

THOMAS BARTON'S FAMILY PRAYER BOOK

By WILLIAM FREDERIC WORNER

THE Rev. Thomas Barton was born in Ireland in 1730. He was, however, of English extraction, his ancestors having removed to Ireland during the Protectorate. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin; and emigrated to America shortly after his graduation. He taught in the Academy of Philadelphia (now the University of Pennsylvania) for several years before he received holy orders. Returning to England, he was ordained deacon and priest on January 26th, 1755, in St. Margaret's church, Westminster, by the Right Reverend Edmund Keene, D. D., Bishop of Chester. He returned to America and arrived in Philadelphia about April 16th of that year and was placed in charge of the congregations of York, Huntingdon and Carlisle.

During the French and Indian War, Mr. Barton served as chaplain to the troops under the command of General Forbes. Following Braddock's defeat, he preached a sermon at Carlisle, and also in several other churches in York and Cumberland counties. The sermon, by request, was published by Benjamin Franklin and D. Hall in Philadelphia in 1755.

On Easter Day, April 15th, 1759, he entered upon his duties as rector of St. James's church, Lancaster, which position he filled until the autumn of 1778,—nearly twenty years—when he removed to New York city, where he died May 25th, 1780, aged fifty years. He was admitted to membership in the American Philosophical Society on March 8th, 1768, being one of a small number of Lancastrians to achieve that honor.

In 1767 Mr. Barton compiled "The Family Prayer Book," which is, in reality, an adaptation of the Book of Common Prayer of the Established Church of England. It was printed by the monks of the Seventh Day Baptist Community at Ephrata, Lancaster county, Pa., and was intended to be used by the congregations of St. James's church, Lancaster, St. John's, Pequea, and Bangor, Churchtown, of which churches Mr. Barton was the spiritual head.

We reproduce here a fac-simile of the title page and preface to the work:

THE · FAMILY
P R A Y E R - B O O K,

CONTAINING
Morning and Evening
P R A Y E R S

For Families and private Persons.

To which are annexed DIRECTIONS for a devout and decent Behaviour in the publick Worship of God; more particularly in the Use of the COMMON PRAYER appointed by the *Church* of ENGLAND:

Together with the.

Church-Catechisin.

Collected and published chiefly, for the Use of the
EPISCOPAL CONGREGATIONS

OF

LANCASTER, PEQUEA and CAERNARVON.

----- " *I will pray with the SPIRIT; and I will pray with the UNDERSTANDING also* "

I Cor. XIV--15.

EPHRATA:

Printed for WILBIAM BARTON MDCCLXVII.

TO the
MEMBERS of the EPISCOPAL CONGREGATIONS
OF
LANCASTER, CAERNARVON & PEQUEA.

My worthy and dear Brethren,

YOU have removed the Necessity, which perhaps I might have lain under, of rendering an Apology for this Undertaking, by your having more than once hinted, that you were desirous of a Form of FAMILY-PRAYERS, suited to the private Worship of GOD in your Houses.

What I now offer you, with a Heart affectionately devoted to your Service, and zealously inclined to promote, by the best Offices in my Power, your spiritual Welfare, will, I hope, answer the pious Designs you have in View.

The excellent LITURGY of that Church, in whose Bosom it is your Glory to have been nursed, stands not in Need of any Additions or Introduction of New Forms.---- It is happily adapted to all Conditions of Men; And supplies the humble and devout Christian, in whatever State he may be placed, with Prayers fit to be addressed to the Throne of Grace: --- But as this LITURGY was more immediately designed to be offered in Publick Worship in the CHURCH, Give me Leave to attend you in Private with the following short Prayers; and to introduce them into your Houses and Closets,

I am sorry to observe that FAMILY WOR-

SHIP is a Duty too little attended to. --- If I could therefore be instrumental in bringing you, My dear Brethren, to a stricter Observance of, this, so essential a Part of your Religion, I should deem myself happy.

