

# The Persecution of the Baptists in Virginia

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**BLUESTONE INDEPENDENT BAPTIST CHURCH**  
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# INTRODUCTION

Many are the afflictions of the righteous. This is the case numerous times throughout the Bible. Several saints that stood for what was right faced severe persecution, imprisonment, and even martyrdom. Men such as Joseph, Jeremiah, Peter, and Paul were imprisoned for their faith. Others were placed behind bars because they would not renounce Christ and His Word (Acts 8:3- *“As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.”*)

This maltreatment not only took place in the Middle East, Europe, and England, but it also carried over on American soil. It was the Baptists, not the Protestants and Catholics, that faced hardships for their beliefs in Colonial America. Religious freedom was not yet birthed in New England! From the Massachusetts Bay Colony to others, these dissident baptizing believers were nothing more than a nuisance. Catholics and Protestants alike made their iron hand of intolerance known toward the full immersionists.

One of the most notable colonies for persecuting the Baptists was Virginia. This is seen in the book titled Imprisoned Preachers and Religious Liberty in Virginia by Lewis Peyton Little. The following is an excerpt taken from this classic book on Baptist History in America. As you read from county to county, notice what our Baptist forefathers faced to bring you religious freedom in America.

Also provided is a map of Virginia and her counties. You can see the route of bloodshed in Virginia by locating the county of incidents on this map.

One should carefully study Baptist History before yoking up with the Protestants, Catholics, and Non-denominationalist. The term “Baptist” meant afflictions in earlier days, and we should never forget that! Before you drop “Baptist” off your church sign, bear in mind what they faced so that you could have liberty.



ARLINGTON

FAIRFAX

LOUDOUN

PRINCE WILLIAM

STAFFORD

KING

WESTMORELAND

NORTHUMBERLAND

LANCASTER

MIDDLESEX

MATHIAS

NEWCASTLE

YORK

SPRINGFIELD

FAIRFAX

FAIRFAX

FAIRFAX

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## **Accomac County**

1. Baker, Elijah- Pelted with apples and stones
2. Baker, Elijah- Banishment attempted
3. Baker, Elijah- Jailed for preaching “Fifty-six days”

## **Amherst County**

1. Hargate, Thomas- Jailed for preaching

## **Botetourt County**

1. Alderson, John- Jailed for (?)

## **Caroline County**

1. Burrus, John- Jailed for preaching
2. Choning, Bartholomew- Jailed for (?)
3. Craig, Lewis- Arrested and required to give bond
4. Craig, Lewis- Jailed for preaching “Three months”
5. Craig, Lewis- Carried to Williamsburg on habeas corpus
6. Goolrich, James- Jailed for preaching
7. Herndon, Edward- Jailed for preaching
8. Pitman, Hipkins- Arrested and threatened with whipping
9. Pitman, James- Jailed for preaching “Sixteen days”
10. Pitts, Younger- Arrested, abused and released
11. Waller, John- Jerked off stage—head beaten against ground
12. Waller, John- Whipped severely by the Sheriff
13. Waller, John- Jailed for preaching. Ten days.
14. Ware, James- Jailed for preaching. Sixteen days.
15. Young, John- Jailed for preaching. Five or six months.

## **Chesterfield County**

1. Anthony, Joseph- Jailed for preaching “Three Months”
2. Chastain, Rane- Ordered to leave the county, or go to jail
3. Chastain, Rane- Comanded to take a dram, or be whipped
4. Clay, Eleazer- Man rode up to cowhide him—failed

5. Eastin, Augustine- Jailed for preaching
6. Tanner, John- Jailed for preaching. Gave bond.
7. Tinsley, David- Jailed for preaching. Four months and 16 days
8. Walker, Jeremiah- Jailed for preaching
9. Walker, Jeremiah- Denied the prison bounds
10. Weatherford, John- Jailed for preaching. Five months.
11. Weatherford, John- Denied the prison bounds
12. Weatherford, John- Hands slashed while preaching
13. Webber, William- Jailed for preaching. Three months.

