

Moments in Our History **(Excerpts from the Dissenting Church of Christ at St. John's 1775 – 1975)**

Persecution and Peace (Part 3)

Whatever the arguments, they were successful. When Governor Edwards returned in July, a further petition was presented, this time supported by no less a personage than Colonel Pringle, at which time “free permission to re-enter the Meeting House was granted which was done the first Sabbath in August with great joy and gladness of heart, seeing the Lord had done such great things for them.”

The first Sunday in October 1780, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered for the first time and “a most joyous time it was.” Hereafter the Sacrament was observed the first Sunday of every month with a service of thanksgiving on Monday night. Greatheed continues “Mr. J. preached to them three times on the Lord's Day, and every other sabbath a fourth time, at a place“ two miles distant (Quidi Vidi). He also preached at St. John's one evening for prayer and religious conversation. The church, which was then regularly constituted, had an annual increase of 20 members for several following years; and notwithstanding numerous losses chiefly by the frequent removal of the soldiers, many were awakened under Mr. J.'s ministry, the communicants usually were from 70 to 80 persons. Among these were a few officers in His Majesty's service, and persons of some respectability in the town, but it was chiefly the poor to whom the Gospel was made powerful unto salvation.”

In April, 1781, a day of Fasting, Prayer and Humiliation was held and the Church Articles revised. (cf. Chapter 9 Document I). The following month, the official certificate was issued:

“THESE are to Certify all whom it may concern that at the Quarter Sessions of the Peace, held at the Court Hall in St. John's, Newfoundland, the 24th day of April last, John Jones took the Oaths of Allegiance, Supremacy and Abjuration and also the Declaration against Transubstantiation and against Popery, and also the Declaration which Protestant Dissenting Ministers are obliged to make agreeable to an Act of Parliament made and passed in the 19th year of his present Majesty's Reign, GIVEN under our hands and seals in St. John's aforesaid, the 10th day of May, 1781.

Signed
EDWARD LANGMAN, J.P.
NICHOLAS GILL, J.P.”

The *Journal* observes “the wonderful interposition of God, that the same person who in 1779 signed an order to prevent John Jones from Preaching at his peril, should in 1781 sign this Certificate” and “This summer they enjoy'd much peace.”