Remember, that our blessed SAVIOUR, while on Earth, often spent whole Nights in Prayer, "And spake a Parable to this End, that Men ought always to pray, and not to faint:" ---- He taught his Disciples that Form which we call the LORD'S PRAYER: --- And one of his Disciples in particular, has directed us "to pray without Ceasing." And we learn from Ecclesiastical History, that the primitive Christians were warm and zealous in the Performance of this Duty, not only when they assembled together to celebrate the EUCHARIST, which was their stated and daily Worship, but also in private and with their Families.

And indeed private Prayer is the best Preparation for Publick, as it disposes for the solemn Assemblies, and frames the Heart for the Social Worship of the Church. ---- It is a Duty likewise that is practised by all religious Christians of every Denomination, and strenuously inculcated by our Bishops and best Divines.

Under these Considerations allow me to hope, that this little Book will be acceptable to the Heads of Families in the Congregations committed to my Charge; And that every one of them will resolve with good old JOSHUA, that "he
and

“and his House will serve the Lord.”

In Order to render this small Offering still more useful, and worthy your Attention, I have annexed DIRECTIONS for a Devout and Decent Behaviour in the PUBLICK WORSHIP of GOD, wrote by a worthy Divine of our Church --- This little Tract has been received with Approbation; and to well-disposed Persons may be of singular Advantage in instructing them how to order their Devotion in the Use of the Book of COMMON-PRAYER.

The frequent Complaints which I have heard made of the Scarcity of the CHURCH-CATECHISM have induced me to add this likewise, which I trust will remove that Backwardness which has appeared in many of your Children in entering the List of CATECHUMENS in the Church.

Praying that every Happiness temporal and eternal may ever attend you and them, “ that it may be well with you and your Children after “you;” And recommending you to God’s Grace and the Love of Christ; I have the Pleasure to declare myself, with the utmost Truth,

My dear Brethren,

*Your obliged Friend and affectionate
Pastor,*

THOMAS BARTON

LANCASTER,

May 25. 1767.

The contents of this publication are as follows:

A Morning-Prayer for a Family.

An Evening-Prayer for a Family.

A Prayer that may be added when any are sick in a Family.

If there was danger of death, another prayer was to be added. It appeared immediately after the prayer for the sick in a family.

A Prayer to be used by a Sick Person.

A Thanksgiving for Recovery.

A Morning-Prayer for a Person in Private.

An Evening-Prayer for a Person in Private.

A Morning-Prayer for a Child.

An Evening-Prayer for a Child.

A Morning-Prayer for a Young Person.

An Evening-Prayer for a Young Person.

A Morning-Prayer for a Servant.

An Evening-Prayer for a Servant.

A Grace before Meat.

A Grace after Meat.

An Evening Hymn.

Directions for a devout and decent behavior in the public worship of God; more particularly in the use of the Common Prayer appointed by the Church of England.

An alphabetical table of the weekly collects in the Book of Common Prayer, reduced under proper heads.¹

A short account of the occasion and design of the Psalms of David, which may serve, in the private use of that divine Book, as an help to find out such Psalms, as may suit the general or particular circumstances of Christians.

The Church-Catechism.

It will be noted on the title page of the book, that the statement is made that it was printed for "William" Barton, whereas the name of "Thomas" Barton appears at the end of the preface. It is the general impression that the name "William" on the title page is a typographical error, as "Thomas," and not "William," was the rector of the three parishes in which the book was espe-

¹ The author used the word "reduced." "Listed" would have been the better word, since the collects are arranged alphabetically under the headings as follows: Affliction, Angels, Charity, Chasity, Christ, Church, Comfort, Contrition, Covetousness, Courage, Enemies, Examples, Faith, Grace, Heaven, Humility, Illumination, Judgment, Love, Ministers, Mortification, Obedience, Prayer, Providence, Purity, Regeneration, Religion, Saints, Scripture, Sin, Sincerity, Holy Spirit, Temptations, Thoughts, Unbelievers and Good Works.

cially intended to be used. The Rev. Thomas Barton had a son by the name of William, who was about twelve or thirteen years of age at the time the book was published; but almost certainly he did not compile it, for it is scarcely possible that a lad of his immature years could have done so.

