

Lydia (Maynard) Bathrick

By Ross W. Beales, Jr.

“God visited me with his sore and [heavy?] providence and Took away one of our Children by Deth.” Thus wrote Lydia Bathrick in the relation that she presented to the Westborough church prior to her admission on August 27, 1749. The death of her son Benjamin caused her to wonder whether Benjamin had been “taken away in Anger” because she had neglected her duty “in not renewing the Covenant Ingagment which I was under my self and having them Baptised.” Benjamin had died on October 14, 1746,¹ and it was now nearly three years later when she offered herself to “joyn with this Church: Desiring your prayers for me and your Acceptance of me.”

Why did it take so long? Why did she wait for nearly three years? She had read the invitation in Matthew 11:28, “Com unto me all ye that Labour and are heavy Laden and I will give you Reast.” But she also had taken heed of the warning in 1 Corinthians 11:29, “for he that Eateth and Drinketh unworthely Eateth and Drinketh Damnation to him self not discerning the Lord Body.” What was a person to do?

Lydia Bathrick had obviously hesitated, but then repeated deaths among her nearest neighbors in the last year made her think that it would be her turn and she would “Appear at the Bar of Crist having Neglected my Duty.” After all, had not Christ commanded, “Do this in Rememberence of me”? She had thought that if she “performd Such & such Things it would do.” Nonetheless, she realized that this would be “for Self-Ends and depending on Self Righteousness”; indeed, “the best of our Services are but sin.” But God had “of late” shown her “Sad State and Condition,” and she thought that she had been “brought to receive Christ” and that she was willing “by his Grace to Submitt To Him *wholly*.” Hearing a sermon on 1 Samuel 16:6,² “Sanctifie your Self and come with me to the Sacrifice,” she was “much movd to come and cast my Self upon Christ.” She was now ready, as she wrote, to “join my Self to his Church and people.” As Ebenezer Parkman noted in his diary, “Admitted Mr. David Batherick and Wife into the Church and administer’d the Lord’s Supper” (Aug. 27, 1749). A week later, the Bathricks offered their three children, Jonathan, Solomon, and Anna, for baptism.³

David and Lydia Maynard were married on May 12, 1742,⁴ but it is not clear when their first child was born. David recorded the births of Solomon and Anna with the town clerk: April

¹*Vital Records of Westborough, Massachusetts, to the End of the Year 1849* (Worcester, MA: Franklin P. Rice, 1903), 227; hereafter cited as *WVR*.

²On Apr. 16, 1749, Ebenezer Parkman’s afternoon sermon was “on 1 Sam. 16.5, those words ‘Come with me to the Sacrifice.’ The Body of the Exercise was sermon on 1 Cor. 10.16, from page 16 to the End of page 22.” This sermon is not among those at the American Antiquarian Society, the Westborough Public Library, or the Congregational Library and Archives.

³Westborough Church Records (Westborough Public Library), 85; hereafter cited as *WCR*. For the manuscript, go to [Westborough Church Records](#).

⁴*WVR*, 120.

22, 1746, and March 20, 1748, respectively.⁵ That Benjamin and Jonathan had not been baptized suggests that they were the Bathricks' first children. After their admission to the church, Lydia and David had four more children.⁶ Although Lydia's birth date is not known, she was probably in her late thirties or early forties when her last child, Stephen, was baptized on February 20, 1757.⁷

Like most women in eighteenth-century Westborough, little is known about Lydia Bathrick's life beyond what is in the church and vital records and the few entries in Parkman's diary. We may imagine her sorrow when her daughter, twenty-seven-year-old Mindwell, had a baby out of wedlock. Mindwell's son Aaron was born on January 3, 1777, with the birth recorded under the surname Hill.⁸ When Ebenezer Parkman visited, he "Severely rebuked" her (Apr. 22, 1777). Mindwell married Edmund Entwisthill on January 21, 1783.⁹ She offered a confession for fornication and her relation before her admission to the church on May 23, 1784,¹⁰ and had her child Aaron Hill baptized.

Lydia Bathrick's husband David died on August 4, 1794, and she followed on Friday, February 26, 1802, with Breck Parkman noting in his diary, "Old Mrs. Bathrick died." Her funeral was set for the following Sunday, and because of "Exceeding bad traveling," Parkman proposed to the Rev. John Robinson that he "have but one exercise which is accepted." Parkman was asked to be one of the bearers, causing him to reflect, "I am now so old a man as to be call'd to be a bearer to one of the Oldest persons in the Town, but so it is I am an old Man. May I realize the thot and make a proper Use of it."¹¹ Breck Parkman was all of fifty-three years old.¹²

⁵WVR, 14-15.

⁶Mindwell (Jan. 27, 1750), Lydia (Mar. 11, 1752), David (Nov. 15, 1754), and Stephen (baptized, Feb. 20, 1757); *ibid.*, 14.

⁷Historians and historical demographers use age forty-five as a proxy for menopause.

⁸WVR, 62.

⁹*Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁰WCR, 206, [393]; see [Mindwell Entwisthill's Confession and Relation](#).

¹¹Breck Parkman Diary (Parkman Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society), Feb. 26, 28, 1802.

¹²Breck Parkman was born on Jan. 27, 1749; WVR, 82.