

K. John Rippon – (1751-1836)



John Rippon

- i. John Rippon was born April 29, 1751 in Devonshire, England. At sixteen he was saved and joined the Baptist church at Tiverton.
- ii. At seventeen he entered the Baptist College at Bristol, England with the intent to labor in Christian ministry. Upon the completion of his studies at Bristol, he was invited to fill the pulpit at the Baptist Church at Carter Lane, Tooley Street in London, where Dr. John Gill had been pastor, which had died the previous year. The result of this filling the pulpit was an invitation to become the new pastor of the church, which he accepted. Rippon was ordained November 11, 1773. The church had been under the pastorate of Gill for fifty-four years, and Rippon retained the pastorate until his death December 17, 1836, a period of sixty-three years.
- iii. While Rippon did not possess the learning of his predecessor, he none the less was blessed by the Lord in other areas, and because of this, his ministry flourished. It was while Rippon was pastor that the church erected a new building at New Park Street, and it was to this same place Spurgeon would be called when he began his work in London. Mr. Spurgeon would later be called to pastor the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Rippon's "Selection" would be used by the Metropolitan congregation until Spurgeon produced "Our Own Hymn Book" 1866.

- iv. The first edition of Rippon's "Selection" appeared in 1787. It was entitled "*A Selection of Hymns from the Best Authors, intended to be an appendix to Dr. Watts' Psalms and Hymns.*" Of this collection of hymns, more than thirty editions were published in England, and many in this country (United States).
- v. One can see that Mr. Rippon was a great admirer of Isaac Watts, in 1798, because of this, Rippon worked on an improved edition of Watts' productions. In many of Watts' late editions errors had crept in, and Rippon wanted to correct these.
- vi. The result of Rippon's labor of love was an improved edition of Dr. Watts' productions, with "An Arrangement of the Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs of the Rev. Isaac Watts" in 1801. The money made from the sell of the book went to help village preaching, small income pastors and other benevolent works. According to Dr. Hatfield in "Poets of the Church", He states that "It is probably the most accurate edition of Dr. Watts' book ever published."
- vii. Rippon would also go on to publish his predecessor's work, Dr. John Gill's "Exposition of the Old and New Testaments," with a memoir prefixed.
- viii. Rippon also printed the "Baptist Annual Register," from 1790 to 1802.
- ix. Rippon's Hymns and Songs
  - 1. "Amid the Splendours of They State" – #102 in PHSS
  - 2. "My Soul Convicted Stands" – #376 in PHSS
  - 3. "Sweet Affliction, Hallelujah" – #484 in PHSS (note: adapted by Rippon)
  - 4. "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name! –#918 and #922 in PHSS (verses 8-10)

L. Jesse Mercer – (1769-1841)



Jesse Mercer

i. His Life

1. Jesse Mercer (Son of Silas Mercer, a Baptist Minister) was born in Halifax County, North Carolina, December 16, 1769. Though bright, he had limited opportunity for an education. When he was fourteen his father moved the family to Georgia, which would become his home.
2. Four years after removing to Georgia, Mercer was baptized by his father, and united with the Phillip's Mill's Baptist Church. Not long after this, he began to preach.
3. Soon after he began preaching, he also married Miss Sabrina Chivers, who was a valued helpmeet to him for nearly forty years. He was ordained to the ministry November 7, 1789.
4. The churches which he served were those of Hutton's Fork, Indian Creek, Sardis, Phillip's Mill, Powelton, Whatley's Mill, Eatonton, and Washington. It is said that "The field occupied by Dr. Mercer between the years 1796, and 1827, was one of the most important in the State of Georgia, —the churches which he served being in the midst of a dense population, and embracing a considerable amount of intelligence and refinement."  
... His connection with these several churches was the means of

quickenning them to a higher sense of Christian obligation, of building them up in faith and holiness, and, in nearly every case, of adding largely to their numbers.”

5. According to Basil Manly, “In his happy moments of preaching he would arouse and enchain the attention of reflecting men beyond any minister I have ever heard. At such times his views were vast, profound, original, striking and absorbing in the highest degree, while his language, though simple, was so terse and pithy, so pruned, consolidated, and suited to become the vehicle of the dense mass of his thoughts, that it required no ordinary effort of a well-trained mind to take in all he said.”

ii. Mercer’s accomplishments and work

1. For several years he was the editor of “The Index.” He was also active in missionary operations, and was for eighteen consecutive years elected president of the Georgia Baptist Convention.
2. He was also actively involved and concerned with civil affairs and education. His gifts to Mercer University amounted to more than forty thousand dollars. In today’s (2019) market that would be 1 million dollars.<sup>17</sup>

Note: Mercer University is today a secular university with multiple campuses in Georgia, however, it began as a Baptist school to equip young men for the ministry. Note: Mercer ended its 173-year affiliation to the Georgia Baptist Convention in 2006. – (See pages 779 to 782 in *The Baptist Encyclopedia, vol. 2, by Cathcart.*)

3. His writings include well over twenty books and materials that span a forty-year period. Among his works is his compilation entitled “*The Cluster of Spiritual Songs, Divine Hymns and Sacred Poems.*” The first edition was published in Augusta, GA, in pamphlet form, and three editions were issued before 1817. For many years his “*Cluster*” was in use in the Baptist churches in south eastern region of the country. Several hymns in it were written by Mercer himself.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> The Baptist Encyclopedia vol. 2, by William Cathcart, 1881, pg. 781.

<sup>18</sup> Baptist Hymn Writers and Their Hymns, by Henry S. Burrage, 1888, pg. 241

iii. Mercer's Hymns and Songs

1. "In sin's howling waste"
  - a. First line:  
"In sin's howling waste my poor soul was forlorn,  
And loved the distance full well,  
When grace, on the wings of the dove to me borne,  
Did snatch me, the fire-brand of hell."
2. "Come, Humble Sinner" – #132 in PHSS
3. "Incomprehensible Love" – #99 in PHSS
4. "'Tis Not the Natural Birth of Man" – #91 in PHSS

M. John Q. Adams – (1767-1848)



John Q. Adams

i. His Life

- a. John Q. Adams was born July 11, 1767 in Braintree (now Quincy), Mass.. He was the son of the 2<sup>nd</sup> president of the United States, John Adams. John Q. would go on to become the 6<sup>th</sup> President of the United States.
- b. John Q. was named after his maternal grandfather Colonel John Quincy. Young John Q. was educated by private tutors – his cousin James Thaxter and his father's law clerk, Nathan Rice. He soon began to exhibit literary skills, and in 1779 he began to keep a diary which he maintained until just before his death in 1848.
- c. In 1778, John Q. and his father traveled to Europe, where John Adams (father) would serve as an American diplomat to France

and the Netherlands. During this period John Q. studied French, Greek, and Latin, and attended several schools. In 1785, the Adams family returned to the United States to finish John Q.'s education.

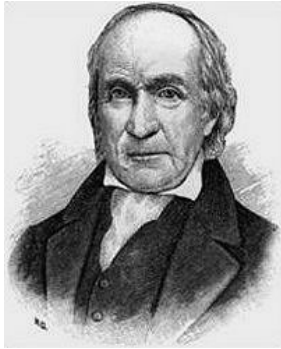
ii. His Service to Country and God

- a. John Q. became a lawyer and opened his own practice in Boston in 1790. Initially Adams avoided becoming directly involved in politics. However, in 1794, George Washington appointed him as the US ambassador to the Netherlands; John Q. considered declining the role but ultimately took the position at the advice of his father.
- b. John Q. spent the winter of 1795-96 in London, it was while there he met his future wife Louisa Catherine Johnson. The second daughter of American merchant Joshua Johnson. John and Louisa were married in England in 1797.
- c. In 1796, Washington appointed John Q. as the US ambassador to Portugal. When the elder Adams became president, he appointed John Q. as the ambassador to Prussia. Though concerned that his appointment might be criticized by some as favoritism by his father, John Q. accepted and traveled to the Prussian capital of Berlin with his wife and his younger brother, Thomas Adams.
- d. Most of Adams' verse, both religious and secular, was written after he had left the Presidency. In his later years he composed a metrical version of the Psalms, best described as a free rendering in fairly good verse of what he felt was the essential idea of each Psalm. When his minister, William P. Lunt, of the First Parish Church, Quincy, Mass., undertook the preparation of his hymn book *The Christian Psalter*, Mrs. Adams put the manuscript of her husband's metrical Psalms into Lunt's hands, and the latter included 17 of them in his book, and five other hymns by his distinguished parishioner.
- e. The effect on Adams of the above actions is recorded in a moving entry in his *Journal* which reveals an aspect of his character quite unknown to those who regarded him as an opinionated and

uncompromising though sincere and upright politician. He wrote on June 29, 1845:

- i. "Mr. Lunt preached this morning, Eccles. III, 1. For everything there is a season. He had given out as the first hymn to be sung the 138th of the Christian Psalter, his compilation and the hymn-book now used in our church. It was my version of the 65th Psalm; and no words can express the sensations with which I heard it sung. Were it possible to compress into one pulsation of the heart the pleasure which, in the whole period of my life, I have enjoyed in praise from the lips of mortal man, it would not weigh a straw to balance the ecstasy of delight which streamed from my eyes as the organ pealed and the choir of voices sung the praise of Almighty God from the soul of David, adapted to my native tongue by me. There was one drawback. In the printed book, the fifth line of the second stanza reads, "The morning's dawn, the evening's shade," and so it was sung, but the corresponding seventh line of the same stanza reads, "The fields from thee the rains receive," totally destroying the rhyme. I instantly saw that the fifth line should read, "The morning's dawn, the shades of eve," but whether this enormous blunder was committed by the copyist of the pressman I am left to conjecture."
  
- iii. Adams' Hymns and Songs
  - a. "Sing to Jehovah a New Song" – #25 in PHSS
  - b. "LORD of All Worlds"
  - c. "O LORD, Thy All-Discerning Eyes" – #71 in PHSS
  - d. "The Hour Glass" – #762 in PHSS

N. John Leland – (1754-1841)



John Leland

- i. John Leland was born in Grafton, Mass., May 14, 1754. When he was twenty years old he was baptized at Northbridge by Noah Alden, of Bellingham. Shortly thereafter he surrendered his life to Christian ministry and joined the Bellingham Baptist Church in the autumn of 1774, from which he received a license to preach the gospel.<sup>19</sup>
- ii. In October, 1775, he went to Virginia, where he was ordained. He labored various parts of Virginia, and under his preaching many people were brought to Christ. He remained in Virginia about fifteen years, and during this time he preached about three thousand sermons.
- iii. Leland's influence upon Government
  1. The Bill of Rights:  
During the 1788-1789 election while still living in Virginia, Leland threw his support behind James Madison due to a meeting that Madison had with Leland, the meeting ended with Madison guaranteeing that he would introduce legislation that would guarantee religious liberty for the newly formed United States. Madison won the election (representing VA) in congress. The Freedom of Religion ultimately would become the First Amendment to the Constitution, and Madison was seated in the First Congress that same year. Madison kept his promise.

---

<sup>19</sup> Baptist Hymn Writers and Their Hymns, by Henry S. Burrage, 1888, 230-233.



2. One well-known incident in the life of Leland was the Cheshire Mammoth Cheese. The people of Cheshire, Mass. Made and sent a giant block of cheese to President Thomas Jefferson. Leland took the block from Cheshire to Washington, DC, and presented it to Jefferson on January 1, 1802. While there, Leland was invited to preach to Congress and the President. Of the incident Leland wrote:

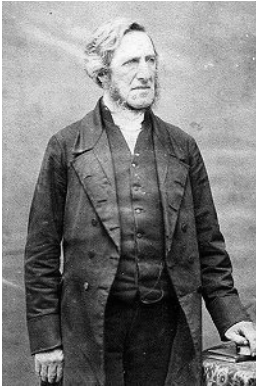
*"In November, 1801 I journeyed to the south, as far as Washington, in charge of a cheese, sent to President Jefferson. Notwithstanding my trust, I preached all the way there and on my return. I had large congregations; let in part by curiosity to hear the Mammoth Priest, as I was called."*

3. Leland was a proponent of religious liberty, and opponent of slavery, and a pastor/evangelist. He was also a hymn writer.
  - a. *"Resolved, that slavery is a violent deprivation of rights of nature and inconsistent with a republican government, and therefore, recommend it to our brethren to make use of every legal measure to extirpate this horrid evil from the land; and pray Almighty God that our honorable legislature may have it in their power to proclaim the great jubilee, consistent with the principles of good policy."* - Resolution for the General Committee of Virginia Baptists meeting in Richmond, VA, 1789
  - b. *"Every man must give account of himself to God, and therefore every man ought to be at liberty to serve God in a way that he can best reconcile to his conscience. If government can answer for individuals at the day of judgment, let men be controlled by it in religious matters; otherwise, let men be free."* – John Leland

iv. Leland's Hymns and Songs

1. "The Day is Past and Gone" – #895 in PHSS
2. "The Preacher's Life" – #853 in PHSS
3. "I Set Myself Against the Lord" –
4. "We Dedicate This House to Thee" – #891 in PHSS
5. "Rise, Believe, and Be Baptized" – #842 in PHSS
6. "Blessed Be God for All" – #657 in PHSS

O. Thomas Kelly – (1769-1855)



Thomas Kelly

- i. Thomas Kelly was born in Ireland on July 13, 1769, and died in Dublin, Ireland on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of May 1855. He was the only son of Judge Kelly of Kellyville, in Queen’s County, Ireland. He was educated for the legal bar at Trinity College, Dublin. While completing his studies in London, he was convinced of his sin through the writings of William Romaine. Finding that all his efforts of reform useless, he at last obtained “peace through our Lord Jesus Christ’... and afterward abandoned the study of law for the preaching of the cross, at the age of twenty-three he became a minister of the Church of Ireland.
- ii. His evangelical preaching came under the scrutiny of the Archbishop of Dublin (Dr. Fowler), leading to him forbidding Kelly any longer preaching in the established church. Kelly therefore left the established church and began preaching and teaching in various chapels throughout the countryside.<sup>20</sup>
- iii. At the age of thirty, Thomas Kelly married Miss Tighe of Rosanna, Co. Wicklow, whose family, besides having wealth and position, were revered for their piety. Three years later he began to publish his hymns, and during the next fifty years, seven hundred and sixty-five hymns came from his pen, many being found in our principal collections.

---

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.stempublishing.com/hymns/biographies/kellyt.html>

iv. Kelly's Hymns and Songs

1. "Hark, Ten Thousand Harps and Voices" – #51 in PHSS
2. "Zion Stands by Hills and Surrounded" – #219 in PHSS
3. "Christ Is Born, Go Tell the Story" – #235 in PHSS
4. "Fly Abroad, and Tell the Story" – #245 in PHSS
5. "Awake, O Sword" – #258 in PHSS
6. "'Twas a Conflict While it Lasted" – #269 in PHSS
7. "Jesus Triumphed by His Power" – #288 in PHSS
8. "Look, Ye Saints, the Sight Is Glorious" – #296 in PHSS
9. "Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted" – #304 in PHSS
10. "Praise the Saviour, Ye Who Know Him" – #556 in PHSS
11. "Lead On, Almighty Lord" – #723 in PHSS
12. "To Arms, Ye Saints, to Arms!" – #725 in PHSS
13. "Where's Thine Armour?" – #761 in PHSS
14. "Hope, My Soul, Thine Anchor Is" – #777 in PHSS
15. "Men of God, Go Take Your Stations" – #865 in PHSS
16. "Cry Aloud, and Spare Not" – #866 in PHSS
17. "Sound, Sound the Truth Abroad" – #868 in PHSS
18. "Fly, Ye Seasons" – #906 in PHSS
19. "Crown Him Whom Angels Sing" – #917 in PHSS
20. "The Lamb, with Glory Crowned!" – #919 in PHSS
21. "Jesus, We Hail Thee" – #921 in PHSS
22. "Who Is This That Cometh from Edom?" – #927 in PHSS
23. "City of the Seven Hills?" – #931 in PHSS
24. "Zion's King Shall Reign Victorious" – #951 in PHSS