For many years, collectors have been searching, without success, for copies of this family prayer book, which the late Julius Friedrich Sachse, who wrote voluminously on the history of the Seventh Day Baptist Community at Ephrata, states is one of the rarest issues of the Cloister Press. It is not known how many copies of the book were printed. Since the author compiled it, as stated on the title page, "chiefly for the use of" families and private persons in the three congregations over which he presided, it is fair to assume that a sufficient number must have been issued to supply the wants of the parishes at Lancaster, Pequea and Caernarvon.

The author of this unique book, the Rev. Thomas Barton, was in the employ of The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the headquarters of which are in London, England. Mr. Barton wrote many letters to the secretary of the Society, giving detailed accounts of his activities, but those which I have examined in the Library of Congress, in The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and elsewhere, make no reference to the book. It is somewhat singular that he should have compiled and published this manual of devotions, possibly at his own expense, without submitting a copy of it to the secretary of the Society in London, England, his diocesan, the Lord Bishop of London, and his Metropolitan, the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

There are several references to the book in the Proceedings of The Lancaster County Historical Society, and local antiquarians and bibliophiles have endeavored for years to secure a copy of the work, but none had the good fortune to be successful. In 1871, Horace Wemyss Smith published a biography of his great grandfather, the Rev. Dr. William Smith, first provost of the College and Academy of Philadelphia, now the University of Pennsylvania, in which (Vol. I, page 582) appears a copy of the title page of the Barton book. Doubtless Mr. Smith had access to a copy of the work at the time he wrote the biography of his distinguished



REV. THOMAS BARTON.

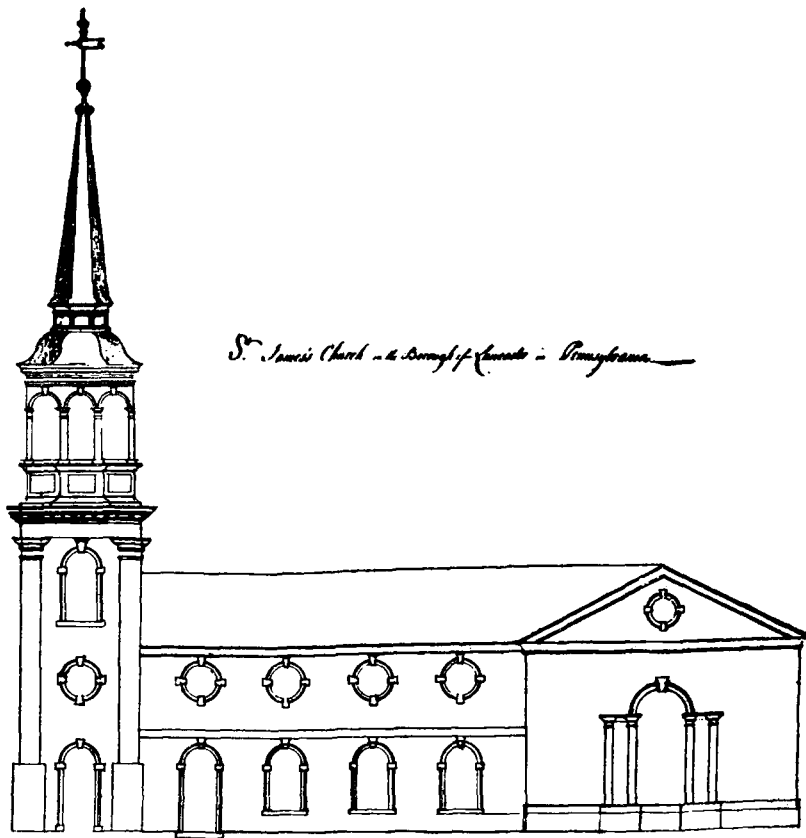


ANCIENT BUILDINGS OF THE CLOISTER OF THE DUNKARDS AT EPHRATA, LANCASTER COUNTY, PA., as they appeared in the summer of 1926. The Rev. Thomas Barton's "Family Prayer-Book" was issued, in 1767, by monks from the printing establishment of the Seventh Day Baptists, who occupied these buildings.

ancestor. Instead, however, of publishing a verbatim copy of the title page, he took the liberty of changing the word "William," which appeared on the original, to "Thomas." It is regrettable that he did not add a word of explanation so that future generations might know why he did so. He probably had good reasons for making the change; and doubtless at the time was in possession of facts which if he had made them public would have saved some embarrassment and would have removed any doubt as to who was the author of the work. It is also quite possible that the error (of which there is little doubt) in the name was discovered and corrected before the entire edition was printed, and Mr. Smith's copy may have been a later imprint.

