"Black River is on the list of churches given by Semple as having delegates at the Sandy Creek Association in the year of its organization in 1758. This church seems to have been situated somewhere on Black River in the present county of Duplin, and was probably in some way connected with the church on Bull Tail, which is a creek emptying into Black River. On March 7, 1757, Rev. John Newton was ordained as its pastor, and probably served it in that capacity until his departure for South Carolina in 1765. This John Newton, according to Morgan Edwards, was born in Kent County, Pennsylvania, August 7, 1732; was baptized in 1752 by Rev. Isaac Potts in Southampton County, Virginia; was instrumental in the conversion of Rev. Philip Mulky near Roanoke in Halifax County, North Carolina, about 1756; was ordained in 1757; and after going to South Carolina he was again ordained as colleague to Rev. Joseph Reese in the ministry of the Congaree church in 1768. Both he and Reese got into trouble because they had accepted this ordination at the hands of two Particular Baptist ministers, Rev. Oliver Hart and Rev. Evan Pugh, and were silenced by the Sandy Creek Association. Reese making proper acknowledgements was restored but Newton refusing was forced to leave off in the midst of a useful and successful work. Morgan Edwards says that his labors in North Carolina were much blest."

Footnote 38: The date of his ordination is found in Morgan Edwards' Notebook on South Carolina Baptists, that of his coming to South Carolina in the materials, etc., for that State.
... Among the early converts and constituent members of Congaree Church were four men who later became ministers---Joseph Reese, John Newton, Thomas Norris, and Timothy Dargan. Congaree was for a time in Sandy Creek Separate Association, and at its division in 1771 enter Congaree Association under Rev. Joseph Reese as pastor. Mr. Reese seems to have caught the spirit of Mr. Mulkey: "his natural eloquence and command of the passions of his hearers were extraordinary". He and his assistants extended their efforts through a wide stretch of territory to such good effect that in 1772 there were branches established at Wateree Creek, Twenty-five Mile Creek, Amelia, and Four Holes, all of which remained with the parent church practically throughout the period under consideration. Rev. JOHN NEWTON, and Messrs. Timothy Dargan, Richard Bell, Ralph Jones, and John Blake aided Mr. Reese in the work of caring for these five meetings.

Footnote: 65 "Four Hole meeting was held in 1772 in a private house "60 miles off SSE" from Congaree; John Newton's plat of 200 acres in Halfway Swamp in 1770 (Plats, XVI, 474) suggests that he might have preached at Four Hole and Amelia--"

Footnote: 66 "Rev. John Newton was born Aug. 7, 1732, at Kent, Pa.; he was converted to Baptist principles in 1752 and baptized by Rev. Joshua Potts of Southampton; called to the ministry in N. C. on Mar. 7, 1757, he came to S. C. in 1765, having two surveys, the first on Halfway Swamp at Horsekin Creek of 200 acres in 1770, the second on waters of Little River of 150 acres in 1772 (Plats XVI, 474, 476); he married Kesiah Dorset by whom he had John, Jemima, Philip, James, Moses, and Phoebe by 1772; ordained at Congaree in February, 1768, by Oliver Hart and Evan Pugh, he was silenced by Congaree Church under the direction of Sandy Creek Separate Association for allowing Regular Baptist ministers to ordain him, and would never enter fully into ministerial work again; he removed to Georgia and died there early in 1791 --"
As proper intelligence from Georgia, got miscarried, I was under necessity to insert the number of members for October 1739, and I understand that till October 1790 there has been added to the Churches.

33 ordained and 39 licensed preachers.

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(a) Ordained in the spring 1790. (b) Died in Nov. 1790. (c) Moved since October 1790 to Crocker's Church, in Franklin, (N. C.)

(d) These three ministers in Georgia, with Nathaniel Hall in South Carolina, got separated from the Association and their Churches, on the account of sentiments, viz. holding Universal Provision and finally falling from grace, got forty members to join them, and in October 1790, set up their own association, called general Baptists.

THE ANNUAL REGISTER OF THE BAPTIST DENOMINATION, IN NORTH AMERICA: TO THE FIRST OF NOVEMBER, 1790

By: John Asplund
NAME: Newton, John, 1732-1791


SOURCE: The Colonial Clergy of Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina by: Rev. Frederick Lewis Weis

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JOHN NEWTON

A few extracts from the Diary of Rev. John Newton, the grandfather of Mr. John H. Newton, of Athens, and brother of sergeant Newton, of revolutionary notoriety, will show something of the spirit of the Association in that day. He was the pastor of Providence church, Jefferson county.

"Saturday, May 19th, 1787.---Started early (from Silas Mercer's), and to the Association in good time. Brother Bussey preached--after him, brother Cook preached. Letters from the churches were read."

"Sunday, May 20th, 1787.-----Sermons preached by Peter Smith, Jeremiah Walker and Abraham Marshall. Several other exhorted."

"Monday, May 21st.---The Association sat on business. Several ministers preached to the people in the woods; the power of God was present to heal. Brother Jeremiah Walker preached on baptism. Silas Mercer baptized brother Thomas. Lively times."

"Tuesday, May 22d.-----After singing, praying and exhorting, we parted in peace and great love."

This meeting was held at Whatley's Mills (Bethesda).

"Saturday, May 27th, 1788-----I came to the Association (at Kiokee) and found many of the ministers here. Sanders Walker preached. Letters were given in from near twenty churches. Silas Mercer was chosen Moderator and Jere Walker, clerk. All things done decently and in order."

"Saturday, October 18, 1788---We came to the meeting-house at Clark's Station. Vast multitudes gathered. Heard preaching. Read letters from the churches."

"Sunday, October 19th.----Heard several sermons."

"Monday, October 20th.---Went on business. Brother Hutchinson was received as a helper; several other ministers received as helpers. List of delegates called. Query brought in: What is Christian perfection? Answer God's children are prefectly justified before God, by the imputed righteousness of Christ, although they are imperfect in their sanctification."

"Saturday, May 16th, 1789-----Went to Association at Fowler's meeting-house (Long Creek). Brother Tinsley preached on "My grace is sufficient". Intermision. Large congregation.

"Afternoon.---Brother Cleveland preached. Brother Hutchinson gave an exhortation how God can love his people from eternity and yet condemn them in convictions. Election proved by one being struck under convictions and others left unconcerned as they were before."

"Saturday, May 15th, 1790--- Came down to the place of the Association, and found a large number of people."

"Sunday, May 16th---Brother Matthews preached from 2d Corinthians, 6:20: 'Now then we are ambassadors for Christ.' Brother Holcombe's text, Psalm 126:3: 'The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad.' Brother Marshall's text: 'And this man shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land'. Brother Silas Mercer preached on brother Marshall's text.

(continued next page)
"Monday, May 17th 1790---Letters from other Associations read. Appointed brethren Marshall, Mercer, Newton, Donald, Bussey and Sanders Walker, as a committee to prepare rules of Decurium and present them at the next Association."

This, perhaps, refers to the articles of Faith and rules of Decorum adopted in 1791.

"Monday, October 18th, 1790----Met early. Several ministers preached in the woods, at the stand. We sat on business and broke up before night, all in peace and love. Next Association to be on Saturday before third Sabbath in October, at Van's Creek."

Rev. John Newton came to Georgia from South Carolina, soon after the Revolution. Dr. B. Manly, Sr., in his history of the Charleston Baptist Church, mentions him as a minister and member of that church. He died soon after the session of the Georgia Association in 1790.

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