1814 annual meeting notes. They insisted that the United States was too prideful and therefore deserved the chaos and violence of war. They exclaimed, “Are not the general insensibilities of men to their eternal concerns, and the prevalence of abounding iniquity, sad presages of greater evils yet to come?”15 Bowdoinham Association’s response to this question was that human sin, including the sins of the Maine Baptists, knew no bounds. They believed that any punishment, including war, was justifiable.

The War of 1812 shook the Maine Baptists’ assurance that God favored them. Revivals were viewed as a symbol that the Baptists were acting in accordance with God’s will, but a war was surely a sign that they had failed. The identity they so far had developed was questioned.

All the Maine Baptist associations argued that the war portended the end of days. The Baptists believed that Jesus Christ would eventually return to Earth to set up a messianic kingdom, judge those who had denied him, and reward both the living and dead who had been believers. No one knew when Christ would return, but the Bible indicated that catastrophic

13 Minutes of the Lincoln Association Holden At Sedgwick, September 16th & 17th, 1812 (Castine: Samuel Hall, 1812).
14 Ibid.
15 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held in Canaan, September 23d, and 24th, 1812, 7.
events would precede the “second coming.” Many Protestants also contended that the end of times would begin in the United States. Congregational minister Ebenezer Baldwin of Danbury, Connecticut, had famously stated in one sermon that the United States would become “the principal Seat of the glorious Kingdom which Christ shall erect upon Earth in the latter Days.” Baldwin had specifically addressed concerns about the American Revolution, but the War of 1812 inspired similar sentiments. Congregational minister Francis Brown declared in an 1812 sermon that “unexampled judgments upon the nations, which shall be found in opposition to the church.” He concluded the War of 1812 was therefore a sign that end of times was near.

Bowdoinham Association specifically stated in the 1814 letter that the end of times was coming. It is unclear whether the British blockade or recent British activity along the coast impacted their outlook, but it surely did nothing to brighten their mood. They remarked, “as a nation, our sins have reached unto Heaven, and ‘the day of our visitation has come.’ The Most High hath a controversy with us; and by pestilence and sword, is He pleading His righteous cause.” The phrase, “the day of our visitation has come,” was a reference to Luke 19:44 in which Jesus Christ visited the Temple of Jerusalem and lamented the state of its corruption. Christ noted that those in the Temple both did not know that he was coming to the Temple and that they would not know when he would return. His second return would be a day of judgment.

Cumberland Association also interpreted the war in apocalyptic terms. They argued, “the times

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16 The Bible references the “second coming” of Christ many times, but especially in the Book of Revelations. The belief in the second coming was important to groups like the Baptists.
19 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held in Canaan, September 23d, and 24th, 1812, 7. Luke 19:44, “And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”
are ominous of great events. The earth, and the heavens, are shaking, and it appears to us that the time is near at hand when the heavens will be more abundantly shaken, that those who are approved may be made manifest.”\(^{20}\) However, their interpretation of events was slightly less threatening. They argued it would be obvious who had remained faithful to God and that he would reward them. All the Maine Baptists found the war to be deeply concerning. These printed meeting notes argued that the remedy to their issues was threefold: pray, remain faithful to God, and unite with one another. Printed association meeting notes, even in the midst of a potential apocalypse, continued to unite the community together and reiterate values.

The millennial sentiments expressed in the Maine Baptist Association meeting notes are absent from the records of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association. Their circular and corresponding letters do not analyze the causes of the war or its potential spiritual meaning. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association only mentioned the war once in their annual meeting notes. The association in 1813

\[\text{Voted… the FIRST DAY OF JANUARY as a Day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer before the Lord, that he would be graciously pleased to remove the dreadful calamities of War, and cause a more general spread of the Gospel, to establish peace among all nations.}^{21}\]

The circular letter of their 1814 annual meeting notes celebrated the end of war on the European continent and the spread of the gospel through British missionary societies. They hoped that the “cessation of hostilities” in Europe would lead to the “long wished for blessing Peace will again be restored to the inhabitants of the earth” but otherwise did not hint at the war in North America.”\(^{22}\)


\(^{21}\) Minutes of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association Held at Sheffield, June 21 and 22, 1813, 7.

\(^{22}\) Minutes of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association Held at Chester, June 27 and 28, 1814, Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters (St. John, New Brunswick: William Durant, 1814), 6.
Maritime Baptists’ silence on matters regarding the War of 1812 in their records was likely due to their position within the British empire. Historian Judith Fingard noted in her work about the Anglican Church in Nova Scotia that the British believed there was a strong relationship between religion and politics. She noted, “recent experience in revolutionary New England seemed to suggest that political radicalism was the product of uncontrolled religious dissent.” Religious “dissenters” like the Baptists were therefore frequently regarded with suspicion, especially during times of conflict. British authorities did not especially target Baptist ministers during the War of 1812, but the threat of arrest loomed large over the heads of those who cherished close relationships with their Maine counterparts. Some “dissenting” ministers insisted on flouting the law by preaching without a license. This further contributed to their negative reputation among British authorities. Duncan McColl was a Methodist minister who frequently preached in Maine and New Brunswick. McColl was a “principal architect” of a “policy of non-belligerence” around the border and continued to preach throughout the conflict.

McColl had received a preaching license from the New Brunswick government, but British authorities questioned his license when they learned of his behavior. Luckily for McColl, little came of this inquiry. There were not comparable conflicts between the Baptists and British authorities during the war, but the Baptists had previously experienced their own share of scraps with the law. The War of 1812 did little to ease the tension between the Baptists and British authorities. The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association therefore likely feared accusations of treason and decided to err on the side of caution in their annual meeting notes.

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25 Correspondence from Duncan McColl to John Campbell, January 3, 1814.

26 See Chapter One.
They printed a total of five hundred meeting notes during the war and it would have been
difficult to keep those copies out of the hands of British authorities.

Churches directly impacted by the conflict rarely mentioned it in their records. Their
meeting notes continued to report regular meetings and sermons, baptisms, deaths, and transfers,
and conferences about the behavior of certain members of their congregations. It is therefore
difficult to piece together, aside from the association annual meeting notes, how the Baptists of
Maine and the Maritimes felt about the war and their lack of connection to each other.

References to the War of 1812 were absent from the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary
Magazine as well. The only direct mention of the conflict appeared in a letter from the Boston
Female Society for Missionary Purposes. This society, like the Maine and Maritime Baptist
associations, called for prayer. Their letter stated

when our beloved country which has long been the seat of peace, and an asylum for the
wretched of every description, is involved in the horrors of war; when the ocean is
discolored, and the land crimsoned with the blood of our fellow-men; it more than ever
becomes the real disciples of Jesus, to ‘pray without ceasing’ that ‘the Spirit of the Lord
may lift up a standard’ against those floods of error and infidelity, and cause a
reformation of heart and life, both in the church and in the world.\footnote{An Address from ‘the Boston Female Society, for Missionary Purposes’ to Females professing godliness,” The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, March 1813, 281-2.}

The periodical focused on other issues than the conflict, especially highlighting the formation
and efforts of the first U.S. Baptist international missionary organization, the American Baptist
Board of Foreign Missions (ABBFM), which was created in May 1814. Maine Baptists adopted
the cause of the ABBFM during the conflict and it continued to influence their denomination
after the war.
Creation of the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions

The conversions of Adoniram and Ann Hasseltine Judson and Luther Rice inspired the foundation of American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions. The Judson’s and Rice were originally part of a group of Congregationalist missionaries who were assigned to evangelize in India. They began to question the biblical nature of infant baptism while sailing to their destination. Ann Judson recorded in a letter to a friend that she had acquired a more “intimate acquaintance with the sacred Scriptures” prior to her arrival. The Judson’s and Rice were also influenced by their relationship with William Carey who greeted them when they arrived in India. Carey was an English Baptist missionary who had been foundational in the formation of the English Baptist Missionary Society. He and his family encouraged the new arrivals to stay with him until the rest of their colleagues landed in India. The combination of their own inquiries and the influence of the English Baptist missionaries led the Judson’s and Rice to embrace Baptist doctrines. The three of them were consequently baptized by Carey shortly after their arrival in Kolkata.

Their conversion complicated their relationship with the Congregational missionary organization they were connected to. They all felt obligated to dissolve their association, but they could not piggyback on the efforts of the English Baptist missionaries. The Bengalese government demanded that the newly-arrived missionaries leave, but the missionaries did not think it was safe to enter Myanmar. The missionaries received some aid from the English Baptist missionaries, money earned from teaching school in India, and donations from a few individuals.

28 The American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions was referred to as the General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions or the “Triennial Convention.”
in the United States, but there was no guarantee of continued help. They wanted to continue their missionary assignment but did not have the means to do so or any direction from an institution.

Luther Rice returned to the United States “for the purpose of exciting the attention of the Baptist churches in this country.”\(^{31}\) Rice’s efforts were overall successful and a group of Baptists “from nearly all the states, from Massachusetts to Georgia” met in Philadelphia in May 1814.\(^{32}\) This group formed the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions (ABBFM). The purpose of the ABBFM was to create a plan for “eliciting, combining, and directing the energies of the whole denomination in one sacred effort, for sending the glad tidings of Salvation to the Heathen, and to nations destitute of pure Gospel-light”\(^{33}\) The ABBFM officially appointed both Judson’s as their missionaries and gave them permission to pursue missionary efforts wherever they saw fit. They also appointed Rice as a missionary, but he instead traveled throughout the United States to encourage Baptists to join with the ABBFM.

The ABBFM was one of the first efforts to unite Baptists in the United States under one cause. Societies like the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society (MBMS) were regional. The MBMS assigned their missionaries to the northeastern United States and Canadian Maritime provinces. The MBMS received communications and occasionally donations from Baptists throughout North America and Europe, but most their support was from New England and the Maritimes. There were other regional and local missionary societies that received assistance from those under their geographic umbrella. This made the ABBFM a marked departure from past societies in North America. American Baptists were no longer only raising funds for local missionaries, but donations for missionaries and converts across the world.

\(^{31}\) Ibid., 95.
\(^{32}\) The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, September 1814, 65.
\(^{33}\) Ibid., 66.
The ABBFM received overwhelming support from Baptists throughout the United States, including the Maine Baptists. Rice wrote to the Baptists in Maine shortly after the creation of the ABBFM. The Bowdoinham Association reported in their 1814 minutes that they had received a letter from him, and he asked for a “regular correspondence and interchange of minutes.” The association noted that they approved of the “laudable designs of the Baptist Board for Foreign Mission,” and that they would not only comply with Rice’s request but would encourage churches within the association to contribute donations every three months.\(^{34}\)

Bowdoinham Association and other Maine associations appointed committees and representatives to communicate with and collect donations on behalf of the ABBFM. The ABBFM reported at their first annual meeting in 1815 that the Lincoln Association had promised “that there be a contribution of one cent per month for each member, to be applied to missionary purposes.”\(^{35}\) Bowdoinham Association alone collected $176.13 in 1816 for foreign missions. The donations ranged from a couple of cents from donors simply referred to as “females” and “sisters” to larger donations from over twenty individual churches. The biggest donation was $23.26 from the “Female Society, Readfield.” This was Rev. Isaac Case’s church, and it is unsurprising that the laypeople there were interested in spreading the gospel.\(^{36}\)

There is no mention of the ABBFM or any visits or letters by Luther Rice in the records of the Maritime Baptists during the War of 1812. The Maritime Baptists also did not invest in English missionary organizations. Neither the Maritime Baptists nor the English Baptists, expressed interest in one another prior to the War of 1812. There are several reasons why this may have occurred. First, the Maritime Baptists were geographically distant from the English

\(^{34}\) Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held in Litchfield, September 28th & 29th, 1814 (Hallowell, Maine: Printed by Nathaniel Cheever, 1814), 5.


\(^{36}\) Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association held in Readfield, September 25th and 26th, 1816 (Hallowell, Maine: N. Cheever, 1816).
Baptists. There were a few cultural differences as well since the Maritime Baptist denomination formed on a “frontier.” Maritime Baptists therefore likely related more to the Maine Baptists to the south than the English Baptists across the ocean. Second, the English Baptists concentrated on spreading the gospel in “heathen” lands. Baptist minister William Carey founded the English Baptist Missionary Society with the support of a dozen other Baptist ministers in 1789. The society was entirely dedicated to foreign missions and its goal was laid out in Carey’s later work *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Protestants to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens.* The book argued that parts of modern-day Canada were “heathen,” but the portions of North America that had largely been settled by the English were categorized as “Protestant.” The English Baptists therefore likely did not consider the support of the Canadian Maritimes to be a high priority as they were already “Protestant.” It is unclear why they did not reach out to them for financial contributions, but they rarely asked the American Baptists either. The English Baptists may have been aware of the Maritime Baptists’ economic situation, or outreach may simply not have been part of their strategic plan.

Maritime Baptists instead contributed to the British and Foreign Bible Society during the war. They praised it for its “almost universal benevolence, manifested in the formation of so many institutions for the benevolent and noble purpose of Christianizing the world that lieth in wickedness.” The British and Foreign Bible Society reported that a Halifax Bible Society was formed in 1813 with branches in Liverpool, Truro, Annapolis Royal, Cornwallis, Horton, Windsor, Cumberland and Londonderry, Nova Scotia, and Burton, New Brunswick. Bibles were


38 *Minutes of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association Held at Chester, June 27 and 28, 1814*, 6.
distributed in English and French.\textsuperscript{39} This auxiliary collected over 800 pounds by 1815 for the society. There are no Baptist ministers listed as leaders of the Halifax Bible Society, but there is evidence that the Baptist denomination contributed to it. The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association reported in 1814 that “a contribution was made for the poor Heathen, to be sent to the Treasurer of the Auxiliary Bible Society at Halifax and forwarded by that society. Amount received £8.13.”\textsuperscript{40}

The British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804 and was a non-denominational Protestant organization. They initially distributed Bibles and other religious works to Welsh-speaking Protestants, but quickly expanded their reach. The Canadian Maritimes provided fertile ground for the society as some could not afford Bibles and many spoke a different language other than English.\textsuperscript{41}

The British and Foreign Bible Society may have been more appealing to the Maritime Baptists. The Maritimes directly benefitted from the society as Bible and other tracts were dispersed throughout their community. The British and Foreign Bible Society also retained a relationship with all of the similar American societies, including the Massachusetts Bible Society and Maine Bible Society. The Massachusetts Bible Society formed in 1809, while the Maine Bible Society developed in 1810. Both pursued relationships with the British and Foreign Bible Society before the war and kept up those relationships during it. An American privateer reportedly stole $600 worth of Bibles sent by the British and Foreign Bible Society. The Bibles were supposed to be sent to the Canadian Maritimes, but the privateer instead sold them at an auction in Portland, Maine. Supporters in Portland attempted to recover the Bibles, but they were

\textsuperscript{39} Reports of the British and Foreign Bible Society With Extracts of Correspondence Etc.; Reprinted from the Original Reports, With the Years 1814 and 1815, Volume III (London: J. Tilling, 1815), 513.

\textsuperscript{40} Minutes of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association Held at Chester, June 27 and 28, 1814, p. 5.

unsuccessful. The Massachusetts Bible Society publicly apologized, repaid the British and Foreign Bible Society, and eventually sent their own Bibles to Nova Scotia. Their representative wrote, “We shall show [the Canadian Maritimes] that war has implanted no enmity in our hearts, that we are still interested in their improvement.”\footnote{British and Foreign Bible Society, \textit{Summary account of the proceedings of the British & Foreign Bible Society; and of the beneficial effects which have resulted from its institution}, by the committee of the Society (London, J. Tilling, 1814), 51-4.} They further stated that the government would not allow them to do more, but that they could hardly be prevented from reimbursing the British and Foreign Bible Society. The War of 1812 disrupted the community that had been created by the Maine and Maritime Baptists, but the British and Foreign Bible Society provided the Maritime Baptists a unique way to connect with the community they were separated from. There is no evidence that the Maritime Baptists continued to donate to the British and Foreign Bible Society after the war. However, the society and its annual reports linked together a community during a chaotic period.

End of War and Resumption of Communication

Both the Maine and Maritime Baptists marked the end of the war with celebration and the resumption of communication between the associations. Rev. David Harris of Sackville, New Brunswick, served as messenger of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association at both the Bowdoinham and Cumberland annual association meetings, while Isaac Case represented the Bowdoinham, Cumberland, and Lincoln Associations at the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association annual meeting in 1815. The Maritime Baptists noted that the meeting notes and letters of the Maine associations “proved very pleasant unto us.”\footnote{Minutes of the Nova-Scotia and New- Brunswick Baptist Association Held at the Baptist Meeting-house in Cornwallis, June 26th and 27th, 1815 (St. John, New Brunswick: William Durant, 1814), 4.}

Printed association meeting notes communicated to the Baptist community that their cross-border identity was once again viable. Every association in Maine and the Maritimes
offered a comment about the end of the conflict. Both the Bowdoinham Association and the
Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association explicitly mentioned their fellow Baptists across
the border in their minutes. The Bowdoinham Association noted, “we are once more at liberty to
communicate our friendship and relate the state of our churches… to our beloved brethren in the
neighboring provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.”44 The Nova Scotia and New
Brunswick Baptist Association’s message was a bit more complicated. Like the Bowdoinham
Association, they celebrated the end of the war and the renewal of their communication.
However, their circular letter also justified their decision to formally cut communication during
the war. They wrote, “we rejoice that hostilities have ceased between the nations to which we
respectively belong, which was the only cause of our discontinuing our correspondence with
you, during the unhappy contest in which so many precious lives have been lost.”45 They
followed these remarks with praise for the foundation of the American international missionary
movement. They further complimented the Maine associations by stating, “their zeal in the end,
will we doubt not, give the American Brethren a distinguished rank among the host of nations.”46

Cumberland Association did not outright mention the Maritime Baptists, but instead
emphasized the importance of communication with the entire body of Christ. The Lincoln
Association did not bring up the resumption of communication at all. Instead, they wrote about
how the end of the war would increase missionary efforts. They noted, “we congratulate you on
the happy events and rejoice that through this merciful interposition of divine providence, many
obstacles to the spread of the gospel, particularly among the heathen are removed out of the

44 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held in Bowdoin, September 27th & 28th, 1815. (Hallowell, Maine:
Printed by N. Cheever, 1815), 8.
45 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia and New- Brunswick Baptist Association Held at the Baptist Meeting-house in
Cornwallis, June 26th and 27th, 1815, 11.
46 Ibid.
way.” 47 Lincoln Association was the only association to not celebrate the renewal of communication. They instead highlighted the return to relative normalcy and the ability to participate in missionary work more fully. They were not the only association to highlight the new American international missionary movement in their letter. Foreign missions preoccupied the Cumberland Association as well as several ministers were appointed to communicate with the “Board of Foreign Missions” during their 1815 annual meeting. The association also expressed gratitude toward the female voluntary societies who had “taken so decided a part in missionary concerns, and have done so much to increase its funds” and encouraged others to “take the matter under serious and prayerful consideration.”48 Both Cumberland and Lincoln Association stated that money had been collected for foreign missions, while Bowdoinham Association noted that they had collected $32.22 on behalf of foreign missions.49 All three also raised money for their own domestic missionary purposes.

The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association did not solicit donations for foreign missions or offer any comment on voluntary societies. They also did not note any donations made to the British and Foreign Bible Society or any other British organization. The Maritime Baptists, instead, entirely focused on domestic missions. They commented that “a liberal contribution was collected for sending a Missionary to the eastward of Halifax, amounting to £29.13.”50 Their plan was to administer to isolated, poor communities along the eastern coast of the province.

47 Minutes of the Lincoln Association Holden At St. George, September 20 & 21, 1815 (Hallowell, Maine: N. Cheever, 1815), 7.
48 Minutes of the Cumberland Association, Holden in Minot, (Me.) Oct. 4 & 5, 1815; Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters, 4, 5.
49 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held in Bowdoin, September 27th & 28th, 1815, 7.
50 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia and New- Brunswick Baptist Association Held at the Baptist Meeting-house in Cornwallis, June 26th and 27th, 1815, 4-5.
Increase of Maine Missionary Voluntary Societies

Maine Baptists remained deeply supportive of foreign missions after the war. The war had caused them to question whether their actions and identity were in accordance with God’s will, but foreign missions seemed a definite sign of God’s favor. Much of their attention was concentrated on the creation of new voluntary societies and the collection of donations. They enthusiastically advocated for institutions that could convert others to Protestantism. They founded voluntary societies that collected donations, solicited funds during association meetings and other events, and corresponded with the ABBFM and other related institutions.

The foreign missionary movement emerged among Maine Baptists during the 1810s and interest in missions exploded in the 1820s. Ira M. Allen, an ABBFM agent, spent eleven months in the mid-1820s touring Maine, New Hampshire, and eastern Massachusetts. Allen particularly concentrated on setting up permanent missionary societies and stressed “the necessity of systematic and combined exertions for the promotions of missions.”51 He reported that “the Societies, which have been instituted in Maine, will by proper attention and encouragement, be carried forward vigorously; and the amount of their payments will be annually augmented.”52

Maine Baptists formed a statewide convention in 1824. Local societies continued to fund their various projects with little oversight, but the Maine Baptist Convention was able to provide a deeper connection to large organizations like the ABBFM. The Maine Baptist Convention and ABBFM cooperated with one another to instigate a statewide program to form missionary societies. Over one hundred and twenty local societies and ten county-wide regional societies formed in 1826 and many of these societies lasted several years. There already had been over

51 The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer, Published by the Board of Managers of the Baptist General Convention, January 1827, 29.
52 Ibid.
two dozen recorded benevolent societies in Maine prior to this date. These new societies benefitted from the ABBFM and the newly-formed Maine Baptist Convention.

Asynchronous print was key to the Maine Baptists’ evolving interests and identity. Maine Baptists received and shared most of their news about foreign missions through reports and letters published by the ABBFM and similar organizations and through publications like the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*. The ABBFM reported in their 1816 annual meeting notes that Rev. Luther Rice had forwarded a parcel of foreign missionary society meeting notes to “the remaining unsupplied associations in Rhode-Island and Massachusetts, and for those in Maine.”

Maine Baptist associations also appointed a “corresponding secretary” and a committee of representatives. The committee was responsible for gathering and sending donations, while the corresponding secretary communicated with the ABBFM and other groups. The Bowdoinham Association “voted to continue brethren Low, Francis and Daggett, a committee on the subject of Foreign Missions,” during their 1816 annual meeting. Rev. John Daggett of Greene was responsible for soliciting funds from potential donors, while Rev. Thomas D. Francis of Leeds sent the sums collected during the association meeting to the ABBFM. This same committee used the circular letter to promote the cause of foreign missions where they contended it was “a subject worthy of most serious attention of all pious and benevolent.”

The selection of a corresponding secretary was one of the first actions completed by the newly-formed Eastern Maine Association. They considered foreign missions to be one of their

53 *The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer*, December 1826.
56 *Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association held in Readfield, September 25th and 26th, 1816* (Hallowell, Maine: N. Cheever, 1816), 7.
highest priorities. They “chose brother Merrill, Corresponding Secretary to the Board for Foreign Missions” during their 1821 annual meeting. They furthermore requested that the existing Ellsworth and Surry, Eden, Trenton, Mount Desert, and Blue Hill Female Mite Societies for Missionary Purposes send their donations to Merrill instead of straight to the ABBFM.57

The ABBFM included updates from any association that contributed to their society in their annual reports. They provided information about new auxiliary societies as well as data like the number of churches and members within the associations, the date and time of association’s annual meeting, the name and home church of the corresponding secretary, and whether the association had sent their annual meeting notes and letters. The ABBFM reported in 1816 that Rev. Robert Low of New Gloucester was the corresponding secretary for the Bowdoinham Association, Rev. Phineas Pillsbury of Nobleborough represented Lincoln, and Rev. John Tripp of Hebron was there on behalf of Cumberland.58

Periodicals were truly the medium through which the Maine Baptists could link to a growing pan-Protestant community and highlight the ways in which foreign missions were becoming an essential component of their identity. The new name of the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine reflected the Baptist denomination’s new global identity. It was renamed The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer or simply The American Baptist Magazine. The publication had always included news from Baptists throughout North America but had tended to emphasize New England and occasionally the Canadian Maritimes. It now also featured a wide variety of missionary news from across the continent. The editors noted in the first volume of the newly-named periodical,

57 Minutes of the Eastern Maine Association Convened at Surry, October 3d and 4th, 1821, Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters (Bangor, Maine: James Burton, Jr., 1821), 4.
From an impression that the former title, though proper at first, might give the Magazine too much of a local appearance, it has been determined to alter it to one more general, and appropriate to the whole denomination. As we have no local interests to serve, our object equally embraces the interests of the whole.\textsuperscript{59}

It still highlighted revivals, lists of ordinations, and letters from prominent ministers, but it now also inserted letters from voluntary societies, notes about charitable contributions, and news about the formation of new organizations.

Periodicals featured the Maine Baptist voluntary societies and the Maine Baptists encouraged individuals and societies to send reports and letters. For example, both the \textit{American Baptist Magazine} and the annual report of the ABBFM reported the foundations of the Maine Baptist Auxiliary Society in October 1815. The \textit{American Baptist Magazine} included a letter that Rev. Hezekiah Prince, Jr. of Thomaston, Maine, the newly-appointed Corresponding Secretary of the Maine Baptist Auxiliary Society, sent to it. Prince reported that the society was founded when “the desire for promoting the cause at length prevailed.”\textsuperscript{60} One of the new members was so delighted by the formation of the society that they, “declared, that five years before, he had conceived a design of giving ten dollars a year to the Missionary cause, and therefore embraced this first opportunity of subscribing the whole fifty.”\textsuperscript{61} Prince then noted that the society’s goal was to raise one hundred dollars by the end of the year and that “the sisters and other females in this town and vicinity, to the number of nearly two hundred, have, also agreed to give a cent per week for the Missionary cause.”\textsuperscript{62}

The Maine Baptist Auxiliary Society promoted its cause at association meetings and by soliciting individual churches. The society quickly reached their first goal through this method.

\textsuperscript{60} “Maine Auxiliary Society,” \textit{The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine}, March 1816, 283-4.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.
The December 1816 edition of the *American Baptist Magazine* reported that the society had sent along $100.\(^{63}\) They continued to raise similar sums and these donations continued to be reported by the above-mentioned publications. The number of similar auxiliary societies in Maine continued to increase throughout the following decade.

Local female organizations particularly used print to connect to an evolving pan-Protestant community. The Lincoln Baptist Female Cent Society formed the same year as the Maine Baptist Auxiliary, and its purpose was to raise money for the Baptist missions in India and Myanmar. They called upon others to join their society by emphasizing the dangers of religious ignorance. They remarked in a letter to the Lincoln Baptist Association,

> Cast for a moment, imagination’s eye on the dark corners of the world, where ignorance and superstition hover around immortal souls, as precious as our own- behold them sacrificing their children and themselves to their god! Behold them bowing to wood and stone, enveloped in thick darkness; without one cheering ray from the Sun of Righteousness to illumine their benighted souls! If ever you have felt the benign influences of the religion of Jesus, you will not, you cannot, remain inactive.\(^{64}\)

The letters sent from the missionaries in India and Myanmar that were published in the *American Baptist Magazine* and reprinted by other periodicals influenced the Lincoln Baptist Female Cent Society. These letters often included the writer’s impressions of their community and their desire to convert the local population. The Lincoln Baptist Female Cent Society’s felt connected to the distant missionaries as they read and speeches they heard, and they desired to share their own testimony.

The Lincoln Baptist Female Cent Society continued to support foreign missions for several years. They donated $173.39 just a few months after their formation and continued to

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\(^{64}\) “Minutes of the Lincoln Association” in *The Second Annual Report of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions for the United States*, 77. The ABBFM was sometimes referred to as the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions.
donate. Their last recorded donation was $35 in 1820. It is unclear what happened to this society, but it is likely it may have been absorbed by one of the larger voluntary societies that had sprung up by the 1820s.

The January 1817 edition of the *American Baptist Magazine* included excerpts of letters from the Bath Female Mite Society that shared its thoughts about the success of voluntary societies and its hopes for the future. The author wrote,

> All heaven rejoices at the deliverance of one sinner, from the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity. May we not hope ere long to rejoice in the deliverance of thousands from the deplorable darkness! The time we trust is not far distant, when prejudice shall be done away from the minds of God’s children, and when the watchmen shall see eye to eye in all the ordinances of the Gospel.

The letter further stated the society rejoiced that “so many of our dear sisters are engaged in the missionary cause.” It is unclear when the Bath Female Mite Society was officially founded, but it is noted in the letter that the secretary had transmitted $27.50 to be used for foreign missions. There are similarly worded letters throughout the publication as well as lists of donations from these societies.

Maine Baptists were interested in the newly-published *Christian Watchman*, a religious weekly newspaper initially published in Boston in 1819. It was not an explicitly Baptist periodical but embraced updates from all Protestant denominations. The editors noted, “a considerable portion of the paper will be devoted to religious intelligence, both foreign and domestic- embracing the labors of missionaries, accounts of revivals of religion, obituary notices of persons eminent for their piety, and a summary of passing events.” The first edition included news from Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, and non-denominational religious voluntary

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67 Ibid.

societies. It also featured an article about the Maine Bible Society, a nondenominational group that had recently formed as an auxiliary to the American Bible Society.69

The Christian Watchman eventually came under the patronage of the Baptist Missionary Society of Massachusetts in December 9, 1825, and remained under their authority for over a decade. However, the Baptists were strong proponents of the periodical even before this transition. Both the Bowdoinham and Cumberland Associations offered free copies the American Baptist Magazine and the Christian Watchman to any new auxiliary missionary or education society. Both Associations stated in 1820 that the purpose of the magazine was for, “diffusing religious intelligence and exciting and cherishing a missionary and benevolent spirit.”70

The Christian Watchman reported on a wide variety of Protestant activities but included updates about Baptist missionaries in Asia and Africa and shared updates about Maine Baptists. For example, the number published on February 26, 1820, included a letter sent from Rev. Job Washburn, the Corresponding Secretary of the Maine Baptist Auxiliary Society, to the Corresponding Secretary of the ABBFM. The letter displayed the “growing zeal for missions” in Maine.71 The Christian Watchman therefore served as another means through which the Maine Baptists could expand the scope of their community and mold their evolving identity.

Maritime Baptist Voluntary Societies

The growth of voluntary societies in Maritimes occurred at a slower pace due to financial and other challenges. The first mention of a Baptist voluntary society appeared in the 1818 association meeting notes. The attendees noted that, “the female mite Society in St. John hath

70 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held At The First Baptist Meeting-House in Lewiston (Me.), September 27 & 28, 1820: Together with Their Circular Correspondence and Letters (Hallowell, Maine: S.K. Gilman, 1820), 4, and Minutes of the Cumberland Association (1820), 15.
done-well, may God incline the hearts of many to follow their example. The Churches in St. John and Salisbury have discovered a laudable zeal in support of Missions.\textsuperscript{72} The Female Mite Society in St. John donated over four pounds during the meeting, but it is unclear how much of this money was intended for foreign missions. The association collected forty-six pounds, twelve shillings, and nine pence in total for “missionary and printing.”\textsuperscript{73} The corresponding letter further noted, “we are doing something likewise for the spread of the Redeemer’s Kingdom, as you will see by our minutes.”\textsuperscript{74} The 1819 annual report noted that there had been contributions from female voluntary societies in Chester, Annapolis, Windsor, Horton, Cornwallis, Nictau, River Philip, Nova Scotia, and Norton, New Brunswick. Nevertheless, there is only one instance in which the Maritime Baptists undoubtedly donated to a foreign missionary society. The \textit{American Baptist Magazine} reported in December 1816 that they had received twelve dollars from “from Rev. Edward Manning and others, Cornwallis, Nova Scotia.”\textsuperscript{75} It is therefore likely that the society in St. John primarily collected donations for domestic missions and the societies that followed its example followed suite.

Maritime Baptists certainly appreciated the foreign missionary movement. Baptists frequently praised the ABBFM and its auxiliaries in the United States. The 1819 annual meeting notes of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association applauded the growth of the American missions on the banks of the Mississippi River, in Africa, and especially in Myanmar. They remarked, “when we contemplate what God hath wrought in America, and what he hath put in the heart of his Zion there to do, for sending the Gospel throughout the world, as far as

\textsuperscript{72} Minutes of the Nova-Scotia and New- Brunswick Baptist Association Held by Appointment, in Newport, June 24th and 25th, 1818 (St. John, New Brunswick: William Durant, 1818), 5.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 8.
\textsuperscript{75} “Donations” \textit{The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine}, December 1816, 417.
means are afforded. We cannot help but exclaim ‘What God hath wrought!’”76 The Association further exclaimed in 1821, “we rejoice in the laudable and spirited exertions by our brethren, for the advancement of the Redeemer’s Kingdom, both in Protestant and heathen lands.”77 Strong support for the Myanmar mission appeared several times in the association’s various annual meeting notes. Nevertheless, the Maritime Baptists were dedicated to spreading the Gospel within their own provinces first before investing in foreign missions. The New Brunswick Baptist Association noted in their 1822 printed annual meeting notes that “we are surrounded by thousands of our fellow-men who are yet in a perishing condition.”78 The association contended that while the English and American Baptists succeeded abroad, they personally felt a “responsibility” to those in their community. They became more interested in foreign missions in the mid-1820s after establishing a greater number of churches in their region.

Publications also kept Maritime Baptists connected to the greater Baptist community with whom they had previously formed a relationship, but also reiterated an identity that deeply valued domestic missions. The American Baptist Magazine continued to report revivals, updates from associations, and the efforts of domestic missionaries in the Maritimes. The letters especially highlighted the success of the domestic missionaries. For example, a letter from Rev. Stephen Dexter of Winthrop, Maine, was published in the December 1816 issue and described his impressions of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association’s annual meeting. Winthrop noted that the domestic missionaries had “visited some families in the eastern parts of Province, that had children of twenty-five years of age, that had never heard a sermon. They were received

76 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia and New- Brunswick Baptist Association Held by Appointment, in St. John, N.B., June 23d and 24h, 1819 (St. John, New Brunswick: William Durant, 1819), 8.
77 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Onslow, N.S., June 27th and 28th, 1821 (Saint John, New Brunswick: Henry Chubb, 1821), 11.
78 Minutes of the New Brunswick Baptist Association, Held at Fredericton, N.B., July 8th and 9th, 1822 (St. John, New Brunswick: Henry Chubb, 1822), 8.
with ten thousand thanks to the Association.”

An update in 1819 further applauded the domestic missionaries and the voluntary societies that supported them. The letter stated, “400 dollars were collected last year, principally by Female Mite Societies. This acquisition to their Treasury has enabled them to employ five Missionaries for a part of the time, the ensuing year.”

Revivals remained an important marker of the Maritime Baptists success. Rev. Joseph Dimock wrote a letter about a revival in Chester, Nova Scotia, in August 1820 that was later printed in the Magazine. Dimock remarked, “I might fill a number of sheets relating the pleasing incidents that have occurred, in a word, the most general that we ever knew in Chester.”

The Maritime Baptists were not as interested in contributing to periodicals like the Christian Watchman. One of the only references to their denomination prior to the mid-1820s was actually a letter from a Maine Baptist minister by Rev. Silas Stearns of Bath, Maine, served as the messenger from the Cumberland Baptist Association to the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Associations in 1824 and reported on their annual meeting. He noted that the Cornwallis Baptist Church was blessed with a revival in which seventy people were baptized. Stearns further commented on the domestic missionary situation. He argued that while the efforts of the missionaries were “greatly blessed,” the missionaries were spread too thin.

The absence of updates about the Maritime Baptists in the Christian Watchman is likely due to the overall nature of the periodical. The prospects of the Christian Watchman praised foreign missionary, Bible and tract, ministerial education, and other benevolent societies. They contended that their goal was “to aid the triumphs, which we doubt not will crown every virtuous

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80 Ordinations,” The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer, September 1819, 190.
exertion.”83 It is doubtful that anyone would have argued that the Maritime Baptists’ domestic missions were not “virtuous exertions.” Nevertheless, their domestic missions may have been outside the scope of the Christian Watchman and the increasing number of periodicals focused on similar themes. Maritime Baptists were far more frequently featured in the Christian Watchman toward the end of the 1820s when Baptists in that region became more invested in foreign missions. However, Maritime Baptists relied upon the asynchronous forms of communication they were already familiar with to define their community and identity during the late 1810s and early 1820s.

Conclusion

The War of 1812 disrupted the relationship between the Maine and Maritime Baptists. Maine Baptists sought community through both the communication of their local proceedings and their dedication to larger voluntary institutions. Maritime Baptists at first looked to the British and Foreign Bible Society for connection during the war but enforced a more local identity once the war concluded. Asynchronous communication through printed association meeting notes and magazines remained essential in reiterating these identities and sense of communities.

83 “To the Patrons of the Christian Watchman and Baptist Register,” Christian Watchman and Baptist Register, December 14, 1819, 3.
CHAPTER FOUR
“THERE IS NO GRATIFICATION SO USEFUL AND AGREEABLE, WHICH CAN BE OBTAINED AT A PRICE SO MODERATE AS A NEWSPAPER”:
MAINE NEWSPAPERS AND CANADIAN MARITIME VOLUNTARY SOCIETIES, 1815-1830

The mid-1810s to late-1820s was an important period of growth for Maine and Canadian Maritime Baptists. Asynchronous communication flourished during this period. Maine Baptist newspapers sprang up because of technological advances in printing, reduction of postage costs in the United States, and growing desire for information about international religious and secular developments.\(^1\) Newspapers served as a sort of crucible, especially for the Maine Baptist community, in the 1820s. The denomination’s population increased throughout the 1810s and 1820s, and Maine Baptists were faced with questions about what it meant to be a Protestant and what constituted a well-functioning and appropriate church structure. They had started to support foreign mission movements, but that assistance was still fairly new. Maine Baptists needed to gauge their feelings on issues such as temperance and slavery. Maine publishers created the *Waterville Intelligencer* and *The Maine Baptist Herald*. The purpose of these newspapers was to provide a space for news, discussion, and debate. They featured a mixture of local and international religious and secular news such as updates on wars and foreign policy and missionary societies and other benevolent institutions. Several columns in each number were dedicated to debates about theology and other issues.

The formative nature of this period for Maine Baptist periodicals meant that their content did not always resonate with readers. This dissonance was partly due to the nature of all periodicals, regardless of their topics- editors need to balance their interests with those of their funders, reader base, and potential readers. However, the newspapers also occasionally featured

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articles that readers found distasteful. This was an unfortunate occurrence for the editors but was crucial in defining the Maine Baptist identity.

Maritime Baptists concentrated on the growth of their domestic missions in the late 1810s and early 1820s. They sent missionaries to areas within their provinces with small populations and few churches. They provided updates about the success of their domestic missions and revivals to the American Baptist Magazine and through continued correspondence of association meeting notes. However, by the mid-1820s, the Maritime Baptists boasted the resources necessary to donate to foreign missions and to invest in religious educational institutions within their provinces. This ability coincided with the publication of the first Maritime Baptist periodical, the Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The Magazine featured a Maritime Baptist identity increasingly linked to global-pan Protestant organizations through benevolent movements like foreign missions. Nevertheless, this identity was somewhat contested. Maritime Baptist leaders feared domestic missions would be abandoned. The Magazine therefore served as a medium of discussion for both Maritime Baptist leaders and laypeople where this important value could be debated.

Waterville Intelligencer

The Waterville Intelligencer was the first Maine Baptist newspaper and the brainchild of the board members of Waterville College. Waterville College was founded in 1813 and its purpose was to “[promote] literary and theological knowledge.” As noted previously, most Baptists ministers did not receive a formal education in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Baptist preachers were usually “ordained” by other Baptist ministers after

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demonstrating a gift for preaching and knowledge of the Bible. Some feared that formal education could distract from one’s piety. Many preferred an enthusiastic preacher who appeared to be influenced by the Holy Spirit rather than an educated minister. Nevertheless, Baptists increasingly believed that formal education was a necessity for ministers as it would encourage critical thinking, expand their knowledge, and allow them to engage in debates with other ministers. Maine Baptists attempted to use periodicals to highlight the successes of the college, promote the value of higher education for ministers, and unite Baptists under the cause of ministerial education.

Supporters of Waterville College sent updates about the college and publications from the faculty to national religious publications like the *American Baptist Magazine*, for instance a review of a sermon titled, “Ministerial Zeal. A Sermon delivered at Waterville, Aug. 15th, 1820” by Stephen Chapin, a divinity professor and later president of the college. The *Magazine* remarked, “we think the Sermon before us is calculated to be eminently useful, especially to those readers who are set for the defense of the gospel,” and further noted, “we earnestly wish for this sermon an extensive circulation.”

They also published several updates about the foundation of the college, its curriculum, and overall development. This kind of exposure benefited the College, which was still in its infancy and faced monetary and legislative challenges.

It is unsurprising that board members of Waterville College believed that an associated newspaper would be advantageous. College president Jeremiah Chaplin especially championed

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The newspaper was to contain updates about the College and general religious intelligence. The College sent a prospectus of the paper during the spring of 1822 to potential subscribers. However, it was not published until May 1823 because of the “extreme difficulty in procuring a Printer or Publisher of the requisite qualifications, who had the property of his own sufficient to carry on the printing business to advantage.”

William Hastings was selected to be the publisher and began publication on May 23, 1823. He was an ideal candidate to edit a Maine Baptist newspaper. He was a professed Baptist, owned a bookshop and a popular circulating library in Waterville, and previously printed a political newspaper known as the *Haverhill Gazette* in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Board members from Waterville College provided initial capital by setting Hastings up with a larger printing shop. Hastings thereafter printed the *Waterville Intelligencer* and a variety of other primarily religious publications, including the catalogues for Waterville College, sermons, and association minutes. Nevertheless, Waterville College did not cover operation costs.

The *Waterville Intelligencer* had two main purposes. First, it was “devoted to literary objects” and “various branches of useful learning.” Hastings intended for these articles to appeal to a reader’s general thirst for knowledge. Second, the paper featured religious intelligence. Hastings claimed that these articles may “call the attention of the gay and thoughtless to religious subjects” and encourage existing Christians. Hastings particularly wanted to highlight world

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5 Burrage, *A History of the Baptists in Maine*, 256; and, Edward Carey Whittemore, ed., *The Centennial History of Waterville, Kennebec County, Maine Including the Oration, the Historical Address and the Poem Presented at the Celebration of the Centennial Anniversary of the Incorporation of the Town, June 23d, 1902 with Illustrations* (Waterville, Maine: Executive Committee of the Centennial Celebration, 1902), 394.
6 *Waterville Intelligencer*, May 23, 1823, 1.
7 George Wingate Chase, *The History of Haverhill, Massachusetts, from Its First Settlement, in 1640, to the Year 1860* (Haverhill, Massachusetts, Published by the Author, 1861), 653; and, Angela M. Leonard, *Political Poetry as Discourse Rereading John Greenleaf Whittier, Ebenezer Elliot, Hip-hop-ology* (Lanham, Maryland, Lexington Books, 2010), 148.
8 Ibid.
events like wars and revolutions. He believed that they were signs of biblical prophecies and therefore worthy of the close attention.  

Hastings described his target audience in the newspaper’s first number. He commented that it was intended for Maine families who “now take no periodical of any kind, and which are not likely to take any, except one that is very cheap.” He argued that they would find his newspaper to be both amusing and instructional. The newspaper cost two dollars per year, and there were several ways for subscribers to save money on their subscription. The price of the newspaper was overall competitive with contemporary newspapers and magazines and would presumably be economically accessible to interested subscribers. The newspaper intended to attract a wide variety of regional readers, including those who did not consider themselves Baptists.

The newspaper showcased the equilibrium Hastings maintained between printing material that was acceptable to Waterville College and appealed to Baptist readers yet could also capture the attention of new readers who “take no periodical of any kind” that might be engaged via politics. This was especially challenging given the rapidly increasing number of newspapers of various genres in the state of Maine, and an overall increase in newspapers in the United States. Many of these newspapers were political and those who wanted to compete with such papers would need to include political and economic news. There were reportedly only four

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10 *Waterville Intelligencer*, May 23, 1823, 1.
11 Ibid.
13 *Waterville Intelligencer*, May 23, 1823, 1.
newspapers in the state in 1822, but between twenty-seven and thirty-four newspapers in 1828.\textsuperscript{14} It was also estimated that there were over thirty kinds of religious newspapers in the United States which circulated to between 50,000 and 60,000 families in 1827.\textsuperscript{15} The resulting newspaper was therefore truly a hodgepodge of religious and secular articles meant to engage a broad audience.

One of the most unique aspects of Hastings’ newspaper was his “Miscellany” section. “Miscellany” appeared on the front page of the newspapers and featured news about wars and revolutions around the world. For example, an 1826 number included articles about a rebellion in Jerusalem and revolutions in South America.\textsuperscript{16} Hastings’ competitor, the \textit{Maine Baptist Herald}, and his successor’s \textit{Zion’s Advocate} also published political and economic news, but largely reserved such articles for the third or fourth page of their newspapers. Many Protestants were interested in this kind of news and certainly believed that God’s hand was evident in major world events and crises. However, the presence of this kind of news on the front page before any religious intelligence suggests Hastings’ interest in politics and providentialism.

The \textit{Waterville Intelligencer} featured few letters directly from Maine Baptists, but its religious intelligence and topics were of particular interest to the Maine Baptists. Topics that were discussed in the newspaper often became causes the Maine Baptists later adopted. For example, Hastings devoted several articles throughout the newspaper to the promotion of the American Colonization Society. One article in August 8, 1823 insisted that “if there be any organization which has strong claims on the benevolence of fellow-citizens, it is the American

\textsuperscript{14} It is difficult to determine the exact number of newspapers during this time period and the existing sources do not agree. This partly could be because many newspapers were short-lived, and others were not always aware of when a newspaper ceased publication. \textit{Hewett’s List of Newspapers and Periodicals in the United States in 1828}, 367 and “Newspapers,” \textit{Eastport Sentinel}, July 5, 1828, 1.

\textsuperscript{15} “From the New York Observer,” \textit{Salem Gazette}, December 25, 1827, 2.

Colonization Society."\textsuperscript{17} The Bowdoinham Association later threw its support behind the American Colonization Society as well.\textsuperscript{18} They recommended in 1829 that the “churches connected with this Association … observe the fourth day of July in a religious manner, and that a collection be made to aid the object of the Colonization Society.”\textsuperscript{19}

Temperance was one of the hottest topics amongst the Maine Baptists during the 1820s and 1830s. Some argued that one should entirely abstain from alcohol unless they were prescribed a medication, while others contended that the Bible only warned against drunkenness and not against alcohol consumption. Maine Baptists largely agreed by the end of the 1820s to encourage total abstinence, but this was a controversial topic for several years prior, as shown in the \textit{Waterville Intelligencer}. As noted above, the June 20, 1826, \textit{Waterville Intelligencer} opened with an article about the dangers of intemperance and the importance of complete abstinence. This argument and updates about temperance societies throughout the United States frequented the pages of the newspaper. Both the Cumberland and Bowdoinham Association agreed to “increase their exertions for the suppression of intemperance, by endeavoring to persuade professors of religion totally to abstain from the use of intoxicating liquors, except as a medicine” in the 1820s, while the other Maine associations and the Maine Baptist Convention adopted a similar resolution by the early 1830s.\textsuperscript{20} There is also evidence that causes such as temperance were adopted by laypeople. The biography of Rebekah Pinkham of Sedgwick,\textsuperscript{17} \textit{Waterville Intelligencer}, August 8, 1823.\textsuperscript{18} The American Colonization Society was an organization of white, American citizens who proposed that free Black people emigrate to African colonies. It helped establish a colony in Liberia in 1821. For more on the origins of the American Colonization Society, see Donald R. Egerton, “‘Its Origin Is Not a Little Curious’: A New Look at the American Colonization Society,” \textit{Journal of the Early Republic} 5, no. 4 (Winter 1985): 463-480.\textsuperscript{19} Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held In Greene, September 23 & 24, 1829; Together with Their Circular Correspondence and Letters, 9.\textsuperscript{20} Minutes of the Cumberland Baptist Association, Held at the Meeting-House in Portland, ME, October 3d & 4th, 1827; Together with the Circular and Corresponding Letters (Portland, Maine: Printed by James Adams, June 1827).
Maine, notes that “temperance and Moral Reform—she felt that all these had claims upon her talents.”

The *Waterville Intelligencer* did not always hit the mark with Baptists and other readers. There is little comment about the newspaper in the Maine Baptist association reports or other related sources, but a few other newspapers complained about them. The *Vermont Chronicle* criticized the *Waterville Intelligencer* for publishing lottery advertisements in 1826. They insisted that this was “foul blot” for a “professedly religious” newspaper, and that Hastings should abandon the advertisements “in compassion to their weaker brother, who, we assure them, is not a little scandalized by their conduct.”

The newspaper seems to have been unable to meet the expectations of all who read it. The *Waterville Intelligencer* published surprisingly little about Waterville College, the institution which initially helped the paper to be created. There are only a handful of updates about Waterville College in the *Waterville Intelligencer*. For example, short articles appear around the College’s commencement, meeting of corporation, and highlighting a sermon preached at a meeting of the Maine Baptist Education Society. However, references to the College were vastly outnumbered by other religious intelligence and secular news.

It is also notable that the newspaper rarely highlighted news about local congregations or individual Maine Baptists. Others who have studied the history of the Maine press, such as Joseph Griffin and Edward Carey Whittemore, commented on the newspaper’s lack of “local” news. Rev. Joshua Millet stated in his history of the Maine Baptists that, “the *Waterville Intelligencer* . . . opened to Baptists in Maine an important channel of communication, with the

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21 E.W. Garrison, *Memoir of Mrs. Rebekah P. Pinkham, late consort of Rev. E. Pinkham, of Sedgwick, Me., containing an account of her conversion, interesting letters to her friends, her writings for the promotion of missionary objects, & c.* (Portland, Maine: Office of the Zion’s Advocate, 1840), 126.

22 *Vermont Chronicle*, Friday, December 22, 1826, 3.

23 *Waterville Intelligencer*, August 15, 1823.

public and with each other. But through this medium they did not always speak what they wished.” Millet did not further elaborate. Baptists may have found some of the content, such as the lottery advertisements, to be disagreeable, but lack of local and state news about Baptists was probably even more detrimental to a large readership.

The newspaper addressed topics that Maine Baptists valued but it did not ultimately display all of them. There were occasional references to the activities of other Maine Protestants. On August 1, 1823, it featured a long column of the Kennebec Bible Society, an auxiliary of the American Bible Society, and its success in distributing over one hundred Bibles and over two hundred copies of the New Testament. There was no lack of Maine Baptist activity in the 1820s. Even prior to the creation of hundreds of Maine Baptist foreign missionary societies in 1826, there were dozens of foreign and domestic missionary, Bible and tract, and general mite societies. They nevertheless received little attention in the newspaper.

Revivals, however, were featured in nearly every issue of the newspaper and remained an important marker of success. The Waterville Intelligencer was interested in revivals no matter where they occurred and within what denomination. Large revivals were especially emphasized a sign of God’s favor. For example, the newspaper reported in 1823 that over fifty people had been baptized in Eastport, Maine. Nevertheless, even small revivals or individual conversion stories were important. The newspaper published a letter from Rebekah Pinkham about her witnessing “the conversion of a man who was hardened by sin and profaneness.”

Hastings may have assumed that his readers desired updates about the large institutions that they increasingly associated with. Most of its Baptist content tended to be about national

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25 Joshua Millet, A History of the Baptists in Maine; Together with brief notices of societies and institutions, and a dictionary of the labors of each minister (Portland, Maine: Charles Day & Co., 1845), 432.
26 Waterville Intelligencer, August 1, 1823, 2.
27 Waterville Intelligencer, August 29, 1823.
28 Ibid.
institutions, while his Maine religious intelligence seems to have been primarily about other denominations or non-denominational organizations like the Maine Sabbath School Union.\textsuperscript{29} Overall, there was a greater focus on institutions like the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, American Bible Society, American Tract Society, and their equivalent societies in Great Britain and Europe. These included articles about the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions and the journey of missionary Ann Hasseltine Judson throughout the United States to raise funds for the organization.\textsuperscript{30}

However, as is evident in later publications, Maine Baptists also desired to visibly demonstrate their contributions to the spread of God’s Kingdom to the larger Protestant community. Maine Baptists wanted to be part of the audience and on stage. The experimental nature of the newspaper, the diverse needs it was expected to meet, and inability to fully represent Maine Baptists may have ultimately led to why the editors of the \textit{Illustrated History of Kennebec County} claimed that the newspaper “dragged along an uncertain existence until December, 1828… when it was suspended for lack of support.”\textsuperscript{31} Hastings eventually moved on to once again print a political newspaper that likely appealed more to his interests.

\textit{Maine Baptist Herald}

The \textit{Maine Baptist Herald} was published in Brunswick by Joseph Griffin. Griffin initially set up his printing office there in 1819 and focused on the consistent revenue he received by printing Bowdoin College’s catalogues and works by its instructors. It is unclear what first motivated him to publish the newspaper. Nevertheless, The \textit{Herald} began publication in July 1824, was published weekly, and cost $1.50 per year. Like the \textit{Waterville Intelligencer}, there

\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Waterville Intelligencer}, January 19, 1826.
\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Waterville Intelligencer}, October 10, 1823.
\textsuperscript{31} Henry D. Kingsbury and Simeon L. Deyo, \textit{Illustrated History of Kennebec County, 1799-1892} (New York: H.W. Blake & Company, 1892), 249
were several ways for subscribers to receive a discount. Benjamin Titcomb, Jr., a graduate of Bowdoin College and the son of Baptist minister and Maine’s first newspaper publisher Rev. Benjamin Titcomb, was the first editor of the paper. However, Titcomb Jr.’s tenure as editor was brief due to poor health. Griffin took over as editor after six months and remained both editor and publisher until the periodical ceased in 1828.

The relationship between the Baptist denomination and Bowdoin College was complicated. It was the first college in Maine and was supported by Congregationalists. No Baptist counterpart was formed until the foundation of Waterville College. Any Maine Baptist who wanted to attend college nearby did not have many choices and Bowdoin College welcomes these students. It is therefore unsurprising that some of the Maine Baptist leaders such as Benjamin Titcomb, Jr. in the 1820s and 1830s were educated at Bowdoin College in the 1800s and 1810s. These students could attend the substantial Baptist churches in Brunswick or in nearby towns should they wish to congregate with those of the same religious beliefs or practice their preaching skills.

The *Herald* featured similar content to the *Waterville Intelligencer*. The pages were filled with a combination of religious and secular news, plus a heavy focus on revivals. Griffin also struggled to print material that appealed to varied audiences and his own interests. However, Griffin was not associated with Waterville College or any other Maine Baptist organization. The newspaper therefore appears to be his own invention and the fate of his paper relied primarily on its success with subscribers.

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There were several notable differences between the Waterville Intelligencer and Maine Baptist Herald. First, the providentialism that is evident in the Intelligencer is absent from the Herald. Griffin may have simply been less interested in the relationship between wars and major world events and God’s influence or believed his readers cared more about other topics. Second, Griffin was more willing to engage controversial issues. The newspaper served as a medium in which religious and moral debates could take place and Griffin often printed stances that differed from the ones published by Hastings.

Griffin questioned the motives of the American Colonization Society and published an excerpt from the Georgetown Columbian and District Advertiser that criticized the organization’s plans. The excerpt stated, “we hope that the friends of colonization will not move another step in the business, until they submit to a calm and thorough discussion of a subject, in which every man of color is so deeply interested.” Griffin wrote an article in his newspaper which argued that less money should be spent on ministerial education and more money on the existing domestic missionaries who visited the less settled areas of Maine. Maine Baptist leaders constantly asked laypeople for more money for their local missionaries, but Griffin’s criticism undoubtedly aggravated those who were trying to promote Waterville College. He also notably published an article that condemned “military reviews,” or exercises intended to bring together and train local militias. Griffin contended that these reviews were merely opportunities for members to get drunk with their friends and potentially injure themselves and others. The Kennebec Journal fired back that military reviews were necessary for the defense of the country.

34 “From the Georgetown Columbian and District Advertiser, of May 29,” Maine Baptist Herald, June 19, 1827, 21. The Georgetown Columbian, and District Advertiser was published in Washington, D.C. and was only published in 1827.
35 Maine Baptist Herald, June 5, 1827), 18.
36 “From the Kennebec Journal,” Independent Chronicle and Boston Patriot, October 12, 1825, 1.
Last, Griffin featured significantly more secular news than religious intelligence. His sections dedicated to religious discussion and theological treatises were similar in size to the Waterville Intelligencer, but there were fewer articles about Protestant organizations and news. There were a handful of articles about the Maine Baptist denomination. The Maine Baptist Convention sent a full report of their proceedings, which were printed in the May 29, 1827, number. However, articles about Maine Baptist organizations were otherwise uncommon in the newspaper. Griffin preferred to print articles primarily about national and international political, economic, and cultural events. This may have been done to compete with the political newspapers in the state, but Griffin did not comment on his decision.

Like Hastings, Griffin paid close attention to revivals. He especially highlighted any revival in which there were a large number of baptisms. For example, he noted that in Biddeford “between fifty and sixty have become the hopeful subjects of a change of heart; and the good word does not yet cease.”37 Several revivals in Portland of indeterminate numbers had brought individuals “of every age, from 13 to 70 years… to bow the knee to Jesus.” It was particularly noted that even when revivals subsided, “HE whose eye beholds the heart, sees the work moving onward with undiminished energy.”38

Griffin later wrote a history of the Maine press and claimed that the Herald was “the first paper, coinciding fully with the faith and practices of the primitive Baptists, ever published in the United States.”39 Primitive Baptists highly opposed missionary and other voluntary societies that had grown in popularity throughout the United States. Primitive Baptists especially disliked those representatives from these societies asked for money and support. They preferred to return their church structure to what they believed was a New Testament model.

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37 Maine Baptist Herald, May 29, 1827, 13.
38 Maine Baptist Herald, June 25, 1827, 29.
39 Griffin, History of the Press of Maine (Brunswick, Maine, From the Press of Joseph Griffin, 1872), 74.
were initially scattered throughout North America and were not part of any formal organization. However, those who opposed missionary institutions formed into official congregations after the publication of the *Kehukee Association Declaration of 1827* which stated that their association would not support any outside institution. There had always been those who resisted the growth of missionary movements, but they were now more united in their opposition. It was at this moment that the Primitive Baptists separated themselves from the Calvinistic Baptist mainstream.

There were no Primitive Baptist churches in Maine during the 1820s. A Primitive Baptist church formed in Whitfield, Maine, in 1830. Nevertheless, it is likely that some within Maine sympathized with them earlier. Griffin’s Primitive Baptist sympathies at the very least became evident in 1827 after the publication of the *Kehukee Association Declaration of 1827*. His personal declaration divided Maine Baptists. Rev. David Nutter of Livermore allied with Griffin and wrote a series of letters published in the *Maine Baptist Herald* that criticized the international missionary movement under the pen name “Mephibosheth.” Nutter’s first letter argued that Primitive Baptists were not against the “cause” of foreign missions. Missionaries are evident throughout the New Testament and the Bible encourages evangelism. However, Primitive Baptists did not agree with the organizations that conducted foreign missions.

Nutter criticized those who supported foreign missions in his initial letter. He first noted that those who refused to donate money to foreign missions were often branded as bad Christians. He argued that this behavior was both unkind and unnecessary. Second, Nutter

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contended that those who were more educated were frequently elected to positions of authority within voluntary societies. He stated that this was not bad in and of itself, but once these individuals were elected, they tended to be constantly re-elected. This could breed jealously, prejudice, and nepotism. Furthermore, he insisted that these individuals did not always behave honorably. They frequently demanded salaries for completing voluntary work. Donations therefore contributed to these salaries instead of directly to the “destitute.” Nutter also noted that his complaints applied to other voluntary societies and seminaries, both of which the Primitive Baptists disliked.

Nutter’s work was especially scandalous as it highlighted specific organizations and individuals. His criticisms primarily aimed at the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions (ABBFM) and the missionaries it employed. He argued that Rev. Adoniram Judson and Rev. Jonathan Price’s time in Ava was unfruitful.\(^{43}\) He was especially critical of Rev. Luther Rice, who had returned from missionary work in India to raise money in the United States on behalf of the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions. He remained in the United States despite his original promise of returning to India. Nutter accused Rice of dishonesty and the ABBFM of “[covering] over many evils which they feared would operate against the cause.”\(^{44}\)

Nutter argued that he was a “friend” of missions, voluntary societies, and ministerial education. Nevertheless, his criticisms, especially of the foreign missionary movement, were unappreciated by readers. Maine Baptists viewed his letters as an attack on the societies they valued and had worked hard to build.

\(^{43}\) Ava or “Inn Wa” was the ancient capital of the Burmese kingdom of Ava. Both Judson and Price had visited Ava in the early 1820s to win the favor of the king. They were captured as prisoners in Ava during the First Anglo-Burmese War. They were unable to persuade the king to support their missions and were unable to convert many individuals during their time in Ava. See G.P. Ramachandra, “The Outbreak of the First Anglo-Burmese War,” Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society 51, no. 2 (1978): 69-99.

\(^{44}\) Maine Baptist Herald, August 28, 1827.
The Bowdoinham Association specifically addressed Nutter’s letters during their annual association meeting in 1827. They commented,

That such mighty movements should excite the enmity, and stir up the opposition of the prince of darkness and his subjects, we were prepared to expect; but that whole companies of the professed soldiers of the cross should make a retrograde movement—occupy the ground, and make use of the weapons of the enemy—and that there should be found within our own missionary district a ‘Mephibosheth’ who would undertake publicly to apologize their conduct in such a manner as goes to reprobate indiscriminately the missionary efforts of the day—to impeach the characters and conduct of some of the most active, valiant and persevering in our ranks—and by his queries and suspicions encourage infidels and skeptics to reproach his brethren and the cause of God—these things are to us matters of great surprise and deep regret.45

The Maine Baptist Convention did not specifically call out Griffin and Nutter, but they assured their members and readers that the missionary cause was important. They remarked,

Be cheerful and firm supporters of Foreign and Domestic Missions. Do not be disheartened at the opposition that may arise. Our dear brethren of the English Baptist Mission have been assailed by open enemies and professed friends; and we must expect to encounter the same difficulties. But, brethren, the cause of missions is the cause of God, and it will prevail.46

The Maine Baptist Convention praised the efforts of the Bible and Tract, missionary, and ministerial education societies and encouraged them to continue their efforts. They also applauded the success of their seminaries and contended that spiritual revivals often occurred at the seminaries, clear proof of God’s approval. They further argued that they would need to use the press to “revive the subject in the public mind, and cherish the flame already kindled,” but did not provide a detailed plan.47 Their letter served more as encouragement than as a blueprint.

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46 Minutes of the Baptist Convention of Maine, Held in Thomaston, Oct. 10 & 11, 1827 (Hallowell, Maine: Spaulding & Livermore 1827, 1900). The “enemies” referred to by the Convention were the leaders of the Konbaung Dynasty of Burmah in the First Anglo-Burmese War. The war had recently concluded in 1826 and the missionaries who survived it were largely treated in the religious press as heroes. See John L. Christian, “Americans and the First Anglo-Burmese War,” Pacific Historical Review 5, no. 4 (December 1936): 312-324.
47 Ibid.
Maine Baptist Herald did not survive long after this series of letters. Creditors claimed Griffin’s press and other printing materials to repay his debts. This prevented him from printing for two weeks and forced him to purchase another press. He published the Maine Baptist Herald for another six months before moving to Boston. He claimed in the Herald that he was moving to Boston to obtain intelligence as early as possible and to better accommodate his subscribers around the city.48 He later admitted in his History of the Press of Maine that he experienced some health issues during this time.49 It can also be hypothesized that Griffin wanted to put some space between himself and Maine Baptists.

Griffin did not print another newspaper until September 1829 and changed the name to the Eastern Galaxy and Herald to further disassociate himself from the denomination. It avoided religious topics and featured entirely secular news. He eventually sold his subscription list and rights to publish the paper to William Noyes of Brunswick, Maine, in August 1830. Griffin then turned his attention to projects that spotlighted his other interests such the History of the Press of Maine and children’s periodical Juvenile Key.

Griffin initially blamed his opponents for his misfortune in 1828. He insisted that he had been “dragged before the Associations and priests, and condemned to perpetual execration for (as we believe) the truth’s sake.”50 He claimed that leaders of the associations were the ones who encouraged his creditors to pay him a visit. He argued that they had taken away the “means of salvation” to a “drowning man.”51 He further contended that his opponents had soon after encouraged the publication of a new Baptist periodical to persuade laypeople to abandon his newspaper. Surely, he referred to the Zion’s Advocate, which began publication in November 1829.

48 Maine Baptist Herald, January 14, 1829, 135.
49 Griffin, History of the Press of Maine, 77.
50 Maine Baptist Herald, June 19, 1828.
51 Ibid.
1828, and that Maine Baptist associations recommended at their annual meetings the previous summer. Griffin’s tone softened a few decades later when he published his *History of the Press of Maine*. He then argued that his creditors had seized his materials at this time “thinking their chances to be lessening.” He had purportedly been attempting to work out a deal to pay off his debt and noted that many of his new supplies had been donated by friends, including Baptist minister Elder Henry Kendall. Kendall was interestingly a resolute supporter of both the Maine associations and foreign missions. Griffin even noted in his later work that *Zion’s Advocate* had been “ably conducted” by Rev. Adam Wilson and does not appear later in life to have resented him.

*Maine Baptist Herald* served as a space for discussion and debate for the Maine Baptists. Newspapers were a medium in which values of new efforts like foreign missions could be evaluated. Griffin’s willingness to engage with unpopular opinions was ultimately detrimental to his newspaper but contributed to the formation of Maine Baptist identity. Maine Baptists emerged from this era of religious newspapers as champions of foreign missions, temperance, and other causes which they believed advanced God’s kingdom.

**Maine Periodical Distribution**

Hastings and Griffin primarily relied upon “agents” to find new subscribers, distribute newspapers, and collect subscriptions. The names and locations of these agents were occasionally printed in their newspapers. These lists are essential in demonstrating where the newspapers were distributed and read but should be regarded with caution. Newspapers did not

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52 Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held In Bloomfield, September 24 & 25, 1828; Together with Their Circular Correspondence and Letters, 4.
54 Ibid. Kendall gave at least two missionary sermons at Bowdoinham Association annual meetings: Minutes of the Bowdoinham Association Held in Leeds, September 27 and 28, 1809 (Portland, Maine: J. M’Kown, 1809); and, Minutes of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Bowdoinham Association Holden at Winthrop, Wednesday and Thursday, September 28th, 29th, 1836 (Winthrop, Maine: William Noyes, Printer, 1836).
print the names and locations of agents in every number, nor even every year. This lists therefore truly offer only a snapshot and should be regarded as such.

The agent list for the *Waterville Intelligencer* in 1823 had seventy-five agents and the *Maine Baptist Herald* had thirty-six in 1827. There were a few notable differences. The *Maine Baptist Herald* agents were primarily nestled along midcoast Maine and along the Androscoggin River. There were several agents around Brunswick. The largest concentration of agents was in Knox County with a total number of eight. There were a few exceptions, with agents in locations like China and Cape Elizabeth. The *Waterville Intelligencer* agents were far more spread out.

There was a high concentration of agents in the Kennebec and nearby counties. Kennebec County boasted eight agents, Waldo County had nine, and Somerset County had ten. However, the highest concentration of *Waterville Intelligencer* agents was in Downeast Maine as there were a total of ten agents in Washington county. Religious print may have been especially significant to those in Downeast Maine as their Baptist churches were still relatively separate from churches farther south.

Their distribution largely matches population density in Maine with agents mostly in, or near, large cities. For example, there was an agent listed for both papers in Hampden, Maine. Agents also tended to be listed in towns where there was a large and/or well-established church. Sedgwick, Maine, was not an especially big town, but it boasted an old Baptist church with many members. It is therefore unsurprising to see an agent listed for both papers there.

The agents’ professions and connections to the Baptist denomination varied. There were a large number of agents who were ministers and deacons. Twenty of the *Waterville Intelligencer* agents were ministers and two were deacons, while seven *Maine Baptist Herald*

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56 *Waterville Intelligencer*, May 23, 1823, 1; and, *Maine Baptist Herald*, November 6, 1827.
57 Hampden, Maine is a town directly south of Bangor, Maine.
agents were ministers and two were deacons. Others served as local “postmasters” and becoming a newspaper agent was a natural extension for that office. Many on these lists did not hold a leadership position in the Baptist denomination and were laypeople or individuals interested in spreading religious intelligence or works that were deemed good for moral growth. The list of agents, therefore, offers a look into the spread and influence of Baptist print culture.

Daniel Merrill is one of the more notable names on both agent lists. As noted previously, Merrill was incredibly active in the spread of Baptist print culture in the early nineteenth century. His *Seven Sermons* had a major influence on many North American Baptists. He was less active in the 1820s as he aged, but he was still well-respected by the denomination and continued to contribute to Baptist print culture. He wrote an impassioned letter to the United States Congress that appeared in the *Waterville Intelligencer* in August 1823.58 Merrill regarded religious print as essential in building a Baptist community in early nineteenth century and continued to view it as medium to spread news and foster discussion in the 1820s. His autobiography was even forwarded to the Baptist General Tract Society a few weeks after his death in June 1833.59

Another interesting agent was Davis Wasgatt. He was a founding member of the Baptist Church of Mount Desert, served as a deacon and the church clerk, and attended at least one meeting of the Eastern Maine Association.60 Wasgatt did not personally write Baptist publications, but it is clear that his church was tuned to Baptist print culture. The large revival that inspired the foundation of his church was noted in the *American Baptist Magazine*.61 The church quickly formed a mite society that contributed to domestic and foreign missions and these donations were published in association meeting notes and Baptist publications.

58 *Waterville Intelligencer*, August 22, 1823, 2.
60 “Record of the Baptist Church of Mount Desert, 1816-1834,” and *Minutes of the Eastern Maine Association Convened at Surry, October 3d and 4th, 1821, Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters* (Bangor, Maine: James Burton, Jr., 1821).
The final name of note is Stephen C. Burgess of Warren, Maine. Burgess served as an agent for the *Maine Baptist Herald*. Unlike Merrill and Wasgatt, Burgess did not serve in a leadership role in the Baptist Church. His main occupations included working as a saddler, merchant, captain in the local militia, and town clerk. Burgess’ connection to the Baptist denomination was as a member of the local church and later treasurer of the Lincoln Baptist Foreign Missionary Society Auxiliary.

The newspaper agents demonstrate the close connection between Baptist churches and laypeople and religious publications. The newspapers value lay in spreading news and molding the Baptist identity. This identity and the roles which the newspaper was played was evolving and religious print was an essential component in the formation and transformation of the Maine Baptist identity.

**Maritime Baptist Voluntary Societies**

Maritime Baptists engaged with existing forms of asynchronous communication in the late 1810s and early 1820s to highlight an identity based in domestic missions. The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association sent a summary of their annual meeting to the *American Baptist Magazine* in 1819. They noted that female mite societies had donated over $400 which helped employ five missionaries in the provinces. Missionaries from the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society and messengers to the association’s annual meetings also sent updates about Baptists in the Maritimes. Maritime and Maine Baptist leaders sent personal communications to one another, and these letters were occasionally published in periodicals. For example, Rev. Stephen Dexter of Fairfax, Maine, provided an overview of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick

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63 The Lincoln Baptist Foreign Missionary Society Auxiliary represented Lincoln County, Maine.

64 The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association divided into two provincial associations in 1820 due to an increase in churches and laypeople but continued to collaborate closely together.

65 *The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer*, September 1819, 190.
Association’s annual meeting. His letter primarily focused on the journeys on the domestic Maritime Baptists missionaries who traveled throughout the eastern part of Nova Scotia. He noted that the missionaries visited families who had “children of twenty-five years of age, that had never heard a sermon.”  

Revivals persisted as a sign that God favored the Maritime Baptists and their domestic missions. Joseph Dimock, the minister of the Baptist church in Chester, Nova Scotia, wrote a letter about the revival in his congregation. Dimock did not provide exact numbers but remarked that it had been an emotional experience. Many people in Chester had sobbed, cried out to God for aid, experienced a conversion, and subsequently were baptized. Dimock remarked, “many sermons have been preached, many prayer-meetings attended, the Bible hath been much read, many appropriate hymns have been sung, as well as many exhortations addressed to the people.” No special event had particularly ignited the flame of the revival, but Dimock stated that it started with the younger members of the community.

Another significant revival took place in Miramichi, New Brunswick, in 1826. Rev. Charles Miller of South Berwick, Maine, passed along news to the American Baptist Magazine that he had received from Maritime Baptist missionary David James. James was employed by the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society and predominately preached throughout New Brunswick during his tenure. Miller commented in his letter that, “the dreadful fire that broke out in that place last fall, was the means of calling up the attention of many to the ‘one thing needful’... The result shows, that God has sanctified the dreadful visitation to them all.”

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66 The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine, December 1816, 386.
further remarked that James had reported that forty-two people had been baptized and that there was hope that there would be more converts.

Maritime Baptists had convincing evidence that their concentration on domestic missions was not misplaced. The mid-1820s was a pronounced period of revival. One of the most notable letters was from Isaac Case in 1824. Case was still employed as a missionary for the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society and had been connected with the society since it was founded in 1803. Case reported revivals in Clemmons, Sissaboo, and Cornwallis, Nova Scotia, as well as at St. Johns and Sackville, New Brunswick. He commented that “hundreds have been made the hopeful subjects of grace,” and that “surely, the Lord hath not forsaken the Earth.”

Charles Tupper, the minister of the Baptist Church in Amherst, Nova Scotia, praised the province’s Baptist domestic missionaries in a letter addressed to the American Baptist Magazine in 1827. Tupper preached throughout New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island and was familiar with many of the churches in the Maritimes. He insisted that “many have professed to have experienced religion and have been baptized by our missionaries; churches have been constituted, and religious worship established in various places.” Maritime Baptists had limited resources and their domestic missions made fruitful use of them.

This situation altered in the mid-1820s. Maritime Baptists claimed that the success of their domestic missions and the growth of the Baptist denomination within the provinces now enabled them to look outward. They concentrated on domestic missions when they had little money but were willing to donate to foreign missions as their denomination grew. Charles

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69 Clemmons and Sissaboo are no longer towns in Nova Scotia but were located at the time near the western shore of the province.
71 Charles Tupper, “Letter from the Rev. Mr. Tupper to the Corresponding Secretary, Amherst, Aug. 6, 1827,” The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer, Published by the Board of Managers of the Baptist General Convention, October 1827, 308.
Tupper wrote to the *American Baptist Magazine* in 1827 about the Maritime Baptists’ ability to contribute to larger benevolent movements. As a member of the newly-formed Missionary Society of Cumberland, Nova Scotia, Tupper sent eighteen dollars on behalf of the society for the purpose of foreign missions and remarked a letter with his contribution,

> It may appear strange that we have not taken a more active part in its promotion, by affording pecuniary assistance. But it is to be considered that missionary exertions are in an incipient state here; and that in these Provinces there are extensive and inviting fields for missionary labors.\(^{72}\)

Tupper further noted that the death of Baptist missionary Ann Hasseltine Judson deeply impacted the Maritime Baptists. He argued that her death should “arouse us, and all the friends of missions, to more vigorous efforts for the promotion of the best of Causes.”\(^{73}\)

Judson was one of the missionaries who had inspired the foundation of the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions in 1814. The *American Baptist Magazine* and other publications often published her letters along with the correspondences and reports from other prominent missionaries. Judson’s fame especially grew during the 1820s. She fought to free her spouse during the First Anglo-Burmese War and to return to her missionary settlement. She tragically died of smallpox shortly after the war ended. Her story was famous in North America even before the publication of the first edition of her memoir in 1829. Her letters and updates about her travels were published in the *American Baptist Magazine*, *Waterville Intelligencer*, and even *Maine Baptist Herald*. Rebekah Pinkham of Sedgwick, Maine, wrote a letter to Judson in 1822 where she insisted that Judson would one day “surround the throne of God and praise him that you were made the instruments of introducing the gospel into an empire of darkness and superstition.”\(^{74}\)

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\(^{72}\) Ibid.

\(^{73}\) Ibid.

\(^{74}\) Garrison, *Memoir of Mrs. Rebekah P. Pinkham*. 
Many North American Baptists regarded Judson as a martyr. Protestant periodicals featured letters from her family and friends that mourned her death and celebrated her successes and moral character. There is evidence that her story and those of the other missionaries were well known throughout the Maritimes through the distribution of periodicals like the *American Baptist Magazine*. Eliza Chipman of the Second Cornwallis Baptist Church often wrote in her diary in 1825 about the ABBFM mission and her feelings about the spread of the Gospel in “heathen” lands.75

Other churches followed the example of Tupper and the Missionary Society of Cumberland. The ABBFM reported in 1831 that they had received group donations from the St. John Foreign Mission Society, “Friends in Sackville, for Burman Mission,” and an individual donation from Mr. Clarke Young of Falmouth, Nova Scotia.76 Young particularly wanted his donation to go to the translation of the Bible for converts in Myanmar. There were also donations from individuals of roughly one dollar each from Onslow, Nova Scotia, and Sackville, New Brunswick. The ABBFM noted the following year that foreign missionary societies, churches, and individuals in Newport, Nictau, Rawdon, Truro, and Wilmot, and St. Johns, New Brunswick, donated nearly $275, with one particularly large donation of nearly $165 from the “ladies” in Pictou, Nova Scotia. The Maine Baptists donated approximately $715 the same year.77 Maritime Baptists did not donate as much money as their Maine counterparts, but this was still a significant sum considering they had only begun to raise funds for foreign missions.

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76 *The American Baptist Magazine Published by the Board of Manager of the Baptist General Convention*, 1831.
77 “Donations” in *The American Baptist Magazine Published by the Board of Manager of the Baptist General Convention*, Volume XII (1832).
There was one especially unique donation from the Horton Female Mite Society which paid $40 for the education of a “Burman girl” in 1831. The Nova Scotia Baptist Association particularly praised the formation of the Horton Female Mite Society and their adopted cause in their annual report. They said,

We are highly pleased to observe in the letter from the Horton church that a society has been formed there, in the aid of the Burman mission, and we shall gladly hail every event of this kind as a token that the Lord is about pouring out on us not only a greater spirit of liberality and the means of supplying it, but also a deeper and more fervid feeling of genuine piety.

Like the Maine Primitive Baptists, Maritime Primitive Baptists did not boast congregations in the 1820s. There were a few congregations in the 1830s, but the movement did not gain momentum until the 1840s. Their perspective is largely absent from Maritime Baptist religious print, and it is therefore difficult to determine how much the Primitive Baptists engaged with the other Baptists in the provinces.

Maritime Baptists simultaneously expressed interest in other related benevolent causes. The same 1831 association meeting notes that praised the Horton Female Mite Society also encouraged the formation of temperance societies. The meeting notes stated, “it is no small credit to the denomination that they have so generally and decidedly come forward and led the way in the cause of moral reform, which so deeply involve the temporal and spiritual interests of society.”

The association meeting notes also began in the late 1820s to include small summaries of the letters from the associated churches. These letters often provided information

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78 Ibid.
80 Maritime Primitive Baptists were referred to as the “Free Baptists.” See Frederick C. Burnett, Biographical Directory of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Free Baptist Ministers and Preachers (Hantsport, Nova Scotia: Published by Lancelot Press for Acadia Divinity College and the Baptist Historical Committee of the United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces, 1996).
81 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Onslow, on Monday and Tuesday, 27th and 28th of June 1831, 7.
about the foundation and condition of benevolent societies. For example, the 1832 association meeting notes remarked that the Horton Church had raised $50 for foreign missions and had recently created a temperance society.  

Horton Academy

Maritime Baptist’s attentiveness to foreign missions partly coincided with their efforts to develop Baptist educational institutions. There had at first been some reluctance to set up seminaries for similar reasons to those that were espoused by the Maine Baptists. Baptists feared that education would eventually be respected more than genuine piety. However, Maritime Baptists began to argue in the 1820s and 1830s that more formal education would guarantee the survival of the denomination. Historian Barry Moody noted, “the desire to provide stability, to protect the Baptist position from assaults from the evangelical left, and to assure that the struggles of the Fathers would not have been in vain all clearly demanded both a better educated clergy and a well-informed laity.”

Ministers and laypeople would be better able to defend their theological positions against the Anglican and Presbyterian churches and attract new Baptists.

Horton Academy was the first and longest-standing Maritime Baptist school. It formed in 1828 along with the Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society. They promised to “[provide] suitable instruction, within the reach of young men, who feel themselves called to the ministry of the Gospel” and offering “the general instruction of youth.” Horton Academy was initially intended more for high school-level education but eventually served college students when it

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82 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Cornwallis, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 25th, 26th, and 27th of June, 1832, 22.  
transformed into Acadia College in 1841. It was technically open to students of any
denomination, but Baptists primarily supported it.\textsuperscript{85}

Like the Maine Baptists, Maritime Baptists also turned to periodicals to highlight the
development of their school and rally support and donations. The \textit{Christian Watchman} was the
first periodical to publish news about plans for the new college. They did so through a letter from
Rev. Alexis Caswell of Providence, Rhode Island. Caswell had recently preached in Nova Scotia
but had been called to assist at the First Baptist Church of Providence and to teach at Brown
University. Caswell attended the annual meeting of the Nova Scotia Baptist Association in 1828.
He stated he had witnessed,

the unanimity and zeal with which they entered on the project of establishing, in the
western part of the Province, a Seminary for Theological and General Education… it is
much needed; and under judicious management, will prove a powerful auxiliary to the
best interests of genuine religion.\textsuperscript{86}

A handful of similar announcements appeared in the \textit{American Baptist Magazine} and \textit{Zion’s
Advocate}.

Publications outside of the Maritimes provided occasional updates about the institution
during the late 1820s and early 1830s. The \textit{American Baptist Magazine} noted in 1829 that the
Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society had acquired sixty acres of land for the school, hired
teachers, and attracted fifty students.\textsuperscript{87} There was a flurry of news once again when Horton
Academy began its transformation into Acadia College. However, these kinds of articles were
infrequent.

\textsuperscript{85} For more on Acadia University, see \textit{Memorials of Acadia College and Horton Academy for the half-century 1828-
1878} (Montréal, Québec: Dawson Brothers, 1881).


\textsuperscript{87} \textit{The American Baptist Magazine and Missionary Intelligencer, Published by the Board of Managers of the Baptist
General Convention}, December 1829, 418.
The foundation of Horton Academy was one of the few moments in which the Maritime Baptists sought aid from the English Baptists. They required money for Horton Academy that they could not fundraise entirely on their own and therefore turned to the English Baptist press for promotion. The Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society was briefly mentioned in a history of the Nova Scotia Baptists that appeared in London-based *Baptist Magazine* in 1829. This particular article had an asterisk where it was stated “any assistance (which is greatly needed), donations of books, &c. from our brethren or friends in England, or elsewhere, will be very gratefully received.” 88 There was also a short reference to the foundation of the school in *New Baptist Miscellany*. The article noted the purpose of the school was for “diffusing the principles of a correct and scriptural education among the youth of that increasing population.” 89 It further commented that land had been purchased for the school and that a principal has been hired to head it.

Horton Academy garnered more attention a few years later when the Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society sent a representative to England. The *Baptist Magazine* published a letter signed by eleven English Baptist ministers in 1831. The letter laid out the financial challenges that Horton Academy experienced, emphasized the importance of ministerial education, and asked English Baptist laypeople to donate money or supplies to the institution. 90 The *New Baptist Miscellany* published solicitations for donations for the school in 1831 and 1832 as well. These letters were written by Edmund A. Crawley, one of the founders of Horton Academy, but featured a list of English donors. The purpose of the list was to thank the existing donors and

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90 “Foreign- Baptist Education Society in Nova Scotia,” *The Baptist Magazine*, 113-14,
encourage others to emulate their behavior.\footnote{Edmund A. Crawley, “Address on Behalf of the Churches of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick,” \textit{New Baptist Miscellany}, July 1831, 273-275, and Edmund A. Crawley, “Letter from Edmund A. Crawley, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Nov. 19, 1831, to the Editor,” \textit{New Baptist Miscellany}, January 1832, 29-30.} These tactics were somewhat successful. The Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society noted in 1833 that they had received £60 from beneficiaries and “part of the money [was] collected in England.”\footnote{Report of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Education Society, for the year ending June 1833, Addressed to the Society at Horton, June 24, 1835 (Halifax, Nova Scotia: The Novascotian Office, 1835), 5.} Maritime Baptists recognized the key role print could play in the development of their school and reached out to well-established American and English periodicals.

\textit{Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick}

The \textit{Christian Watchman}, \textit{American Baptist Magazine}, and English periodicals all helped connect Maritime Baptists to the larger, pan-Protestant community. However, their \textit{Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick} was truly where Maritime Baptists discussed their concerns and priorities. Maritimes Baptists first proposed a magazine that was unique to their provinces at the 1825 meeting of the Nova Scotia Baptist Association. They voted to request that the New Brunswick Association collaborate with them on the publication and the New Brunswick Baptist Association agreed. All other major decisions about the \textit{Magazine} were voted upon by the two associations. The \textit{Magazine} began publication in 1827.

Rev. Charles Tupper was the first editor of the \textit{Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova-Scotia and New Brunswick} and edited it through 1833. He was born in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia, in 1794 and was baptized in May 1815 by Rev. Edward Manning. He quickly began preaching throughout Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. He was a major advocate of temperance, an ardent supporter of foreign missions, and authored religious articles in the mid-1820s, as demonstrated by his above letters to the \textit{American Baptist Magazine}. He was considered a natural choice as the first editor of the magazine due to his experience and
dedication to the Baptist denomination and missionary efforts. The \textit{Magazine} was originally published in St. John, New Brunswick. Most Maritime printers at the time were based in either St. John or Halifax and did not to have ties to the Baptist denomination. Tupper’s home church during this period was in Amherst, Nova Scotia, but he frequently visited New Brunswick on missionary tours. It was therefore easier for him to communicate with printers in St. John than printers in Halifax.

Tupper was replaced in 1834 by James Walton Nutting and John Ferguson of Halifax, after he moved to Prince Edward Island to serve as a minister of the Baptist churches in Bedeque and Tryon. Neither Nutting nor Ferguson were Baptist ministers or missionaries, but they were both highly educated, dedicated to the growth of the Baptists, and supported the “deep-seated Calvinism” that characterized the denomination. They were members of the newly-formed Granville St. Baptist Church in Halifax, whose members were eager to contribute to the denomination. Nutting and Ferguson swiftly jumped into leadership roles in both their church and the Nova Scotia Baptist Association. The \textit{Magazine} was printed in Halifax once Nutting and Ferguson took over as editors.

Like other religious periodicals, the \textit{Magazine} relied on agents to distribute copies, collect subscriptions, and find new readers. There is no record of the names or locations of these agents until 1836. By 1836, they noted that there were nearly seventy agents spread across Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island. Seventeen of these agents were listed as

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94 Amherst, Nova Scotia is on the northwestern shore of the province. It would also have been easier for Tupper to travel by boat to St. John than to Halifax.

95 \textit{Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Bridgetown, County of Annapolis, on Monday and Tuesday, 24th and 25th June, 1833 Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters, Missionary Notices, Remarks, &c., &c.} (Halifax, Nova Scotia: J. S. Cunnabel, Argyle Street, 1833), 8.

ministers while the others were laypeople or other community members. The agent’s professions and connections to the Baptist denomination varied, but several examples represent the significance of print in the Maritimes.

One of the most noteworthy names on the list of agents is that of Rev. Joseph Dimock of Chester, Nova Scotia. He was one of the first Baptist ministers to be ordained in the Maritimes and was a key founder of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association in 1800. Dimock was the minister of the Baptist Church in Chester but evangelized throughout the Maritimes. He served as the messenger to the Cumberland and Bowdoinham Associations in 1820 where he brought with him the letters and minutes of his home association. Dimock occasionally wrote to periodicals like the *American Baptist Magazine*, as demonstrated above. Baptist print was essential in Dimock’s life, his local church, and the denomination he supported.

Ebenezer Packard was not a minister but was an active member of the Fredericton Baptist Church in New Brunswick and the assistant clerk of the New Brunswick Baptist Association. He was an avid supporter of the New Brunswick Education Society and its goal to form a seminary within the province and taught school himself. He successfully petitioned the province’s House of Assembly in 1835 to teach for six months in the Northesk Parish. Packard was deeply connected to the denomination and served various leadership roles within it.

The final interesting agent was Abraham Newcombe of Stewiacke, Nova Scotia. He originally lived in Cornwallis and was a Presbyterian. However, upon moving to Stewiacke in 1799 he became a Baptist and experienced a full-immersion baptism. Newcombe helped to form

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97 *Minutes of the New Brunswick Baptist Association*, 1833, 1837-1842 (St. John, New Brunswick); and, *Journals of the House of Assembly of the Province of New Brunswick From the Twentieth Day of January to Seventeenth Day of March* (Fredericton, New Brunswick: John Simpson, 1835), 357.
the Baptist Church in Stewiacke and remained an active member. He did not adopt any leadership role and his main connection to the denomination was as a devoted layperson.98

Most of the Nova Scotian agents were based on the western shore of the province, along the core region for Baptists in the province. There were a few agents on the eastern shore, but these agents were quite dispersed. John Ferguson, the eventual editor of the Magazine, represented its interests in Halifax. Interestingly, there were also three agents in Cape Breton Island. The missionary society was especially eager to evangelize there and sent missionaries throughout the 1830s. Reports from missionaries who traveled to Cape Breton Island appeared in the April 1830, July 1833, November 1833, and March 1834 numbers. One missionary noted, “here they are very destitute of the means of education. Bibles and testaments we found had been through the benevolence of Bible societies pretty generally distributed amongst the Christian part of the people.”99 Previous efforts had been successful in distributing religious printed material in Cape Breton, but there was more to do in this domestic missionary field.

Agents in New Brunswick tended to be spread along the southwestern portion of the province and the Saint John River and concentrated near urban areas such as St. John and Fredericton. This area had been the subject of missionary tours from both the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society and Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Missionary Society. Rev. Isaac Case and others had spent much of their time in the early 1800s ministering to those around the Passamaquoddy Bay. Later missionaries from the Maritimes moved further north into the province. There were also two agents in Prince Edward Island (PEI). The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Missionary Society was especially interested in spreading their Baptist theology in

99 The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick, New Series March 1834, 76.
PEI throughout the 1820s and 1830s. The location of the agents therefore reflects the locations of the Baptist strongholds in these provinces as well as the success of their missionary efforts in areas like Cape Breton Island and Prince Edward Island.

**Content of the Magazine**

It is notable that the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Associations decided to print a magazine over the kinds of newspapers that were favored by the Maine Baptists. Tupper claimed that magazines were “permanent chronicles of the matter embodied in them, and, as such, are preferrable to weekly Journals, which are apt to be mislaid, and torn to pieces after the first reading.” Tupper further noted that he would not provide any further argument on the point as he believed that any “enlightened person” would agree with him.\(^{100}\) The overall format and content of the *Magazine* changed little during nearly a decade of publication, even after it was taken over by new editors. Nutting and Ferguson noted in their first letter addressed to readers that they intended to continue the same format and content as before. They remarked that encouraging the growth of the denomination and piety was “the professed object of the New Magazine, as it was of the last.”\(^{101}\)

The promotion of Horton Academy was a key component of the *Magazine’s* content. It frequently reported information about new instructors, the number of students and student curriculum, snippets from the minutes of the Nova Scotia Baptist Board of Education, and news about the school’s financial state. Most of these updates were followed by pleas for donations.

\(^{100}\) *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick, January 1827.*

For example, the January 1831 number argued that the “pressing wants of the Education Society ought to stimulate all who wish well to religion and sound learning.”

Many Maritime Baptists supported education, but the Magazine and other printed material indicate that there was some opposition. The New Brunswick Baptist Association bemoaned that “many parts of the Province are still unacquainted with the claims which this [school] has to public support.” One letter to the Magazine contended that many within Nova Scotia, including the legislature, did not believe educational organizations were worth monetary support. Maritime Baptists thus used the Magazine to rally support Horton Academy and education more generally and therefore make these institutions a strong part of the Maritime Baptist identity.

The Magazine’s most noteworthy feature was its focus and encouragement of domestic missions. It printed extensive letters from missionaries employed by the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Associations and updates about revivals that showcased the missionaries’ successes alongside letters from English and American missionaries in Asia and Africa. The inclusion of domestic missionary reports and related materials is unsurprising given that the magazine was supported by the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Associations and their connected missionary societies. Nevertheless, the initial content of the Magazine points to a Maritime Baptist identity that was deeply rooted in the spread of the gospel in their own provinces.

However, this identity was contested. Maritime Baptist laypeople increasingly founded voluntary societies dedicated to funding foreign missions and other benevolent causes. This

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102 The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick, January 1831.
103 Minutes of the New-Brunswick Baptist Association, Held at Fredericton in the County of York, on Monday and Tuesday, Tenth and Eleventh of July (St. John, New Brunswick: Royal Gazette Office, 1837), 13.
fervor began in the mid-1820s and continued throughout the tenure of the periodical. The Magazine incorporated news about these new societies and the number of updates from these local organizations increased over time. The editors of the Magazine could not in good conscience discourage foreign missions or other benevolent causes, nor would they have been inclined to criticize any attempts to spread the gospel or increase piety. Nevertheless, it is clear that the editors struggled to find a balance between printing information about the domestic identity that they had embraced over the last decade and the increasing global identity laypeople sought.

This tension is exemplified in the January 1833 number of the Magazine as it contained both domestic missionary letters and articles about other local benevolent organizations. The number highlighted a letter from Rev. Samuel Robinson of St. George, New Brunswick, evangelized throughout neighboring parts of southern Charlotte County. Robinson remarked that he had faced criticism from residents in the area, but that they ultimately had been swayed by his preaching. He wrote, “there has been such a visible change, that the mouths of enemies seem to be stopped.”

The Magazine also included several notices from voluntary societies dedicated to foreign missions and a handful of other benevolent organizations. Both the Windsor Female Mite Society and Halifax Female Mite Society formed in late 1832 due to “interest in the success of the Mission to Burmah.” The Windsor Female Mite Society particularly noted that they hoped that their “efforts, though small, may receive the approbation of him who did not let the two mites of the widow go unnoticed.”

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104 The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick, January 1833, 23.
105 The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick, January 1833.
106 Ibid.
Maritime Baptists were more united in their support of other benevolent causes. Maritime Baptist leaders encouraged the formation of Sabbath School, Bible and Tract, and temperance societies in their printed association meeting notes and the *Magazine*. The periodical noted and praised the formation of a Baptist Tract Society in St. John, New Brunswick, in 1829. The editors recommended, “to the Sister Churches in these Provinces the formation of similar Societies- that, by their unified efforts, every family may be supplied with these little Heralds of Everlasting Gospel.” ¹⁰⁷ Later that year it was reported that a Sabbath School was founded in Chester, Nova Scotia, and that one hundred students attended it. The *Magazine* wrote, “we hope the teachers and children will persevere in this excellent cause and it is our constant desire that Sabbath Schools may be universally established.” ¹⁰⁸

Temperance was an especially consistent and timely topic for the Maritime Baptists. The subject of temperance was first mentioned in an article titled “Intemperance” which discussed the dangers of drunkenness. The *Magazine* thereafter often highlighted the formation of temperance societies throughout the provinces. One particularly lengthy article described the formation of several temperance societies based on the western coast of peninsular Nova Scotia. A temperance society in Wilmot, Nova Scotia, reportedly formed with forty-four members. The article wrote that it was moving to see how some of the members “a short time ago were opposed to the Institution, [but now] come forward acknowledging their error, and call upon their children and acquaintance to join them in so good a cause.” ¹⁰⁹

The success of the domestic missionaries and the various benevolent societies was demonstrated through revival reports. Rev. Thomas Ansley of Brookfield visited central and

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¹⁰⁷ *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick*, January 1829, 228.
¹⁰⁸ *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick*, October 1829, 374.
¹⁰⁹ *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick*, January 1831.
northern Nova Scotia on a missionary trip in 1829. The *Magazine* noted he baptized several
people in Brookfield and helped the new converts form a church.\(^{110}\) Edward Manning wrote a
letter to the *Magazine* in 1834 that concentrated on a large revival at his church in Cornwallis.
Many people were baptized and also “between 60 or 70 persons male and female have united
with the Temperance Society since the commencement of the work, and particularly within that
district, where the reformation has principally been.”\(^{111}\)

It is understandable that all of the topics mentioned in the *Magazine* were also discussed
in the printed association meeting notes. Unlike the Maine periodicals, the *Magazine* was
directly linked to the associations. Anything the associations found to be significant would find
its way into their periodical. Nevertheless, the *Magazine* demonstrates that subjects that mattered
to the leaders of the denomination often gained traction with the laypeople.

Maritime Baptist leaders and laypeople were overall united in many benevolent
movements iterated an identity that valued spreading the gospel and moral reform through Bible
and Tract, Sabbath School, and temperance societies. However, Maritime Baptist leaders
continuously worried that domestic resources suffered financially and thus those within their
provinces also suffered. The New Brunswick Baptist Association reported in 1829 that “the state
of religion is low.” They partly blamed the churches’ lack of manifest blessings upon a lack of
assistance “towards supporting a constant of periodical supply of Ministerial labors.” The New
Brunswick Association further insisted that once laypeople were “aroused to a sense of duty,”
there would be “a more extensive circulation of divine truth.” This was concern was printed in
the January 1830 number of the *Magazine*. The anonymous author proposed a more “systematic”

\(^{110}\) *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the
Missionary Society of New Brunswick*, January 1830.

\(^{111}\) *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the
Missionary Society of New Brunswick*, May 1834.
plan in which laypeople and churches would donate to domestic missionary societies. The author insisted that this plan would ultimately lead to the extension of the Kingdom of Him.112

Maritime Baptist leaders did not oppose foreign missions. However, they argued that one could not effectively contribute abroad if they did not also spread the gospel in their own local communities. After all, “charity begins in the home.” Their argument throughout the 1810s and early 1820s was that their resources had been too few and that there were too many unconverted individuals within their own province. They now had access to a greater number of resources and were eager to share them but feared domestic missions would be abandoned in the process.

Most Maritime Baptist laypeople did not share this concern. Their letters in the *Magazine* instead enthusiastically conveyed their new dedication to foreign missions. The *Magazine* proved an especially valuable platform for Baptist women who overwhelmingly supported foreign missions. There were few articles or letters by female authors before the 1830s, but letters and news from female mite societies increasingly appeared after 1832. The April 1832 number featured a series of letters between the Horton Female Mite Society, the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, and editors of the *Magazine*. The editors explicitly noted that the letters were intended to inspire the foundation of other mite societies. The Horton letter writer noted that its mite society had been inspired by missionaries in Myanmar and by Biblical examples. She noted, “he who accepted the two mites of the widow will accept every gift when offered with love; and will look with special approbation upon that servant of his, who remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”113 The treasurer of the Windsor Female Mite Society wrote in May 1833 that they hoped, “the Christian

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112 *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick*, January 1830.

113 *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick*, April 1832, 318.
church in general may manifest much greater activity in the missionary cause,” while Canso Female Mite Society argued that their dearest wish was that the “cheering beams of the sun of righteousness” would reach a “disconsolate soul” through their contributions.\textsuperscript{114} Maritime Baptists had more opportunity to voice their beliefs and concerns than had previously been afforded to them.

**Association and Magazine Reform**

Part of the tension between support for domestic missionaries and fundraising for foreign missions was resolved throughout 1832 and 1833. The Nova Scotia Baptist Association voted to form a domestic and foreign missionary society as an auxiliary at this annual meeting. The society intended to raise funds not just for domestic missionaries, but for the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions. Donors were asked to designate whether they wanted their funds to support missionaries in the Maritimes or for international missions. The Association argued they did not want to limit their “exertions to ourselves alone but encircling the Globe as it were in our arms of our Christian benevolence, including the whole human race within the sphere of our prayers and labors.”\textsuperscript{115} Maritime Baptists shortly thereafter streamlined the process of collecting and donating missionary funds\textsuperscript{116}

The provincial organization invited any churches and mite societies who contributed to domestic or foreign missions to become auxiliaries. They could send representatives to an annual meeting that was held in conjunction with the association meetings. Individuals could join the society and become voting members by contributing five shillings a year. Money for domestic and foreign missions were to be equally divided unless earmarked by the donors. All donations

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{115} *Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Cornwallis, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 25th, 26th, and 27th of June, 1832 Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters-Missionary Notices- Remarks-Proceedings of the Education Society, &c.* (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Philip J. Holland, 1832), 28.
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid.
for foreign missions were sent to this society before they were forwarded to the ABBFM or similar organizations.\textsuperscript{117}

Donations to the ABBFM thereafter were listed as from the Nova Scotia Baptist Missionary Society. There continued to be individual societies that donated to the ABBFM from New Brunswick like the St. John Foreign Mission Society until the late 1830s. The New Brunswick Baptists eventually formed a new missionary society with the Nova Scotia Baptists in 1838 that continued to function in the same way as the Nova Scotia Baptist Missionary Society.\textsuperscript{118}

The 1832 annual meeting of the Nova Scotia Baptist Association was a watershed moment for them. The handful of domestic and foreign missionary voluntary societies had not yet organized in the Maritimes to engage with foreign missions or other pan-Protestant benevolent movements. Maritime Baptists had not previously had the time nor resources to extend their influence beyond their immediate geographic reach. The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova-Scotia and New-Brunswick now launched Maritime Baptists onto the international stage of Protestant benevolence with full support for the foreign missionary societies that had formed over the late 1820s and early 1830s.

The Magazine initially issued four numbers a year, but the board of the missionary society agreed to increase the number to six each year in 1833. Their argument was twofold. The Magazine would more quickly spread information about the Maritime Baptists and their efforts in voluntary societies. The Magazine would also be useful in, “uniting our brethren and strengthening them in the bonds of the universal spirit of brotherly love… and of kindling and

\textsuperscript{117} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{118} Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Chester, Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, 25th, 26th & 27th June, 1838 Together with their Circular Letter, Missionary Notices, Remarks, &c., &c. (Halifax, Nova Scotia: James Spike- Prince and Barrington Street, 1838).
enlarging that undying zeal and energy, without which profession of the Gospel is an empty name, and faith itself is dead.”

The Magazine was also to serve as an educational tool. The Association insisted that there was “increasing demand for literary and religious information in many parts of the Province” and that the periodical would afford “a higher degree of mental cultivation” for readers.

Maritime Baptists focused on spreading their faith locally, struggled to solicit donations and to educate their ministry, and battled against the authority of the Church of England throughout the early nineteenth century. These local challenges somewhat isolated them from Baptists in North America after the War of 1812. However, the Maritime Baptists now celebrated the success of their domestic missions and their ability to contribute more broadly to God’s kingdom. The Association minutes exclaimed, “churches have arisen in every part of our colony and others are yet rising. Some which were very small at their commencement have increased so greatly, that we may well say of them, ‘a little one has become a thousand; and a small one a strong nation.’”

The Magazine would thereafter be under the patronage of the missionary society, and anything done by the society, whether through the dispersal of domestic missionaries as it had done before or through the donations collected for foreign missions, would be highlighted in the publication. The first issue after this charge contained a treatise on the importance of international missions and a concise history of the “Burman” mission. Missionaries were further obligated to “promote the circulation of this Periodical, in order to diffuse such intelligence as

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119 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Bridgetown, County of Annapolis, on Monday and Tuesday, 24th and 25th June, 1833 Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters, Missionary Notices, Remarks, &c., &c. (Halifax, Nova Scotia: J. S. Cunnabel, Argyle Street, 1833), 24-5.
120 Ibid.
121 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Cornwallis, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 25th, 26th, and 27th of June, 1832, 12. Quote is from Isaiah 60:22, “A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the Lord will hasten it in his time.”
may tend to awake an interest in the cause of Missions, and for the purpose of increasing the Society’s funds.” The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New-Brunswick was to be the tool that would solidify their position in both the Christian and secular world.

The tension between those who primarily supported and identified with the domestic missionary work and proponents of foreign missions did not immediately evaporate in the Magazine, as demonstrated by the January 1833 number. Nevertheless, there were increased indications that foreign missions were an essential component of the overall Maritime Baptist identity. The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Associations sent domestic missionaries throughout the Maritimes. However, these ministers also now wrote of the voluntary societies they helped form in the towns they visited. Rev. Richard McLearn visited Cape Breton Island during a missionary tour in the summer of 1833. He noted on his tour that he, “preached a missionary sermon and assisted in forming a female Mite Society, in favor of circulating the holy scriptures in the Burman language.”

Rev. Joseph Dimock evangelized throughout eastern Nova Scotia in 1834. He contended that he believed it was a “wise endeavor to enlist the energies of females in every good work, the Bible, Missionary and Temperance Cause.” These missionary letters emphasized the necessity of voluntary societies, particularly those that championed foreign missions.

The Magazine continued to print letters from foreign missionary societies and even began to note donation amounts. For example, the July 1834 number included a letter from the Cornwallis Ladies Missionary Society, which laid out their foundation and purpose, and a list of donations for the “Burman Mission.” The list featured eight societies and three individuals,

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122 Ibid., 8.
123 The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick, July 1833, 37.
124 The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick, May 1834.
primarily concentrated on the western coast of peninsular Nova Scotia. These laypeople collected approximately fifteen pounds for foreign missions.\textsuperscript{125}

Maritime Baptists were incredibly optimistic in 1832 and 1833. They had a plan to print the Magazine more frequently and were unapologetic proponents of foreign and domestic missions. However, The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New-Brunswick did not garner the kind of attention that it aspired to. The Maritime Baptists noted in 1834 that the Magazine’s lack of popularity led to debt. They remarked that they were indebted to the printers they had contracted and thus, “urge on the Churches the necessity of using strenuous efforts to extend its circulation, and to establish the requisite agencies for this purpose.”\textsuperscript{126} In 1835, 700 subscribers to the Magazine paid one dollar a year for their subscription. This amount was “barely sufficient to pay the expenses of the publication” and certainly would not have been enough to support their growing missionary enterprise.\textsuperscript{127}

There were also logistical issues with its distribution. The periodical was published six times a year and delivered through the post. Subscribers complained that they were not receiving it in a timely manner and would often receive several numbers at the same time.\textsuperscript{128} Subscribers were therefore unable to keep up with the latest news from the denomination. This delay was not an “efficient means of the promotion of the good cause.”\textsuperscript{129}

\textsuperscript{125} The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick, July 1834.
\textsuperscript{126} Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Amherst, County of Cumberland, on Monday and Tuesday, 23rd and 24th June, 1834 Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters, Missionary Notices, Remarks, &c., &c. (Halifax, Nova Scotia: James Spike, 1834), 9.
\textsuperscript{127} Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Horton, County of King’s, on Wednesday & Thursday, 24th & 25th June, 1835 Together with their Circular and Corresponding Letters, Missionary Notices, Remarks, &c., &c. (Halifax, Nova Scotia: James Spike, Granville Street, 1835), 21.
\textsuperscript{128} Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Horton, County of King’s, on Wednesday & Thursday, 24th & 25th June 1835, 23.
\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., 22.
Interestingly, the *Magazine* did not include advertisements. All the Maine Baptist periodicals included advertisements of some kind. Some of these advertisements featured local businesses, while others highlighted other Baptist print products. Maritime Baptists do not explain their choice, but it may have been due to taxation. The advertising duty was three shillings and 6 pence for an advertisement in the British empire, and this duty was not abolished until the 1850s. Advertisements may have cost the Maritime Baptists more than they were worth, and such taxes did not exist in the United States during this period.

Unfortunately, subscriptions were often late or nonexistent and donations were unreliable. On top of it, that Maritime Baptists would have continued to pay the stamp and paper duties that would have been placed on periodicals. Maritime Baptists could no longer justify financially supporting the *Magazine*. Nevertheless, they did not want to entirely give up on their goal of providing religious intelligence and inspiration. Maritime Baptists therefore turned to a shorter, more frequent, and less expensive newspaper that resembled something like the *Zion’s Advocate*. This newspaper would reflect a Maritime Baptist identity rooted in domestic and foreign missions, ministerial education, and other relevant benevolent causes. A newspaper seemed the way of the future for the Maritime Baptist denomination.

**Conclusion**

Asynchronous communication through newspapers and magazines offered a medium through which Maine and Maritime Baptists could shape their identity. This identity increasingly valued voluntary societies, especially foreign missions. These identities were contested, but print offered a way in which they could be molded and resolved.

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There is evidence of some persistence in the Maine and Canadian Maritime Baptist cross-border identity that dominated in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Maine and Maritime Baptists continued to send messengers and letters to one another during the mid-1810s to mid-1820s. Interestingly, Maritime Baptists primarily communicated with the original Maine Baptist associations and no formal relationship was set up with the flurry of associations that were founded in Maine between 1815 and 1830. The only new association they communicated with was the Eastern Maine Association, formed in 1818 as an offshoot of the well-established Lincoln Association. The newly-formed association quickly opened correspondence with the Bowdoinham and Lincoln Associations and sent representatives in 1819 to their annual association meetings. They also sent a letter to the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Association in 1820, who “voted to open a correspondence with the Eastern Maine Association.” This relationship was likely formed due to the proximity of the Eastern Maine Association to the New Brunswick border. The Eastern Maine Association was based east of the Penobscot River and was therefore the closest Maine association to the Canadian Maritimes. The other new associations that were founded after it pursued relationships with other Maine Baptists through associational messengers, representatives to statewide organizations, and connections with large, international benevolent institutions.

Messengers became more inconsistent by 1825. There were several years when no messenger from any Maine association visited the Nova Scotia or New Brunswick Baptist associations meetings. The messengers who did attend these associations often represented multiple Maine organizations. This decline seems to correspond with the appearance of Baptist periodicals in Maine and the Maritimes. Associations and other institutions continued to print their meeting notes and reports, but they also sent them to relevant publications. Neither the
Maine nor Maritime Baptists commented on this change, but the timing seems more than coincidental. Both groups may have printed minutes to send to their members but relied on periodicals to share their news with a wider and more distant audience by the late 1820s.

Maine and Maritime Baptists seldom printed about one another in their periodicals. There were naturally a few exceptions, but they were truly occasional. For example, the *Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick* reprinted the obituary of Rev. John Hull. Hull was born in Nova Scotia but moved to Maine in his late twenties. He died at the age of thirty-one and many Baptists in Maine and the Canadian Maritimes mourned his premature death.\(^{131}\) Their overall focus instead was on their increasing connection to voluntary societies and the wider pan-Protestant community.

Neither the *Waterville Intelligencer* nor *Maine Baptist Herald* was in print by 1829. *Maine Baptist Herald*’s stance against foreign missions and other benevolent groups had earned it the ire of Maine Baptist leaders and laypeople. Maine Baptists lost interest in the *Waterville Intelligencer* likely because it rarely printed local religious intelligence. The newspapers allowed the Maine Baptists to read about translocal Protestant institutions but scarcely provided them any opportunity to demonstrate that they were part of these same developments. *Waterville Intelligencer*’s successor would feature far more local news while continuing to post about worldwide events. Maine Baptists wanted to read about both the larger organizations they supported and their own local efforts. Nevertheless, the *Maine Baptist Herald* served as crucial medium of debate, while the *Waterville Intelligencer* introduced timely topics that Maine Baptists discussed in other forums. The *Magazine* lasted far longer than its aforementioned Maine counterparts. It was a significant medium, especially for debates concerning foreign and

\(^{131}\) *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, Published Under the Board of the Missionary Society of New Brunswick*, July 1830.
domestic missions. However, it was eventually replaced by a weekly newspaper due to logistical and financial issues. All three periodicals offered important discussions about foreign missions, temperance, colonization societies, and benevolent groups. Both the Maine and Maritime Baptists emerged from this era with a clearer sense of their priorities and a growing vision of their community.
CHAPTER FIVE

“INTELLIGENCE OF ALMOST EVERY KIND HAS A TENDENCY TO DISCLOSE AND EXHIBIT THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD IN GOVERNING THE WORLD”:

ZION’S ADVOCATE, EASTERN BAPTIST, AND THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER, 1828-1840

Maine and Maritime Baptists both supported regional periodicals by the end of the 1820s. Asynchronous communication was now deeply connected to the formation of Maine and Maritime Baptist identity. Maine Baptists witnessed a succession of periodicals throughout the 1810s and 1820s that were crucial to the overall development of their identity but ultimately did not highlight the ways in which Maine Baptists viewed themselves as part of a larger, pan-Protestant community. Like its predecessors, Zion’s Advocate, based in Portland, Maine, printed a mixture of religious and secular content, both local and international. This was done to appeal to readers’ multifaceted interests. However, Zion’s Advocate also published significantly more information about the activities of Maine Baptists and the ways in which they contributed to foreign missions and other benevolent movements. Maine Baptists therefore squarely placed themselves into a global pan-Protestant community.

Maine Baptist identity and priorities were contested through the publication of the Eastern Baptist in 1836. This newspaper reportedly assuaged specific concerns of certain Maine Baptist ministers. Nevertheless, it is unclear whether or not Maine Baptist laypeople sympathized with the Eastern Baptist, but the newspaper demonstrated that print was an essential forum of discussion.

Messenger continued to publish religious, specifically Baptist, material but also highlighted secular news and a greater variety of updates from other denominations.

The Christian Messenger published domestic missionary reports while also still printing articles about the foreign missionaries and the Maritime Baptist societies that supported them. Maritime Baptist leaders used the newspaper to promote Horton Academy, but there were signs that the institution was not fully financially supported by laypeople. The newspaper provided a medium through which Maritime Baptists could discuss their values. The Maritime Baptist laypeople ultimately argued they were members of a pan-Protestant community that valued foreign missions and other benevolent movements, but this identity was contested by Maritime Baptist leaders who worried about the progress of their faith in their own provinces.

All three newspapers featured revivals. Revivals continuously remained a symbol of God’s favor and confirmation of Baptist identity and actions. The newspapers particularly featured large revivals or revivals in which it was clear to them that God was present.

Heather A. Haveman contended that magazines published in major centers in the United States like Boston and New York City “[emphasized] their products’ broad, universalistic (national or global) appeal.” She further argued that publications printed outside of these centers were “more likely to adopt localistic identities” to interested readers. However, the periodicals published by the Maine and Maritime Baptists demand a more nuanced assessment of identity. Zion’s Advocate, Eastern Baptist, Christian Messenger both needed to appeal to readers. Reader feedback was evaluated, and changes were made to the periodicals to retain and attract readership.

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Zion’s Advocate, Eastern Baptist, and Christian Messenger highlighted local Baptist organizations while publishing content about national and international Protestant institutions. The content of these periodicals suggest that Maine and Maritime Baptists viewed themselves as members of both local and more global communities. They identified as members of their neighborhood churches and raised money for efforts like domestic missionary associations. However, they also participated in a greater pan-Protestant movement whose influence reached out through organizations like the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions. The periodicals are essential to understand the way that Maine and Maritime Baptists regarded themselves and their role in the world, and how that position had evolved from their original identity as cross-border Baptists to global Christians.

Zion’s Advocate

Zion’s Advocate was the most successful Baptist newspaper of early nineteenth century Maine. The first volume was published on November 11, 1828, in Portland, Maine, by Rev. Adam Wilson and it continued in varied forms for a century. Wilson was well-respected by the Baptist community. He graduated from Bowdoin College in 1819 and joined the Baptist church in the area during his time at the college. He continued to study theology and served the Baptist churches in Wiscasset, Turner, and New Gloucester before deciding to publish the Zion’s Advocate.2

Wilson purchased the subscription list of the Waterville Intelligencer and sent the first number of the Zion’s Advocate to previous subscribers, asking them to return the Zion’s Advocate by mail if they did not wish to subscribe to the new newspaper. The periodical cost $2 per year, but there were various means through which readers could purchase the newspaper at a

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discounted price.\textsuperscript{3} The newspaper was distributed through the postal system and agents, the same means through which \textit{Waterville Intelligencer} and \textit{Maine Baptist Herald} had also been distributed.

Initially, nine \textit{Waterville Intelligencer} agents remained as agents of \textit{Zion's Advocate}. The first nine agents were based around central and Downeast Maine in Androscoggin, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Penobscot, and Washington counties. There was one agent per county, with the exception of Kennebec County which boasted two.

By early 1829, an additional thirty-six agents distributed the newspaper, for a total of forty-five agents. This number remained relatively consistent throughout the period under study. The agents represented all Maine counties, with the exception of Aroostook county. The largest cluster of agents was in Kennebec county where subscribers could find six total agents. This is unsurprising since Waterville College was based in Kennebec county. There were still significant numbers of agents in midcoast and Downeast Maine as well as along the Androscoggin River. The most notable difference between agents for \textit{Zion's Advocate} and for \textit{Waterville Intelligencer} was that the \textit{Zion's Advocate} had representatives in York and Oxford counties. This may have been because the newspaper was based in Portland, and it was therefore easier to distribute newspapers to southern and western Maine. The Oxford Baptist Association was also formed in 1828 and there were likely now representatives eager to engage with the broader Baptist community.\textsuperscript{4} Overall, the number of agents in each county was fairly even and \textit{Zion's Advocate} was available in more areas than its predecessors. This suggests a growing and more widespread Baptist print culture.

\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Zion's Advocate}, November 11, 1828, 1.
\textsuperscript{4} Henry S. Burrage, \textit{A History of the Baptists in Maine} (Portland, Maine: Marks Printing House, 1904), 190.
Like the agents of the previous newspapers, *Zion’s Advocate* agents’ connections to the Baptist denomination varied. There were fifteen ministers and two deacons listed on the agent list and the remainder were laypeople or interested readers. One of the most interesting names on the agent list is that of Simeon Milliken. Milliken lived in Mount Desert and was part of the revival in 1816 that led to the foundation of the Baptist Church of Mount Desert. He was a deacon for the Baptist Church of Mount Desert and served as a representative of his church at the Eastern Maine Baptist Association annual meeting.\(^5\) He was also a local schoolteacher where he often led his students in prayer and was a fervent supporter of Sabbath schools and temperance.\(^6\) He kept a journal where he frequently wrote about the revivals that took place on Mount Desert Island in the early nineteenth century. He became a newspaper agent because he believed that Mount Desert was one of the “places where new agents of the *Advocate* are needed and desired.”\(^7\) He was deeply in tune with the Baptist community and the ways in which print could impact it. His memoir was eventually published by Rebekah Pinkham, another staunch supporter of the Baptist denomination and religious print.

William Cox of Norway, Maine, is another notable name. Cox was storekeeper and a strong proponent of his local Baptist Church. He served as a representative at the Oxford Baptist Association fifteen times. He reportedly, after hearing a lecture on temperance, “poured all the liquor in his store into the street and never sold any afterward.”\(^8\) His connection to the Baptist community was as an active layperson.

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\(^7\) *Zion’s Advocate*, January 15, 1829, 39.

\(^8\) *Minutes of the Oxford Baptist Association*, 1840-1844; and, John Hosmer Cox, *New England Cox Families* (Lexington, Massachusetts: Published by Author, 1898).
Nearly a third of the agents were also ministers. Religious leaders overall were more vocal about their support of the *Zion’s Advocate* than they were of its predecessors. The Maine Baptist Convention remarked in 1829 that the periodical had “a very salutary influence” and “appears to be growing increasingly interesting.” They continued to recommend the paper at their annual meeting the following year. It is unclear whether Maine Baptist leaders felt *Zion’s Advocate* better represented Baptist interests or if they feared that it would fail without promotion. They had never vocally recommended the *Waterville Intelligencer* or *Maine Baptist Herald*. Nevertheless, *Zion’s Advocate* benefited from initial support from Maine Baptist leaders.

There was dedicated support from Baptist laypeople. The Penobscot Baptist Association at their sixth annual meeting voted to recommend *Zion’s Advocate* to all the churches and parishioners in their network. They reported that every member of the Baptist Church in Levant had read the periodical at least once, and they hoped that other churches would follow suit. The Maine Baptist Convention trumpeted this accomplishment in 1830: “We should rejoice, could it be said of every Baptist Church in the State, as it may in truth be said of the Church in Levant—every member has the opportunity of reading the *Advocate*.”

**Content of the *Zion’s Advocate***

The *Zion’s Advocate* was similar to *Waterville Intelligencer* and *Maine Baptist Herald* as it contained a mixture of religious and secular content within its four pages. The most noteworthy feature of the newspapers was its concentration on Maine Baptist activities. Maine Baptist updates were absent in previous Maine Baptist periodicals. However, nearly every number of *Zion’s Advocate* featured some news about the Maine Baptists.

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11 *Minutes of the Baptist Convention of Maine, Held in North-Yarmouth, Oct. 5, 6, & 7, 1830* (Portland, Maine: Day & Fraser...Exchange Street, 1830, 1903).
This particular focus was evident from the first newspaper number. This number included a letter from Rev. Edward Payson, the minister of the Baptist Church in Portland, notices from both the Bowdoinham and Cumberland Associations, a short blurb about the number of Baptist churches and associations in Maine, an account of a Sabbath School in Portland, and news about revivals in Freeport and Yarmouth. Payson described the origins of his church and noted the frequency it had church conferences, prayer meetings, and Sabbath School. The news about the revivals noted that there was also an increase in “missionary spirit” and that “in addition to our male and female missionary societies, we have lately formed our Sabbath School, consisting of ninety-eight scholars and twelve teachers into a Tract Society, raise twelve dollars, one half to publish Tracts in the Burman language.”

Zion’s Advocate was an important Maine Baptist forum of discussion. The Maine Baptist Herald particularly featured occasional letters from other Maine Baptists. Nevertheless, there were more Maine Baptists letters in the Zion’s Advocate than in previous newspapers. The most frequent topics were abolition and temperance.

Most numbers featured some kind of article or update about temperance. Many of these articles were written by members of local temperance societies and thus included a report on how their society was founded, their constitutions, and the ways in which their organization impacted their local community. One letter from Machiasport noted that the formation of their society inspired a “unanimous vote” in which “no license should be granted for retailing spirituous liquors in the town of Machias Port the ensuing year.” The articles in Zion’s Advocate overwhelmingly supported temperance and this discussion carried over into the Maine Baptist association annual meetings. For example, the Penobscot Baptist Association recommend

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12 Zion’s Advocate, November 11, 1828.
13 Zion’s Advocate, October 8, 1829.
in 1831, “measures in operation for the suppression of Intemperance, and cordially recommend to our Churches ENTIRE ABSTINENCE from ardent spirits.”

_Zion’s Advocate_ also printed articles that supported the abolition of slavery. The Bluehill Baptist Church requested that their minister preach on slavery and that his sermon be printed in religious newspapers. _Zion’s Advocate_ consequently printed Rev. James Gillpatricks’ sermon on the evils and unchristian nature of slavery. Abolition was a topic that interested readers but was not one that was mentioned in association minutes until the mid-1830s. The Bowdoinham Association was the first association to openly oppose slavery in their printed association minutes but did not do so until 1836.

The Maine Baptist associations may have been reluctant to denounce slavery as some of their members may have benefitted monetarily from it. Slavery was illegal in Maine, but Mainers could support the institution through shipping and trade. Simeon Milliken of Mount Desert wrote an enthusiastic letter to the _Liberator_ in 1839. He wrote that he wished to “say to my brethren, if they gather money in this way, they will be likely to put it into bags with holes.” Regardless of the associations’ motivations, religious print was the primary form of asynchronous communication in which the Maine Baptists could discuss slavery.

Debates about foreign missions largely dissipated by the end of the 1820s and beginning of the 1830s. The articles in _Zion’s Advocate_ promoted foreign missions and letters to the editor theorized ways in which the gospel could be further shared. One letter suggested the creation of a non-denominational foreign missionary society in the state to “come up to the help of the Lord in

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14 Minutes of the Sixth Anniversary of the Penobscot Association; Held at the Baptist Meeting-House in Charlestown September 14 & 15th, 1831 (Bangor, Maine: Burton & Carter, Printers, 1831).
15 _Zion’s Advocate_, February 19, 1829.
16 Minutes of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Bowdoinham Association Holden at Winthrop, Wednesday and Thursday, September 28th, 29th, 1836 (Winthrop, Maine: William Noyes, Printer, 1836).
this thing.”\textsuperscript{18} The editor responded to this letter and stated that such a society would be incredibly beneficial. Foreign missions were now a strong value of the Maine Baptists and the newspaper facilitated ways in which this identity could be strengthened.

\textit{Zion’s Advocate} was a significant forum for female laypeople. One early number featured a letter entitled “Sketches of 1828, by a Female, the Wife of a Baptist Preacher.” The writer explained the dedication of the Baptist churches in eastern Maine to the missionary movement. The writer noted that when members of the Eastern Maine Association “took hold of the bible cause, there was more a spirit of perseverance and energy than had been discoverable before; and the prospect is; that the counties of Hancock and Washington will ere long have a good supply of the word of God.”\textsuperscript{19} Rebekah Pinkham of Sedgwick was also a frequent contributor to periodicals such as the \textit{Zion’s Advocate}. One of her letters was an impassioned statement in favor of the abolition of slavery. Her letter included her newfound knowledge about the horrors of slavery and a plea to readers to support abolition. Her letter noted “Ah! my Christian friends, can we not pray more that God would cause his people to break their bondage, and let the captive go free… remember to ask God to have compassion on the poor Africans who are enslaved in a Christian land.”\textsuperscript{20}

\textit{Zion’s Advocate} also highlighted Baptists throughout the world. Their religious intelligence section often incorporated updates from Baptists from other parts of the United States. This particular section on September 10, 1829, also mentioned a Presbyterian meeting that took place in Ohio, the formation of a utopian community in New Harmony, Indiana, an update about a school for young women in Calcutta, the ordination of a minister in Salem, Massachusetts, the appointment of a minister in Kentucky, and announcement about a meeting of

\textsuperscript{18} \textit{Zion’s Advocate}, January 12, 1832.
\textsuperscript{19} “Sketches of 1828, by a Female, the Wife of a Baptist Preacher,” \textit{Zion’s Advocate}, January 22, 1829, 41.
\textsuperscript{20} \textit{Zion’s Advocate}, June 1832, 127-8.
the Boston Baptist Association. There continued to be updates and letters from various voluntary societies, regardless of their associated denomination as well. For example, the April 30, 1829, number of the newspaper featured a lengthy letter from the Female Bible Society of Portland. This article included an update about their constitution, treasury, the activities and success of the voluntary society, and their reasoning behind their actions. The author noted, “we have cause for gratitude, that such ample means have been afforded to us, to supply the destitute, with the inestimable treasure, the Word of God, which is ‘able to make them wise unto salvation.”

Revivals remained a symbol of God’s favor and were this accordingly recorded in Zion’s Advocate. One particularly fascinating revival occurred in Phippsburg, Georgetown, and Woolwich. The revival was prompted by the death of a Baptist layperson referred to as “Mrs. Drummond.” Drummond reportedly sang hymns very loudly prior to her death. The author reported, “So rapturous was her exit, that a smile remained upon her face, after her spirit had fled. Several, who had previously thought but little upon the subject of religion, now became convinced of its reality and importance.” Other revivals may not have been nearly as spectacular as the one inspired by Drummond, but they still demonstrated to the Baptists that their theology and actions were in accordance with God’s will.

One of the most interesting aspects of the Zion’s Advocate was the recurrent publication of letters to the editor. Maine Baptist Herald and Waterville Intelligencer also included some letters to the editor, but these were infrequent and did not typically include multiple perspectives. For example, one writer argued that Christian should be unconcerned about the ways they dressed and more focused on piety. A follow-up letter from another writer argued that piety was

21 Zion’s Advocate, September 10, 1829, 174.
23 “Revivals,” Zion’s Advocate, April 9, 1829, 87.
important, but that Christian should not dress in a way that brought attention to their physical appearance. Another fascinating debate occurred in 1833. One writer argued that ministers demanded too much pay and sought “imaginary wants.” The writer insisted that ministers were attempting to live a life with far too many luxury goods. Another writer quickly defended the ministers who sought more pay in an article published two weeks later. This author contended that ministers were paid too little and that most chose to remain with their congregations “in poverty, rather than leave them destitute for a better support in the service of the convention.”

*Zion’s Advocate* was a significant medium through which Maine Baptists could discuss their priorities and ultimately shape their identity.

**Eastern Baptist**

The ability of *Zion’s Advocate* to fully convey the identity of the Maine Baptists was challenged by the publication of the *Eastern Baptist*. The origins of the *Eastern Baptist* are rather fuzzy. Some works that address Maine press or religious history claim that the newspaper was first published in 1835, while others argue it began publication in 1836. Unfortunately, the earliest copies of the newspaper are no longer available and therefore its original publication date and the original intentions of its editors cannot be confirmed.

Maine Historian Henry Burrage insisted a small minority of Baptist ministers, led by Rev. David Nutter, were concerned that the *Zion’s Advocate* leaned toward Arminianism and did not always overtly support abolition. They consequently formed their own newspaper that was more Calvinistic and strongly championed abolition. Nutter himself was very vague in his own writings about the origins and success of the *Eastern Baptist*. He claimed that the *Eastern Baptist* was formed by those who wanted to revive the abandoned *Maine Baptist Herald*. He did not

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24 *Zion’s Advocate*, April 1829.
25 *Zion’s Advocate*, December 4, 1833, December 18, 1833.
state why anyone would want to revive the paper or mention any failings with \textit{Zion's Advocate}. He instead noted, “A paper had been in published in Brunswick called the ‘Baptist Herald,’ the first paper published in the State for our denomination, it had by some means fallen through, and many of the old Baptists wanted it revived.”

The origins of the \textit{Eastern Baptist} may be murky because the likely true story behind its formation revealed petty disagreements between Maine Baptist leaders. Maine Baptist ministers were called to a meeting in 1835 to resolve their disputes.\footnote{Zion’s Advocate, February 6, 1835.} The main issue within the denomination was that there were many churches without settled ministers, but these churches demanded that their ministers were educated. Uneducated ministers struggled to find permanent positions and were “left to shirk for themselves as quite too unfashionable, out of date, and as not coming up to the popular notion of the age.”\footnote{The Christian Intelligencer and Eastern Chronicle, April 24, 1835.} The older generation of ministers further claimed that the newer generation were prideful and had taken control over the various leadership positions within the denomination. The meeting did not resolve much other than to attempt to encourage churches to accept older, uneducated preachers as their settled ministers.

Nutter was on the committee that was instructed to prepare an address to the denomination, and it is unsurprising that he took this stance. He had complained in a series of \textit{Maine Baptist Herald} letters about the faults of foreign missions.\footnote{See Chapter Four.} One of his main concerns was that those who were in power tended to be more educated and that these individuals retained authority over an extended period of time. Nutter had not received a formal education and it appears he may have resented those who believed that their education made them superior.\footnote{David Nutter, “Reminiscences of the Past, 1815-1855,” Volume II.}
Zion’s Advocate published frequent updates about Waterville College. Readers could browse through articles about commencement ceremonies and the reports of the board of trustees. Zion’s Advocate printed articles about other Baptist theological institutions such as Columbian College in Washington, D.C. as well. Wilson was clearly supportive of ministerial education.

Was the Eastern Baptist more Calvinistic and supportive of abolition than Zion’s Advocate? No. Both newspapers published very similar content. As noted above, there were several articles in the Zion’s Advocate that called for the abolition of slavery. They both printed theological treatises, articles about the Maine Baptists and their various organizations, updates about other Protestant denominations, stories of revivals, and secular news. Their religious articles expressed the same theology, and it is difficult to imagine that most readers would have argued that the newspapers were dissimilar.

The only significant difference between Zion’s Advocate and Eastern Baptist was the number and profession of the newspapers’ agents. Eastern Baptist listed 128 agents in 1837. The overall geographic distribution and main base of supporters was similar to the Zion’s Advocate. However, nearly forty percent of these agents were either ministers or deacons. This percentage was much higher than it had been for other Maine Baptist newspapers, including Zion’s Advocate. It is also interesting to note that several towns listed multiple agents and at least one of those agents was typically a minister. It is likely that this minister had a strong influence over his congregants.30

The ministers also tended to be part of an older generation. One example is Elder Henry Kendall of Topsham, Maine, who preached throughout the state and the Canadian Maritimes since 1801. Kendall served as a missionary for the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society and

30 Eastern Baptist, November 15, 1837.
attended the Bowdoinham and Cumberland Associations as a representative of his church throughout the 1810s and 1820s. Kendall was also sympathetic to Joseph Griffin when Griffin lost his press. Kendall did not mention any of the Maine Baptist publications in his autobiography, but nevertheless appears to have been sympathetic to both Griffin and Nutter.

The majority of Maine Baptists endorsed both publications. They were unconcerned by the supposed subtleties that had led to the creation of the *Eastern Baptist*. Bowdoinham Association approved of both publications in 1836. They remarked, “your committee recommend to your continued patronage, *Zion's Advocate*, published at Portland… Your committee are also favorably impressed with the present character and editorship of the *Eastern Baptist*, published at Brunswick.” They argued that both were “designed to promote the cause of morale and religion.”

The two papers eventually combined into the *Zion’s Advocate and Eastern Baptist* in 1839. Nutter claimed that the papers merged when the remaining editors moved away, while Burrage stated that financial issues and late subscriptions caused the merger. The final numbers of the newspapers are missing so we may never truly know why the two papers merged. However, the merger overall was peaceful and the content and purpose of the *Zion’s Advocate* was not impacted by the merger. The Maine Baptist Convention remarked in 1840 the newspaper was a “very valuable religious paper, which ought to be taken by every Baptist family

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32 See Chapter Four.
33 Henry Kendall, Autobiography of Elder Henry Kendall With an Introduction (Portland, Maine: Published by the Author, 1853).
34 Minutes of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Bowdoinham Association Holden at Winthrop, Wednesday and Thursday, September 28th, 29th, 1836 (Winthrop, Maine: William Noyes, Printer, 1836), 4.
35 Ibid.
in Maine.” The only major change that occurred was the inclusion of an “Anti-Slavery department” in the paper in 1840. This section was added shortly after a Maine Anti-Slavery Convention meeting that same year.

Christian Messenger and Repository of Religious, Political, and General Intelligence for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick

Maritime Baptists arrived at their association meeting in 1835 with new plans to engage readers and further spread their influence. They decided to forego the Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in favor of a weekly newspaper. This change had been requested by churches and individuals in the association. Its leaders argued that “a Newspaper, because it admits a greater variety of subjects, and, while still religious, may be of a livelier character, is more popular, and is better suited to a young country.” The newspaper was to contain religious and missionary intelligence as well as commercial and scientific news. Baptists published the newspaper and featured their own updates, but there was also more information about other denominations than had previously been included in the Magazine. It was hoped that the newspaper would be published so frequently that any delay in the arrival of issues would be inconsequential.

It was particularly important to the Maritime Baptists that this newspaper, although supported by Baptists, was non-denominational. The editors of the Christian Messenger insisted they desired the newspaper to be “the medium of communication for the religious sentiments and feelings of every sincere and sober minded Christian, of whatsoever name or sect he may be.”

They believed that a more general Christian newspaper would lead to the “increase of vital

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39 Ibid.
religion.” Maritime Baptists therefore looked to engage with the greater pan-Protestant community more deeply.

A committee was formed to determine whether a newspaper would be a wise investment and returned in 1836 to explain their full support for such a publication. The *Christian Messenger, and Repository of Religious, Political, and General Intelligence for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick* began publication in 1837. Maritime associations “warmly” recommended the newspaper to the public as it was “calculated to spread abroad and maintain the principles of Gospel truth.” They further noted that the newspaper needed the support of individuals and churches that were part of the associations.

John Ferguson and J.W. Nutting continued to edit the newspaper and thus it was printed in Halifax like its predecessor. The newspaper remained under the overall authority of the missionary society which financially support and promoted it. The *Christian Messenger* continued to be published until it merged with the St. John-based periodical the *Christian Visitor* in 1851. The periodical has undergone several name changes and mergers over time but is still published today as the *Atlantic Baptist Magazine*.

Maritime associations were excited about the publication of this pioneering newspaper in the region, but there was a certain amount of trepidation. They implemented several fail-safes should the *Christian Messenger* fail. Any losses from the newspaper were to be charged to the Missionary Society. However, it requested that “a number of persons be procured to pledge themselves to the Board the Sum of £5 each for two years, from the first day of January next-

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41 Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Yarmouth, Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, 26th, 27th & 28th June, 1837 Together with their Circular Letter, Missionary Notices, Remarks, &c., &c. (Halifax, Nova Scotia: James Spike- Office, Granville Street, 1837).
guarantee the sum of no less than £250, if required, for the support of the paper.”42 The publishers were asked to provide an annual financial report, and the newspaper would be discontinued if it did not receive enough money to sustain it that year. Furthermore,

members of the Churches, and all others, in this and the Sister Province, who are in arrears, as Subscribers to the *Nova-Scotia and New-Brunswick Baptist Missionary Magazine*, [should] be urgently requested to pay up such arrears to the respective Agents with as little delay as possible.43

The Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Associations were unafraid to seek out those who were in arrears. The New Brunswick Baptist Association specifically requested in 1844 that churches, “pursue the most effective means, which in their judgment, shall be requisite to obtain the large amounts still remaining for the publication.”44 The newspaper also now incorporated advertisements. Maritime Baptists did not comment upon this change, but the advertisements doubtlessly provided a little more cashflow than had been available to the *Magazine*.

There were thirty-five agents in 1837 or half the number of agents listed for the *Magazine* the previous year. Ten of these agents were ministers and one was a deacon. Some of the agents who distributed the *Magazine* also distributed the *Christian Messenger*, including Abraham Newcombe of Stewiacke, Nova Scotia.

The most notable features of the agent list were the high percentage of ministers acting as agents, the small number of New Brunswick, Cape Breton Island, and Prince Edward Island agents, and the concentration of agents along the western coast of Peninsular Nova Scotia. There were only four agents in New Brunswick, whereas there had been eighteen agents for the *Magazine*. There were no agents listed for Cape Breton Island and Prince Edward Island. The

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42 *Minutes of the Nova-Scotia Baptist Association Held at Yarmouth, Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday, 26th, 27th & 28th June, 1837*, 11.

43 Ibid.

44 *Minutes of the Baptist Association, held at Sackville, County of Westmorland, in the province of New Brunswick, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, the 8th, 9th, and 10th July 1844* (Fredericton, New Brunswick: James P.A. Phillips, 1844), 9-10.
overall lower number of agents, high number of ministers, and fewer agents outside of peninsular Nova Scotia can likely be accounted for the newness of the newspaper. The *Christian Messenger* was largely the brainchild of the Nova Scotia Baptists, and it may have taken awhile for news about the newspaper to spread. This is evident the following year in which sixty-four agents were listed from the newspaper, including nineteen in New Brunswick and one agent on Prince Edward Island.\(^45\) However, the geographic distribution of the agents in 1837 and 1838 does reveal that western Nova Scotia remained the heart of the Baptist denomination in the late 1830s.

Readers generally well received the newspaper. One article from an anonymous “plain man” remarked that the paper was successful in the rural areas. He stated, “I am happy to inform you that the *Christian Messenger* has already become a favorite amongst us country people. Just as soon as the stage arrives at our villages, and the mail is opened, you will hear many a person enquiring for the *Christian Messenger.*”\(^46\) The author’s only criticism was that the editors did not always follow-up with additional articles when they promised to do so, but the author did not further elaborate.

*Christian Messenger* featured articles and information that were similar to Maine Baptist newspaper content. There were articles on the relevant topics of the day such as temperance. The newspaper published treatises that discouraged drunkenness and promoted temperance as well as letters from temperance societies in the province. These society letters are particularly interesting as they reveal the motivations of the laypeople who joined the societies. Like the Maine Baptists, the newspaper indicates that the Maritime Baptists largely supported temperance. One short article from the Halifax Temperance Society noted that “many names were added to the list, and

\(^{45}\) *Christian Messenger & Repository of Religious, Political & General Intelligence for Nova Scotia & New Brunswick*, January 12, 1838, 16.

great expectations are entertained of the revivals and extension of the cause in this place.”

The Lunenburg Temperance Society reported that their efforts had been successful as “ardent spirits are not so much in use, either as stimulants to labor, or in social circle of friends and acquaintances, as they were prior to the formation of Temperance Societies.” Maritime Baptist laypeople valued temperance as a crucial part of their evolving identity and used the newspaper to share the ways in which their actions progressed.

The newspaper would be remiss if it did not publish news about revivals and the ways in which the gospel spread throughout the Maritimes. One especially large revival occurred in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia, in the summer of 1837. A total of forty-eight Baptists joined the two churches in Yarmouth. The author reported that a few of the new converts were “baptized the previous Sabbath, near the old Meeting-House, in the presence of about 1500 spectators.” The author celebrated the new additions but was also impressed by the ways in which the revival had attracted others. Another large revival took place in Tracadie, New Brunswick, in March 1838. The revival started when two women related their experiences and ended with nine new church members and twenty-five candidates for baptism. The author argued that this was “a day of great events- a day of God’s power amongst the inhabitants of the earth.” These revivals were a clear sign to Baptists that their beliefs and actions remained blessed.

*Christian Messenger* was distinguished from other contemporary newspapers by its lengthy articles from domestic missionaries. This focus is understandable as the newspaper was under the domestic missionary boards. These articles highlighted the influence of domestic

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missionaries upon those they visited and the spread of the Gospel in the Maritime provinces. One letter was from Rev. David Harris of Fredericton, New Brunswick, who journeyed to the “destitute shore” of western Nova Scotia in 1838. Harris’ ship at one point became caught in a storm and he was forced to shelter in Fisherman’s Harbor. Fisherman’s Harbor was not originally part of his journey. However, Harris argued that “it appeared to me that God had sent me to this harbor” as the entire neighborhood eventually listened to him preach.51

Domestic missionary letters and letters from missionary boards highlighted the continuing tension between domestic and foreign missions, and the priorities of Maritime Baptist leaders and laypeople. Maritime Baptist leaders viewed these kinds of letters as necessary due to the difficulty in raising money for domestic missions. Domestic missions previously enjoyed fairly widespread support. The Nova Scotia Baptist Association remarked in 1831 that it “is in a very flourishing state, and every year, churches, and the fruits of the labors of its missionaries are added to our association.” However, the interests of the Maritime Baptist laypeople shifted. As previously noted, they were increasingly invested in foreign missions and other benevolent institutions. This is partly demonstrated through donation records. A letter from the Nova Scotia Baptist Board of Domestic Missions criticized churches and associations for not “individually [sparing] a few dollars, shillings, or even pence, to save our dying fellow men.”52 The Board further noted that many of the churches in Nova Scotia were large and therefore had no excuse for not contributing to domestic missions. This plea from the Nova Scotia Baptist Board of Domestic Missions contrasted with the donations to the American Baptist Board of Foreign

51 Christian Messenger & Repository of Religious, Political & General Intelligence for Nova Scotia & New Brunswick, February 24, 1837, 60.
Missions that same year. Maritime Baptists donated $215.58 to foreign missions in 1838.\textsuperscript{53} Some of these donations were from individuals, but others were from churches with “scores of members” including the Baptist churches in Horton, Livermore, Wilmot, and Yarmouth.

These letters contrasted with the other content within the newspaper. The newspaper published articles about English and American missionaries and letters from Maritime foreign missionary societies. For example, one number featured a lengthy letter from the Female Burman Mission Society. The society contended that they were cheered by the news they received from the foreign missionaries and that “while the mighty Hand of God is at work for his own cause and glory, the Society are diligently laboring in the use of means likewise, for God works by means.”\textsuperscript{54} This Society undoubtedly viewed their work as in accordance with God’s will.