In 1900, the late Julius Friedrich Sachse published a critical and legendary history of the Ephrata Cloister and the Dunkers, entitled, "The German Sectarrians of Pennsylvania, 1742-1800." On page 462, appears an exact reproduction of the title page of Mr. Barton's prayer book. Unfortunately, Mr. Sachse did not state his source of information, and it is not known whether he was in possession of a copy of the work, or whether he had access to the title page and fragment of the book which was in The Historical Society of Pennsylvania some years ago, and which has since disappeared. In Sachse's work, the name "William" appears on the fac-simile of the title page and not "Thomas."

In 1916, a "Bibliography of Lancaster County" was published. Barton's book of family prayers is listed on page nine, under the year 1767. The author, Miss Lottie M. Bausman, failed, however, to mention that two copies of the work were known to exist at the time she compiled her bibliography,—one in The Divinity School of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, Pa., and the other in the private library of Mr. Henry E. Huntington, 4 East 57th street, New York city. It is also evident that the source from which she acquired her data was not an original one, for she states that the book was "published chiefly for the use of the Episcopal congregations of Lancaster, Pequea and Caerracon." As she was in doubt about the correctness of the spelling of the last-mentioned place, she placed a question mark after it. By comparing it with the title page, as given at the be-



St. James's Church - St. James's Church in Lancaster - Pennsylvania

ORIGINAL BUILDING OF ST. JAMES'S CHURCH, LANCASTER, PA. The building was begun in 1745, and completed in 1753. The steeple was erected in 1762, during the rectorate of the Rev. Thomas Barton. A bell, purchased in London, England, in 1770, was hung in the steeple. This was one of the three congregations under the care of the Rev. Thomas Barton in which his "Family Prayer-Book" was specially in-

ginning of this article, the reader will note that the author spelled the word correctly, "Caernarvon."

The copy in The Divinity School is, undoubtedly, the one referred to in Bishop William Stevens Perry's "Historical Collections Relating to the American Colonial Church," published in 1871, Vol. II, p. 567, in which it is stated that a copy of Thomas Barton's interesting compilation of family prayers is in the library of William Bacon Stevens, Bishop of Pennsylvania. The writer has since learned that at the death of Bishop Stevens, his library was purchased by friends and presented to The Divinity School. As the custodian of this rare and valuable book, the School is exercising excellent judgment in keeping it in a fire-proof safe. Permission was graciously granted by the trustees of the School to have the title-page and preface photostated, and this is the source of the fine illustrations appearing in this article.

The copy in the Henry E. Huntington Library and Art Gallery, San Marino, California, is in excellent condition, although it has been rebound by the French binder, Lortic Fils, in a rather elaborate manner. It was acquired in the purchase en bloc of the library of Mr. E. Dwight Church, Brooklyn, New York, who made, prior to 1907, an outstanding collection of books of American historical interest.

So far as known, these are the only two perfect copies of the Barton book in existence. The writer has the third copy, which lacks the title page, pages three and four of the preface, and several at the end of the volume.² This imperfect copy he purchased a few years ago from a lady in Caernarvon township, whose ancestors, for generations, lived in the old homestead and attended Bangor Episcopal church, Churchtown, Caernarvon township, Lancaster county, Pa. The lady's forbears doubtless received it either by gift or purchase directly from the author, the Rev. Thomas Barton, who was also their rector.

² Pages two to eight of the Church Catechism, Finis and Errata, are missing in my copy. The size of the leaf measures 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ by 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches.