

FBI 3/127

Memoir

of the Rev. Dr. Benj. in a Vacation, who died
in London, at Bulwick, on the 15th. of November
1831, aged 83 $\frac{1}{2}$ years.

In the year 1764 she began to write a Rec-
itation of her life, which she afterwards continued
till within a very few years of her happy conser-
mation. In this Recitation she ^{had} prefixed the
following short Note: "If an account of my
course this time may be of any benefit to any
poor sinners, travelling towards Zion, it may be
well to while writing it. Otherwise not." Of
this Recitation the following, is ^{nearly} a ~~strict~~ ^{literal} copy.

I was born May 6th. A. D. 1748 at Bk Brook
in the county of Derby, where ^a boy of the Poor
there had been formed, and which my parents then
reared in Labourer. They took me, when two years
old to White End in London, and placed me under the
care of a Sister, till I was of age to be
admitted into the School, instituted for the children
of Labourer. Soon after the School was removed
to Chelsea, and remained there till my seventh year.
In this my early childhood I remember many drawings,

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of grace, which made me truly and childlike
love our Saviour above all things.

In 1755 the School was removed to Peabody.
I was greatly benefitted by this change, many op-
portunities being afforded me of hearing of our Sav-
iour's love to children, and of his bitter suffi-
erings and death to save out sinful souls from hell.
This was rich spiritual food for me. and oh!
how did I enjoy the children's pray'r-days. A
deep sense, that our Saviour claimed my heart
in very all, often drew tears from my eyes. About
this time one of my companions, for whom I yet
had particular affection, departed this life. I
cannot express my grief at parting with her. It
caused an evident desire in my heart, ~~that~~ to
^{the} be next child that passed. A dream I had and
which was no doubt caused by this occurrence,
not only made a very strong impression on my
mind, but served as a warning to me, whenever
my rebellious heart strove against God.
Shall, therefore, relate it. I dreamed, that our
Saviour came into my room, and with a look
that expressed a condescending love and benigni-
ty, said distinctly, Blessed art thou in faith.
He called each of my companions to him by name
and assured them in beautiful offices while we

shining. I was bold, expecting to be called in
 my bairn, but had the mortification to see my
 self clothed with filthy rags. Observing ^{that} he was
 to go, I burst into tears, fell down at his feet
 and implored him to strip me of my rags, and clothe
 me with garments, such as he had given to the rest,
 upon this he said ^{look} up with such an affectio-
 nate look that it ^{look}ed like the immortal eyes of
 my heart, granted my request and sealed it with
 a kiss of pardoning love. The joy and happiness
 I felt, seemed too great for my feeble and mortal
 body to bear. Thereupon I awoke and instantly
 getting out of bed, kneeled down and fervently en-
 titled the Lord to take my heart as his property
 promising to follow him this life. Not know-
 ing that any of the other children were awake, I
 was startled when hearing the welcome voice of my
 bosom friend, Anna Rogers, addressed me, proposing
 that we should join together in a perpetual com-
 mitment with the Lord. This we did in all simplicity,
 and in the sequel often reminded each other of its
 like her happy departure, which took place eight
 years after.

In 1761 I was received among the girls. I now
 entered on unknown trials and many experiences, that
 greatly distrested & perplexed me. My love to our Savior

became fluctuating; I could not comprehend why
I did no longer abide in Him as closely as in my
childhood. My mind was occupied with its left
and impossible thins. It was an agony and discor-
dent, seeking for the claim in others instead of
myself. So great indeed was the desirousness
of my heart, that I wished to conceal from every
observer ^{my} true state, and pass for one of the
better sort. My guilty conscience demanded
me to such a degree, that I even wished to
forget our Saviour, her bearing secret enmity
against Him, his precious Word, his supplicat-
ing cry. When, therefore, obliged to read the Bible,
I always chose the historical part, neglecting
the moralities and life-giving portion.

April 4th 1761 came I into the 2^d Room
at Duckenfield. This change proved beneficial.
The clouds began to disperse; and my gracious
Saviour sought me and found me straying, sheep,
make me within, to see and own my pastor,
and anew extended his mercy to me. He
also granted me the favor, which I had long
ardently desired, of being received into the church.
This privilege was conferred on me on the
13th of August in the just mentioned year.
Now I foolishly fancied, my happiness would
never be interrupted; but I was soon undeceived

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But it was not long before I slipped into my
former indifference regarding essentials in reli-
gion. This induced me to pray with fervor for
leave to quit the world, and for admittance into heaven.
But this was not the design of our Saviour
with me. Indeed there was too much of my own
will mixed up with this desire.

On the 1st of May 1767 I entered into
the 1st Sister's choir. My state of heart at the
time made me take this step, not without a
feeling of sorrow at leaving my former choir;
yet this transition was attended with blessing,
but it was not lasting. I passed my soul with
many a wound by frequenting my best and faith-
ful friends, and dwelling on former experiences.
I grew poor and self-concited, and fell into a
miserable state of indifference. ~~This was greatly~~
~~reduced by~~ ~~the~~ ^{This became} late Sister Dorothy Hopper noticing the
obscure life I now led, ~~she~~ ^{and} ~~she~~ ^{and} with
repent. But this, far from having the desired
effect, only hardened me. She therefore took a
suitable opportunity to speak with me, and, with
the affection of a mother, put several heart-
searching questions to me, patiently waiting for
an reply. At that time I could give no answer,
it would indeed, had I attempted it, only have added

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to my confusion. In this dilemma the Lord
by his Spirit worked in my soul at the heart, and
showed me my bearings & attitude. Let me then
recall before your Lordly tribunal, and confess
and confess I could believe, that he had cast me
and cast my prayer out. This produced
great anxiety, for my unfaithfulness to such
a kind friend appeared unfathomable to me,
and I do not disclaim my watchful solicitation
to any one, knowing, that if I wished, I could
by my rejecting the effect of myesy, and thus
my own choice. In this distress of my soul
I cried for mercy from the depth of misery to
the infinite depths of punishment and damnation
and hell. The Lord was pleased to reveal
my errors, to restore me so favorably, and manifest
himself to the eyes of my faith, as lessening my
condemnation still on the score, to draw me
free from the bondage of sin, and remove the
burden of guilt from my conscience. As a
pardon of a sinner I could rejoice in my salvation.

On the 18th of August 1768 I was for
the first time presented at the H.C. The daily
word was, "How precious are thy thoughts unto
me, O God; how great is the sum of them!"

went down like a reprobate, shrewd after a long drought. And on the 3^d of September in the year following I was favored to take my place with the company at the Lord's table. Bow'd down under a sense of my unworthiness, and the Lord's unpeakable goodness, I entered unfeigned thanks for all his benefits, and devoted myself to him without an' body.

In October there came a fever break out in the pr. Harvey, by means of which four of the inhabitants were transplanted into the church above. I likewise was affected, with it, and not expected to recover but not only was within, and ready to leave the world, but & forced in the prospect of seeing my services and being safely buried in heaven. Contrary to the expectation of the doctor, of myself and others, I slowly recovered the mortidity of the disorder being covered off by an open sore on my side, from which I suffered a long time.

During this period I often received wandering ministrations, tho' I had but little experienced the patience and long suffering of Jesus. Yet I must declare to his praise, that he was the only object I deemed worthy of my admiration;

and his offer made to him was to me of all sins
the most heinous.

Family circumstances rendered this year
1777 very melancholic to me. My dear wife, who
had served the country at Duckett's Field for upwards
of eight years, was called to Blackcock. Their
frequent conversations with their children on spiritual
subjects led me to serious reflection, and proved
a stay to my wavering faith. I recollect with
peculiar pleasure the time my Broth. Samuel
spent in our midst, previous to his voyage to Can-
ada, being called to the service of the Mission
in that island. His inspiring address was my dear
father's parting advice, when he, in every af-
flicting moment, pointed out to me the neces-
sity of devoting myself without reserve to
our Saviour.

The blessing I enjoyed during the Revival
season in 1778, will never be forgotten by me.
While casting a believing look at Jesus ex-
sing on the cross, I was so overpowered, that if the a-
veil, which hid a time from mortal sight, had
been withdrawn, I must have sunk into ins-
anity. The impression of this was so strong, that
I often thought, our Saviour would shorten my
evil days, and take me at this time to himself.

but he appointed differently. My faith and
patience were to be further exercised. In
1780, after the removal of Dr. Grantly to Berlin,
it was proposed some to undertake the girls'
school at Duckenfield. I felt the weight and
importance of the charge committed to me; but
the Lord stood by me, implanted love to the children
in my heart, and blessed my weak endeavors. In
this employment I toiled 37 years, partly
here and partly at Berlinfield, and for two years
I was likewise the mistress of the Sunday School
for girls.