### **Culpeper County**

1. Ammon, Thomas- Jailed for preaching
2. Banks, Adam- Jailed for (?)
3. Corbley, John- Frequently taken from pulpit—beaten
4. Corbley, John- Jailed for preaching
5. Craig, Elijah- Jailed for preaching “One Month”
6. Craig, Elijah- Jailed for preaching “Duration unknown”
7. Delaney, John- Jailed for permitting a man to pray
8. Harriss, Samuel- “You shall not preach here.”
9. Harriss, Samuel- Meeting broken up by a mob
10. Harriss, Samuel- Door battered down
11. Harriss, Samuel- Arrested as a vagabond, schismatic, etc.
12. Ireland, James- Tried to suffocate him with smoke
13. Ireland, James- Tried to blow him up with gun powder
14. Ireland, James- Tried to poison him. Injured for life.
15. Ireland, James- Drunken rowdies put in same cell with him
16. Ireland, James- Threatened with a public whipping
17. Ireland, James- Horses ridden over his hearers at jail
18. Ireland, James- Men made their water in his face
19. Ireland, James- Jailed for preaching. Five months.
20. McClannahan, William- Jailed for preaching
21. Maxwell, Thomas- Jailed for preaching
22. Moffett, Anderson- Jailed for preaching
23. Picket, John- Misrepresented by Parson before congregation
24. Picket, John- Jailed for preaching
25. Saunders, Nathaniel- Summoned to appear at court for preaching

26. Saunders, Nathaniel- Arrested and tried, but acquitted (or Orange)
27. Saunders, Nathaniel- Jailed for preaching
28. Thomas, David- Dragged out amidst clinched fists, etc. (or Orange)
29. Thomas, David- Attempt made to shoot him—battle followed (or Orange)

### **Essex County**

1. Lewis, Ivison- Arrested but not imprisoned
2. Shackelford, John- Jailed for preaching “Eight days”
3. Waford, Thomas- Arrested, searched and released
4. Waller, John- Jailed for preaching. Fourteen days.
5. Ware, Robert- Jailed for preaching. Eight days.

### **Fairfax County**

1. Major, Richard- Warrants issued but not executed
2. Moore, Jeremiah- Apprehended and carried before magistrate

### **Fauquier County**

1. Fristoe, Daniel- Service interrupted by curses and silly antics
2. Major, Richard- Warrants issued at Bull Run—defended—Giants
3. Major, Richard- Man went to meeting determined to kill him
4. Major, Richard- Mob so outrageous—nearly pulled to pieces
5. Marshall, William- Arrested but they failed to jail him
6. Picket, John- Great opposition from mobs and magistrates
7. Picket, John- Jailed for preaching. Three months or more.
8. Thomas, David- Pulled down while preaching—dragged out

### **Gloucester County**

1. Lewis, Ivison- “Met with violent opposition”

## **Hampshire County**

1. Taylor, John- Suffered the “rage of mobs”

## **Hanover County**

1. Waller, John- Hauled about by the hair of his head

## **James City County**

1. Walker, Jeremiah- Opposed by the “Parson and others”

## **King and Queen County**

1. Greenwood, James- Jailed for preaching “Sixteen days”
2. Lovall, William- Jailed for preaching “Sixteen days”

## **Lancaster County**

1. Lunsford, Lewis

## **Loudoun County**

1. Harriss, Samuel- Locked up in gaol for some time

## **Lunenburg County**

1. Lane, Dutton- “Charged not to come there again.”
2. Walker, Jeremiah- Sued in two actions for baptizing two boys

## **Middlesex County**

1. Afferman, John- Cruelly beaten—incapacitated for work
2. Falkner, Richard- Arrested but released
3. Greenwood, James- Presented for being absent from church
4. Greenwood, James- Jailed for preaching “Forty-six days”
5. Mullins, William- Presented for being absent from church
6. Street, Henry- Received one lash—prevented by companions



7. Waford, Thomas- Severely beaten with whip
8. Waller, John- Jailed for preaching. Forty-six days.
9. Ware, Robert- Presented for not going to church
10. Ware, Robert- Jailed for preaching. Forty-six days.
11. Webber, William- Jailed for preaching. Forty-six days.

### **Northumberland County**

1. Lunsford, Lewis- His preaching interrupted by mob violence and legal proscription

### **Orange County**

1. Chambers, Thomas- Jailed for (?)
2. Corbley, John- Jailed for preaching
3. Craig, Elijah- Jailed for preaching “Seventeen or 18 days”
4. Craig, Elijah- Jailed for preaching “A considerable time”
5. Craig, Joseph- Presented for being absent for church
6. Harriss, Samuel- Pulled down and hauled about by hair, hand, etc.
7. Leland, John- Threatened with a gun
8. Mastin, Thomas- Presented by grand jury
9. Morton, Elijah- Ousted as a Justice because he was a Baptist
10. Spencer, Joseph- Jailed for preaching
11. Tribble, Andrew- Presented for preaching
12. Wyley, Allen- Jailed for preaching. “For some time”

### **Pittsylvania County**

1. Elkins, Richard- Two men started for warrant. Frightened.
2. Harriss, Samuel- Mightily opposed and slandered
3. Lane, Dutton- Endured much persecution
4. Lane, Dutton- His mother beaten by his father
5. Marshall, Daniel- “Endured much persecution”

### **Richmond County**

1. Lunsford, Lewis

2. Lunsford, Lewis- Summoned and required to give bond

### **Shenandoah County**

1. Kaufman, Martin- Severely beaten with stick
2. Koontz, John- Severely beaten with butt end of large cane

### **Spotsylvania County**

1. Chiles, James- Jailed for preaching “Forty-three days”
2. Craig, Joseph- Apprehended, but escaped
3. Craig, Lewis- Indicted, tried, but not imprisoned
4. Craig, Lewis- Jailed for preaching “Four weeks”
5. Mash, William- Jailed for preaching “Forty-three days”
6. Reed, James- Jailed for preaching “Forty-three days”
7. Waller, John- Jailed for preaching. Forty-three days

### **Stafford County**

1. Fristoe, Daniel- Warrant issued but not executed
2. Fristoe, Daniel- Gun presented to his breast
3. Fristoe, William- Application for warrant for him refused
4. Fristoe, William- Pursued by man with gun, but escaped
5. Fristoe, William- Taken by a warrant, went to Philadelphia
6. Spiller, Philip- Jailed for preaching
7. Thomas, David- Violent opposition—worship prevented
8. Thomas, David- Ruffians armed with bludgeons to beat him
9. “Three Old Men”- Indicted, fined, but not imprisoned
10. Weeks, Anderson- Arrested on a warrant, but not imprisoned

### **Westmoreland County**

1. Lunsford, Lewis

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## **Nansemond**

1. Barrow, David- Ducked and nearly drowned by 20 men
2. Mintz, Edward- Ducked and driven away in his wet clothes

## **Norfleet's Ferry**

1. Tanner, John- Shot with a shotgun

## **North Carolina**

1. Harriss, Samuel- Knocked down while preaching

## **Location Unknown**

1. Clay, John- Jailed for preaching
2. Ireland, James- Opposition everywhere
3. Koontz, John- Met in the road and beaten
4. Koontz, John- Arrested and started to jail, but released
5. Moore, Jeremiah- Brutally assaulted by a mob
6. Murphy, Joseph- Carried before magistrate, not imprisoned
7. Reed, James- Dragged off stage, kicked and cuffed about
8. Waller, John- Almost rent asunder by friend and foe
9. Ware, Robert- Annoyed by men drinking and playing cards

Little, Lewis Peyton. Imprisoned Preachers and Religious Liberty in Virginia. J.P. Bell Co., Lynchburg, VA. 1938.