Another letter from an anonymous author lamented that Maritime Protestants generally had done little to “spread the conquests of Christ’s kingdom over lands hitherto enveloped in heathen gloom.”\textsuperscript{55} Most Maritime Baptists desired to spread God’s kingdom, but the newspaper demonstrated that the Maritime Baptist leaders and laypeople disagreed on the best way to accomplish this goal.

The newspaper also published several articles about Horton Academy and the Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society. These articles varied from the articles in the Zion’s Advocate about Waterville College. Zion’s Advocate printed articles about activities at the school, such as commencement. The Christian Messenger articles usually addressed fundraising, even if their article incorporated some information about the activities of the school. Maritime Baptist leaders relied upon the newspaper to promote the school. The articles hint that while Maritime Baptists

\textsuperscript{53} The Baptist Missionary Magazine, 1838, 96, 263.
\textsuperscript{54} Christian Messenger & Repository of Religious, Political & General Intelligence for Nova Scotia & New Brunswick, April 28, 1837, 135.
\textsuperscript{55} Christian Messenger and Repository of Religious, Political, and General Intelligence for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, January 13, 1837, 10.
likely supported Horton Academy, the school struggled financially. One article commented that “the advantages of education are now so sensibly felt and appreciated, that we deem it unnecessary to offer any remarks upon a subject so well understood.”

However, this same article also stated that the school was £1,600 in debt. Maritime Baptists reportedly pledged subscriptions to help with this debt, but some of these promises were never fulfilled. A letter from the Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society in 1838 bemoaned that “a large balance is yet to be collected.”

Like the Magazine, the Christian Messenger continued revealing a tension between the priorities of the Maritime Baptist leaders and laypeople. Maritime Baptist leaders prioritized domestic missions and Horton Academy, while laypeople donated large sums of money and wrote passionately about foreign missions and other benevolent causes. Maritime Baptist identity was disputed, and it was through asynchronous communication where this discussion played out.

Conclusion

Maine and Maritime Baptists increasingly viewed themselves as members of global, pan-Protestant community. Laypeople valued foreign missions and other movements that expanded God’s Kingdom or increased morality. They used print to share news about the societies they formed to support these causes and their overall beliefs. However, these perspectives were not always shared by the denomination’s leadership. Maine Baptist leaders battled against growing support for ministerial education and the rejection of the uneducated, while Maritime Baptist leaders sought financial support for domestic missions and local educational institutions.

Asynchronous communication through newspapers was where these issues could be debated. Both laypeople and leaders alike turned to print to offer their perspective and promote the values they prioritized. Print provided a forum where the Maine and Maritime Baptists could mold their identity and sense of community.
CONCLUSION

“THE GREATEST POWER OF THE PRESS ARISES FROM ITS CAPABILITY TO PROPAGATE OR OPPOSE THE TRUTH OF GOD”

Asynchronous communication fostered the transformation of the Maine and Maritime Baptist identity from cross-border to global between 1770 and 1840. The isolated and fledgling Northeastern Borderlands communities of Baptists initially turned to one another for support. Missionaries and association messengers from both Maine and the Maritimes frequently worked together to baptize new converts, set-up churches, and minister to laypeople between the 1770s and early 1810s. This relationship was fostered and deepened by the publication of association minutes and early missionary magazines.¹

Individuals like Isaac Case of Readfield, Maine, and Edward Manning of Cornwallis, Nova Scotia, illustrate this relationship as well as the importance of print to its growth and maintenance. Case was a well-respected minister, leader of the Bowdoinham Association during its early days in the 1790s, a frequent messenger to the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Associations, and a missionary for both the Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Society and Maine Baptist Missionary Society. He distributed printed annual reports of his own association as well as others in Maine and the Maritimes. His missionary journeys were well-documented in periodicals like the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine* and *Maine Baptist Missionary Register*. He visited communities in both Maine and the Maritimes and often collaborated with other ministers from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. Case’s impact across the region was immense. He reportedly helped to found 350 churches and baptized 1,000 individuals.² He enjoyed a long life and witnessed the evolution of the Baptist denominations in the Northeastern

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¹ Title quote from *Christian Messenger and Repository of Religious, Political, and General Intelligence for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick*, January 27, 1837, 29.
Borderlands from its modest origins in the 1770s to enjoy growth and stability in the first half of the nineteenth century.³

Edward Manning was an ardent supporter of Henry Alline in the 1770s and was swept up by New Dispensationalism in the late-eighteenth century. He eventually turned away from its evangelical intensity and instead focused on uniting Maritime New Lights in the 1790s and 1800s under a theology of full immersion baptism and closed communion. Similar to Case, Manning was a founding member of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick Baptist Association, messenger to Maine Baptist associations, and a missionary whose journeys were published in the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*.⁴ Manning also lived a long life and was a major figure in the growth of the Maritime Baptist denomination.

Case and Manning demonstrate the importance of missionary efforts that united the borderlands and the close collaboration between Maine and Maritime Baptists. Print also linked these communities and helped forge a regional Baptist identity that prioritized domestic and cross-border missions, fought to defend their theology, argued over the best ways to structure their churches and interpret scripture, and encouraged regional partnerships for survival. Association annual reports informed readers about the successes and tribulations of churches within an association, highlighted local interests and concerns, and underscored relationships within and outside the association. Periodicals functioned in a comparable manner and included news from North American Baptists. Baptists believed both were needed to unite their dispersed denomination that departed from the established Congregational churches of Massachusetts and the Anglican one of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

³ Case died on November 3, 1852, at the age of 91.
⁴ See Barry Moody, “From Itinerant to Pastor: The Case of Edward Manning (1767-1851),” *Papers of the Canadian Society of Church History* (1981), 1-25.
This intertwined relationship began to change during the War of 1812. Maine and Maritime Baptists were unable to formally communicate with one another during the war. There was no exchange of associational messengers and annual reports and references to the Maritime Baptists are absent from Baptist periodicals at the time. As a result, Maine and Maritime Baptists turned to other commitments. Maritime Baptists largely concentrated on their individual churches and domestic missionary efforts. Maine Baptists joined the growing foreign missionary effort, spurred by the creation of the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions in 1814. Borderlands Baptists rejoiced at the resumption of communication after the war, but their relationship was altered by the wartime cessation.

Maine Baptists experienced phenomenal growth after the war. Their denomination was no longer scattered and isolated but was united through a rich network of associations and voluntary societies whose purposes aligned with the goals of pan-Protestant benevolence. They prioritized raising money and supplies for foreign and domestic missionaries, Sabbath School, temperance, Bible and tract, ministerial education, and, eventually, abolition societies. These varied group were usually auxiliaries to a growing number of national organizations like the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, American and Foreign Tract and Bible Society, and American Sunday School Union. Some of these organizations were led by Baptists, while others enjoyed pan-Protestant support.

However, not all Maine Baptists embraced foreign missions, which were among several issues discussed and debated throughout the 1820s as the changing identity of Maine Baptists was contested and molded through print. The Waterville Intelligencer, a Maine Baptist newspaper, printed articles about temperance and the American Colonization Society. The newspaper itself did not share much local information about Maine Baptists, but the topics it
examined were frequently discussed in the Maine Baptist associations. The *Maine Baptist Herald*, a newspaper based in Brunswick, Maine, printed several letters from Maine Baptists. The most controversial articles criticized foreign mission societies. Maine Baptists angrily responded to these articles, and the *Maine Baptist Herald* ceased printing shortly thereafter. Both newspapers printed a mixture of religious and secular news to appeal to a variety of readers. However, these newspapers failed to report on the activities of the Maine Baptists and how they participated in the pan-Protestant community. Neither the *Waterville Intelligencer* nor *Maine Baptist Herald* was in print by the 1820s, but both offered important spaces for Maine Baptists to form and evaluate their identity during their tenures.

Maritime Baptists were unable to engage with increasingly global-oriented benevolent organizations until the mid-1820s due to limited financial means. Maritime Baptists encountered resistance from the Church of England in the early-nineteenth century. Maine Baptists certainly faced some opposition from Congregationalists, but these groups did not have the same governmental support as the Anglican church in the Maritimes, especially after Maine gained statehood in 1820 and ended preferential treatment for Congregationalism. In the 1820s and 1830s, Maine Baptists largely worked toward shared benevolent goals with other US Protestants. Maritime Baptists, meanwhile, continued to concentrate on domestic missions until they had the local institutional stability and money to invest elsewhere. They sent letters about the success of their domestic missions and vibrant revivals to periodicals like the *Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, which was tellingly retitled as the *American Baptist Magazine*, after 1817.

Maritime Baptists began to contribute to foreign mission societies, religious education, and other benevolent movements in the mid-1820s and also issued their first periodical, *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick* in 1827. Like the Maine
Baptists, Maritime Baptist identity was somewhat disputed. Maritime Baptist leaders emphasized the continued need for domestic missions, while laypeople increasingly invested in foreign missions. Both leader and laypeople sent articles to the Magazine that expressed their concerns and interests in ways that explained the positions that they believed they held in the greater, pan-Protestant community.

Print remained a crucial medium of discussion throughout the late 1820s and into the 1830s. Zion’s Advocate, a newspaper based in Portland, Maine, particularly spotlighted the contributions of Maine Baptists and their various voluntary societies and also shared letters it received from readers. These readers frequently responded to one another and debated topics that were meaningful to the denomination. It would be challenged by the publication of the Eastern Baptist in Brunswick, Maine, in the mid-1830s. The new newspaper was formed largely by ministers who felt isolated from the denomination. The Eastern Baptist claimed it was more Calvinistic and supportive of abolition in its editorial letters, but there is little evidence in its other articles to support these claims. It ultimately printed nearly identical content to Zion’s Advocate, and the two newspapers merged in 1839. Nevertheless, the Eastern Baptist demonstrated that Baptists immensely valued print as a vehicle for community expression and identity formation.

The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick suffered from financial setbacks in the mid-1830s. Maritime Baptists turned to a weekly newspaper and began publication of the Christian Messenger and Repository of Religious, Political, and General Intelligence for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in 1837. The newspaper featured both religious and secular news, but also remained a space through which Maritime Baptist leaders and laypeople shared their values. Maritime Baptist leaders continued to promote domestic missions
and laypeople continued to form societies, donate money, and write enthusiastic letters about their benevolent work. One of the perennial topics in Maine and Maritime Baptist periodicals no matter the time period were revivals, causes for rejoicing regardless of where they occurred or what denomination benefitted. They were a sign that Baptist individuals, churches, and the denomination as a whole were behaving according to God’s will. Revivals demonstrated God’s blessing and illustrated the spread of Protestant theology.

Female Baptists especially embraced the growing pan-Protestant community through their participation in benevolent societies and in print. Women Baptists occasionally attended associations, but their voices were largely absent from printed association meeting notes. Periodicals not only shared reports from the societies they formed, but also individual letters from Baptist women. Eliza Ann Chipman was actively engaged in benevolent societies through her church in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia. She taught Sabbath School and participated in the local mite society. She also felt emotionally connected to missionaries abroad and remarked upon their journeys and sacrifices. Some of her contributions through these voluntary societies were recorded in Maritime publications. Rebekah Pinkham of Sedgwick, Maine, was similarly invested in various benevolent causes such as foreign missions and education, and she used publications to express her commitments and to call others to act. She published in both the *American Baptist Magazine* and *Zion’s Advocate*. Pinkham’s *Narrative of the Life of Miss Lucy Cole* and *Memoir of Simeon J. Milliken, esq., of Mount Desert, Maine* were both published by

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6 E.W. Garrison, *Memoir of Mrs. Rebekah P. Pinkham, late consort of Rev. E. Pinkham, of Sedgwick, Me., containing an account of her conversion, interesting letters to her friends, her writings for the promotion of missionary objects, &c.* (Portland, Maine: Office of the Zion’s Advocate, 1840).
Boston-based Baptist printer James Loring. These works highlighted the lives of devout Baptists and the ways in which religious print inspired and bolstered their faith. Pinkham not only consumed Christian literature but actively engaged with the community through her work in voluntary societies and her published articles and books. Printed association meeting notes had generally linked together the Maine and Maritime Baptist Northeastern Borderlands before the War of 1812, but after the war publications and voluntary societies increasingly connected Baptist women to a broader and more global pan-Protestant community.

Isaac Case remained primarily focused on his missionary work during the nineteenth century. However, Edward Manning was more in tune with the changes within the denomination. Manning’s church in Cornwallis was the first Maritime Baptist church to donate to the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions. Manning was an ardent supporter of religious education and a key founder of Horton Academy in modern-day Wolfville, Nova Scotia. He wrote several letters to the *Magazine* and later to *Christian Messenger* with updates about his church, revivals, visits to the United States, and domestic missions.

Manning remained at the forefront of changing Maritime Baptist developments even as he maintained unusually durable relationship with Maine Baptists that lasted into the mid-nineteenth century. The older generation of Baptists in the Northeastern Borderlands held more firm to cross-border norms of an earlier era that pre-dated the rise of benevolent organizations and religious newspapers. For example, Manning, the longstanding minister of the Cornwallis Baptist Church in Nova Scotia, attended the Maine Baptist Convention and other associations in the state in 1836. The *Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova-Scotia and New Brunswick* reported

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7 Rebekah P. Pinkham, eds. *Memoir of Simeon J. Milliken, esq., of Mount Desert, Maine* (Boston, Massachusetts: James Loring, 1836); and, *Narrative of the Life of Miss Lucy Cole of Sedgewick, Maine in which is exhibited the controlling power of Piety in Early Life* (Boston, Massachusetts: James Loring, 1830).

8 *The Massachusetts Baptist Missionary Magazine*, December 1816.
that he “enjoyed much pleasure in his Christian intercourse with the American ministers, of whom he speaks very highly; and had experienced much kindness from everybody.”

Individuals like Manning were respected and welcomed by the Maine Baptists. However, younger Baptist leaders did not have similar cross-border connections. The Nova Scotia Baptist Education Society sent Rev. Richard McLearn to the United States in 1836 and 1837 to raise money for Horton Academy. He spent the majority of his time along the New England coast, particularly in Maine. His journey was assiduously reported in *The Baptist Missionary Magazine of Nova-Scotia and New Brunswick* and later in the *Christian Messenger*. McLearn struggled to secure donations from Maine Baptists. For example, he noted, “in Bangor, where my expectations were raised very much, I received only sixty dollars.” McLearn was not shocked by the limited donations. He stated, “here the people are pressed so much for money by so many different Agents, for such a variety of objects, unless an Agent possesses more than a usual share of assurance, management and perseverance, he has little chance of success.” He believed it was easier to garner donations in Nova Scotia, because Baptists in that province were relatively new to mite societies, and therefore their pocketbooks had not yet been drained by the growing number of benevolent institutions. He argued that the success of Horton Academy would likely rely on donations from Maritime Baptists. McLearn’s journey was emotionally and physically draining, but he was not angry with Maine Baptists, whom he viewed as the epitome of Protestant benevolence.

Maine Baptists did not lack resources. They reportedly donated over $1,000 to the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions alone in 1836. This sum does not account for

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money donated to numerous additional Bible and tract, temperance, anti-slavery, Sabbath School, ministerial education, and other benevolent organizations.\textsuperscript{12} The Maine Baptist identity now centered upon a strong role in these larger pan-Protestant institutions. Their main focus was on the ways they could spread the gospel globally.

Even the association printed meeting notes came to highlight a more global identity. By 1840 there were no representatives from Maine at the Nova Scotia Baptist Association or New Brunswick Baptist Association and no Maritime representatives at Maine associations or the statewide Maine Baptist Convention. The associational guest lists instead featured representatives from large international benevolent organizations. There was often a representative from the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions at the individual Maine associations in the 1840s. The Bowdoinham Association noted in 1843 that they had been visited by “Bro. N. W. Williams, Agent for Foreign Missions.”\textsuperscript{13} Maine Baptist meeting notes were filled with updates and minutes about various local benevolent societies, and many of these institutions were auxiliary to the larger national organizations in the United States. For example, the Cumberland Baptist Association meetings included reports from the Cumberland Sunday School Union, auxiliary to American Sunday School Union, and the Cumberland Foreign Missionary society, auxiliary to the ABBFM. They were especially interested in sustaining their own foreign missionaries by the 1830s and 1840s and sent Rev. Ivory Clarke, originally of South Berwick, Maine, to Liberia in 1837.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12} The Baptist Missionary Magazine, 1836.

\textsuperscript{13} Minutes of the Fifty-Eighth Anniversary of the Bowdoinham Baptist Association Held With the Church in Bowdoinham Village, Wednesday and Thursday, September 25th & 26th, 1844 (Hallowell, Maine: Glazier, Masters, & Smith, 1844), 6.

\textsuperscript{14} James Strong and John McClintock, The Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1880); and, Twelfth Anniversary, Minutes of the Penobscot Association; Held in the First Baptist Meeting-House, Hampden, Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 20 and 21, 1837 (Belfast, Maine: F.P. Ingalls, Printers, 1837).
Maritime Baptists were visited by representatives from large benevolent organizations in the late 1830s and early 1840s as well. For example, Rev. Dr. Babcock of the American and Foreign Bible Society spoke at the 1843 Nova Scotia Baptist Association. The association quickly thereafter formed a committee to conduct any “business as may be connected with raising of funds for the support of the American & Foreign Bible Society” and to organize collections “to be taken in all the Churches throughout our Province.”\textsuperscript{15} They sent their own missionary, Richard Burpee of Saint George, New Brunswick, to join the American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions in 1845.\textsuperscript{16}

Religious print culture shaped Baptist identity formation in the Northeast Borderlands and evolved as newspapers became increasingly popular in the 1830s. Printed association notes and early missionary magazines were essential to Maine and Maritime Baptists between the 1790s and 1810s. Both provided spaces where Baptists could discuss theology and support one another, while missionary magazines emphasized the importance of domestic missions and highlighted the expansive community that could be produced from such efforts.

Newspapers also provided a unique space for laypeople. They sent letters directly to the newspapers to voice their interests, concerns, and viewpoints, and engaged with other Protestants on important topics of the day. Religious leaders also published numerous letters, but these intermingled with the contributions of laypeople. Local churches, societies, and individuals could be thoroughly heard in newspapers. This evolution of asynchronous communication ultimately led to a Baptist identity that connected to a global, pan-Protestant community by the 1840s.

\textsuperscript{15} Minutes of the Nova Scotia Baptist Association Held a Yarmouth on the 26th, 27th, and 28 of June 1843, Together with the Circular Letter, Missionary Notice, &c. (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Printed at the Christian Messenger Office, 1843).
Religious leaders were significant and could greatly impact their community but not as solitary figures. Popular religious print was a major force molding identity that was shaped by the rich engagement of laypeople.

**Recommended Further Study**

This study has demonstrated that religious print culture built a Baptist cross-border community in Maine and the Maritimes that after 1815 increasingly engaged a global Protestant vision. Printed association annual reports and both national and local periodicals were key to these developments. Much remains to be done to further explore how print culture shapes religious identity. First, it would be valuable to see if a similar model could be applied to other cross-border regions in North America and elsewhere. Magazine and newspaper production exploded in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries offering a larger range of primary sources. Some of these periodicals were short-lived but others enjoyed a long run and influence. How were they used to foster identity among other communities? How did that sense of community evolve over time? Second, there is little information on the editors and publishers of these materials. It can be difficult to ascertain the connection of publishers to religious denominations. There are an increasing number of works on the book marketplace and distribution. However, more studies of the ways that printers, editors, writers, and readers engaged with one another would lead to a deeper understanding of how printed material reflects the mutual engagement of publishers, writers, and readers with one another. This especially applies to religious print culture given the strong motivation to guide readers’ actions in much religious material. How much were editors and publishers beholden to their readers and did other genres of print operate differently? Last, there are an increasing number of studies on print culture in North America and studies focused on organizations like the American and Foreign Bible Society or American Tract Society. However, there is a need for more studies on the use of
periodicals and other literary sources by everyday people. How did the proliferation of religious print inform the self-understanding of laypeople? It would be particularly revealing to see more studies on the local and domestic impact of foreign missionaries and the ways in which their memoirs were read and shared. It would also be enlightening to trace the location and spread of revivals through print. This kind of study could highlight Baptist geographic and demographic changes and the ways in which Baptist communities evolved.

Print shaped identity and community building for Maine and Maritime Baptists. It was initially used to advance a trans-national community in the Northeastern Borderlands and later promoted integration in a larger pan-Protestant world. Print reflected the community that created, read, and used it to spread news, offer opinions, and engage in debate. Asynchronous communication could connect readers to people, institutions, and places who they would otherwise never meet or visit. Periodicals and other printed material provide rich and rewarding material to evaluate how authors, publishers, and readers interacted, engaged, and contributed to their local, regional, and global communities and merit further study.
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