After Dr. Grantly having been buried at
Berlinfield, I together with several of my Sisters
from Duckenfield, moved into it in 1785.—
Eight years after it pleased our Saviour to call
me to a quiet and uneventful
Christmas Eve, my beloved father, then a deacon
in the ministry at Duckenfield. I felt this applic-
ation the most keenly on the womb, caused by the
recent death of my Brother Samuel in Lentzow,
after twenty years' faithful service as a physician,
and severely ill treated. My God, gracious

providence the severity of this trial was mitigated by several changes in my situation. My sister Mary, who, on my removal to Finsfield had succeeded me as mistress of Duckingsfield School, being required to assist my mother during my father's illness; and being, I trust qualified for it than I was, I for some time ~~undertook~~^{occupied} her place in the school. This afforded me an opportunity of being an ear and eye-witness to my dear father's last ministerial services, which he delivered like three days prior to his death. And when I afterwards returned to Finsfield I witnessed in silence on the Lord's judgment some scenes of His dying dispensation. - Two years after, on March 29th 1798 my dear mother was favored to enter the mansions of eternal bliss.

Owing to the increasing infirmities of the master of the Plain School for Girls at Finsfield, it was in 1803 proposed to me, ^{to} undertake the principal charge of this institution. I soon felt convinced that this proposal did proceed from the Lord, and therefore accepted it, relying on His help, who graciously rewardeth the unfeigned

service performed for His sake. ~~In this~~.
Viewed in this light it appeared a favor to me
and I thought, what promises have we! Often
things trying to flesh and blood act as spurrs to
drive us to God. This was so it was in my case,
and when I was hourly poor in spirit nothing seemed
too difficult for me but when I acted in my
own strength and the pride of my heart, I was
sure to meet with a check, if not with a fall.

Yet, even this was only divine mercy; and no
sooner was I convinced of my error, than freedom
was effected, and my departing spirit cheered by
a look of grace. Thus, while instructing and
encouraging others, I was myself taught many
a wholesome lesson in this school, showing to me
the depravity of my own backslidings,
and my constant need of fresh supplies of grace.

Glad and thankful for the means of grace,
afforded me in the house of God, to feed the
hungry with the word of eternal life, I never
doubt in safety absented myself from the
assembly of the saints. And when I observed others
negligent in improving this privilege, the petition
often fled from my lips, "Feed me, O Lord, and
give to each of thy hungry and thirsty after Thee."

Hung out with intent them to take food." In
 more instances than can have I had the satis-
 faction to witness, that my secret ejaculations
 were heard and answered. This excited gratitude
 to my gracious Lord, and enhanced the value
 of the privilege to attend his holy ordinances.
 I spent this absolutely quiet Sabbath preserving
 my soul the life of faith, to kindle afresh
 the flame of love to him, and confirm my
 hope, that all my sins and depressions are
 dissolved in the ocean of his mercy. — I am a
 miracle of grace, and a witness to every discon-
 sole sinners, that read, or hear, this narrative,
 that none is too vile, since I even I have obtained
 mercy. Let them only apply to our Saviour.
 The ocean of his love is not dry, nor ever will
 be. If unable to utter a single word, sit by
 with each and touch his hand, after
 heart. — Present me my speech of love to thee,
 my gracious Saviour, and the accepting
 grateful praises for preserving me in conser-
 vation with thy chosen people. Oh! let my
 soul, as a sheep of this blessed flock, be found
 in the bundle of the living at the day of
 thine appearing.

December 18th. 1818. Feeling of late the infi-
nitely of age increasing upon me, I laid my
covenant in prospes before my best, the
unseen, Friend, who had hitherto supported me,
education, him to have given cheerfully to resign
into his hand the trust he had committed to
me in the school, and yet to put my faith and
confidence to stand, whether trials may yet
have to encounter. but give my habitation with
his peace, and let me enjoy a sweet tabbatt, a
blessed expectation of a blissful eternity. I
gave vent to my feelings in expreſſion somewhat
like the following: "My gracious Saviour, carry
on thy work in me, which absent from Thee,
sle thou hast completed it. Pardon, blot out
and remember no more the many errors, com-
mitted by me in the work, Thou didst direct
me to do. Help, enable abundantly every one
of them lamb of thy flock, whom thy kind pro-
vidence did, from time to time, place under my
charge, who art well acquainted with abounding
blessings, knowest that their prosperity
lay near my heart, but the happiness pertaining
to their eternal happiness, was sufficient in my
view, and that for ever lend a ear to them, I delight

to direct their importunate to Thee, from whom every good proceedeth, to help their wants to Thee, and expect relief. I waited not to reward them, but great were the privileges they enjoyed of being instructed in the way of peace, to teach for themselves thy holy word, to remember the promises thou didst venture to put them in thy salvation. They went away, when in after-life they met with various trials, experiencing thy gracious help, and at the close of their mortal race be prepared for thy eternal kingdom. Ages indeed I have witnessed of the year's effect of my full minuteness, before they left this world. Many more would undoubtedly have come to my knowledge, if I had been free from the self-working. I humbly thank Thee, O Lord, for what I have seen; an abundant blessing, but borne me on eagles' wings, even to heavy hearts!!

In my stickleness, that in my younger days used to be actively engaged in our services on either side. Alas! I was blind to my infirmities, for none knew me, but I saw it much pointed to remain in his Church militant, I was

happy and sympathized with them in their labours,
delighted when God crowned them with success,
and grieved when they met with trials and discon-

siderments; and they in their first were kind to me.
If it had been left to my care to order my course
I could not have minded it. I enjoy the liberty of
speech, and consider it every poor wanderer into
the right path for obtaining peace. If they take
my advice, then do I truly rejoice, and how else I
could rejoice in my case.

As a special Being, and I came to take the spi-
ritual ^{care} ~~service~~ of the Ep. Sutor, belonging to the
cong. at Buckenfield, I arrived there in ~~Buck~~ February
1829, and found the situation much more
agreeable than I had expected, gladly devoting
the little strength and time, still goanted me, to the
service of any Heavenly Friend. Being, what ex-
pecting, this friend 79 years old, I think, I shall not be
able to hold out much longer. Ungrateful thanks
be to my foolish services. He will bear me
every thing, merciful, and has rendered my Sabbath per-
sonly pleasant. But I must now with shame, tell
the wanderings of my corrupt heart at times, distract
my thoughts from Him, and I meet his presence
and long sufficing to my life's end. If, at that

awful how he safely conducts my departing spirit into his presence, my only plea with him
Here come I since; I want you
See thy abatement unto me again.

After a stay of about 6 years at Buckin-
field, I returned to Guilford on Dec^r. 1st, 1825.
I spent much time for thankfull for this change,
as well as for deep reconciliation. The American
way of life in families made me desirous to
spend my last days at Guilford with my few
dear relatives, now residing at Guilford. I was
there in 1826, lodged near you some time with
my dear Bro. & Sis. Rev. Lettice, and am now here
and enjoyed a truly substantial. In the sequ-
I took a room in the Dr. Young's, where I now
feel quite at home, so participating without
any want in the well and woe of every individual
of inhabitant.

O Lord, thy goodness and mercy have followed
me all the days of my life; and thy precious
Holy word hath been a lamp to my feet tho' this
hunting, wilderness, and sword yet enabled me
comfort and hope, and affide the sweetest
in, on the death of thy creatures. Oh! how
they add to my affliction! —

A very brief account of her last days of earthly life is all, that need be added to the preceding relation of the principal events in her life and Christian experience. — The closing period, of between four to five years, which she spent in the S^t. Barnabas, shows that she had lost a mere foundation of her faith, which was in her an influential principle, no less when depressed by the infirmities of old age, than while her strong health and strength enabled her to be actively employed day and night in promotion, the good of her friends in night hours, and at the same time enjoying yet her person the company, & comfort of those faithful servants, who employ their respective talents, whether many or few, in advancing their Lord's Kingdom upon earth. When, therefore, she came to seek me with this his servant, she could render her account with joy.

Her last illness began to wade the end of October, but did not assume an alarming character till about a week before her departure. In vain did her medical attendants try to mitigate the bodily pain she suffered. The hour of her final release from earthly misery was come, but her Lord, not less than gracious in all his dispensations, ordained this painful and eventful

exercise of her faith and patience. This even supported her in the pressure of affliction, so that she did not lose confidence in our salvation; stayed upon Him till night was kept in perfect peace. On Saturday ^{The year delivered from} the lecture of her sufferings was mitigated, so that she could spend the Sunday in company or even. In the evening, some friends assembled in her room, and joined in singing a few verses. In confident prayer she was commended to the blessing of grace and blessing of the Lord in the prospect of her speedy departure. Before the company had risen from their knees she cast an affectionate look at each, and with much solemnity and emphasis, several times repeated, farewell! This scene will not easily be forgotten by those who witnessed it. The presence of the conqueror of death was sensibly felt, that the conflict of the flesh seemed already overcome, winging its flight to the regions of eternal bliss. In this blessed frame the patient saint ^{pitched} hours, retaining her recollection to the very last. Every now and again she repeated the lines of sweet hymn, ^{of} Don't disturb me now - ask not what I do - ~~ask not what I do~~ I go thro' this vale

to meet him - Jesus comes, and I must greet
him - Don't disturb me now - look not what I do." -

Then with the approach of the confines of time,
she said, "The joys increase again and again
she exclaimed, "How glorious! My Saviour is
come. This is peculiar; this is heaven! I
shall ever dwell with Him." Without a sigh
or a struggle her emancipated spirit left its
earthly tenement, and soared on high, very early
in the morning of November the 15th. 1831.

Our late sister deservedly obtained the
esteem of all, who knew her; and that esteem
will not be lessened by a perusal of the foregoing
narrative. However simple and unadorned its
style, it presents a character, which exhibits
the lineaments of an humble, but sincere, decided
~~and~~ & believed, and a decided and faithful
follower of Jesus. She was here and is not.

Oh God, we bless Thee with a sound understand-
ing, which she did not leave among good, but
stared her mind with unuseful knowledge; and that
knowledge, & she was ever ready to communicate
to others. Her anxiety in the instruction of
children will be gratefully remembered by

very many, who enjoyed that instruction, nor
 a few of whom, we may confidently hope, will
 one day rise up and call her blessed, not only for
 conveying to their infant minds the sediment,
 of human learning, ^{above all for} ~~but~~ ⁱⁿ filling into their
 minds love to Jesus, and faith in Him as their
 Saviour. When ~~sustained~~ she was never
 happier, than when surrounded by the children
 in the school, or visiting them in their families;
 and her affectionate & courteous manner failed to
 elicit love and confidence as well as respect
 on their part. When acting the part of an
 instructed, advised and friend of children &
 old and young people, she was in her proper ele-
 ment. See this occupation the Lord had evi-
 dently designed and fitted her, and in her case
 full attention to it, she as truly served him
 as if she had accompanied a Missionary, and
 shared in his labours and toils to win souls for
 Christ in a Heathen land.

She professed a facility & fondness for putting her
 thoughts into rhyme, and often gratified her
 friends by tokens of affection ^{of} this kind,
 especially on festive occasions. Through

Her compositions ^{can claim no} are devoid of pretension; they ^{already failed to please} pleased or made people
of genuine friendship by ^{fixing} the attention
on him, to whom other talents, whose the larger
were the greater, were consecrated.

Her strong attachment to the B.ⁿ. Churc^h
might be accounted for on the ground of her
having been born and nurtured within ^{its} pale,
and her father being a worthy Minister
of ^{its} ~~the~~ ^{it} Religion. But whatever weight this cir-
cumstance might have in influencing her
mind in early youth; the decided preference
she gave to it in an advanced year was based
on ^a ~~an~~ ^{more} solid foundation. Without de-
parting from the orthodoxy of other Christian
communities, or undervaluing their zeal and
usefulness in the cause of pure and undefiled
religion; she considered the plainness and sim-
plicity, with which the Brethren direct their
heads to one ^{a very} ~~affectionate~~ ^{affectionate} jewel
in their ministry. Now, while this leaves each
individual to entertain his own opinion on points
of doubtful interpretation; the spirit of unity,
that binds together the member in love, is preserved
by leaving, constantly the one object of permanent
importance set before them.

Moreover she valued the Church, to which
she belonged, because she had found, in her own
experience, and that of many others, that its institu-
tions and regulations were adapted to the charac-
ter and circumstances of men in sinners, to pro-
mote in them the life of faith in the Son of God, and
thus preparing such in their sphere, to serve the Lord
with uprightness of heart here below, and become
meet for an inheritance among the saints in heaven.

She had been in full connexion with this com-
munity for nearly 70 years. During this long pe-
riod she had witnessed ^{some} changes in its exten-
sive discipline, yet this did not diminish her attach-
ment to it, nor shake her confidence, that the
Lord would continue to guide it as a chosen flock of
His. Whatever predilection she felt for those
powers and offices, under which she had received her
call of grace from the Lord, she knew they were but
the gifts of God making her election sure. On this says
herself in her Dissertation, she had learned to disti-
nguish between the essentials in religion, and matters
things of mere expediency. If she perused the dis-
cipline of the Church, she sought not the command
in the change of the outward system; but in the like
warning of some of its members, in the declension
from primitive, ^{pure} and simple purity, in the forgetfulness
that compliance with God's command, by ^{any} sacrifice
one thine heart, is the very soul of genuine piety,
an attention to which can be comprehended

99. X by no external person and myself, however writing
as we do. For a review of this spirit that the whole Church she often
and fervently prayed, on the subject you understand, that her constant watch