

*Narrative*  
A Faithful *Blunderton*  
**NARRATIVE**  
OF THE  
Surprizing Work of GOD  
IN THE  
**CONVERSION**  
OF  
Many HUNDRED SOULS in *Northampton,*  
and the Neighbouring Towns and Vil-  
lages of *New-Hampshire* in *New-England.*  
In a LETTER to the Rev<sup>d</sup> Dr. BENJAMIN  
COLMAN of *Boston.*  
Written by the Reverend Mr. EDWARDS, Minister  
of *Northampton,* on Nov. 6. 1736.  
And published,  
With a Large PREFACE,  
By Dr. WATTS and Dr. GUYSE.  
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~ Featured Work ~

EDWARDS, JONATHAN. *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of Many Hundred Souls in Northampton, and the Neighboring Towns and Villages of New-Hampshire in New-England. In a Letter to the Reverend Dr. Benjamin Colman of Boston.* Written by the Reverend Mr. Edwards, Minister of Northampton, on Nov. 6, 1736. And Published With a Large Preface, By Dr. Watts and Dr. Guyse. The Second Edition. London: Printed for John Oswald, at the Rose and Crown, in the Poultry, near Stocks-Market. MDCCLXXXVIII. [1738] Price stitch'd 1 s. bound 1 s. 6d. Duodecimo.

This is the epoch-making report by Edwards of the revival taking place in Northampton. "It reached John Wesley and is regarded as an immediate promoter of revivals in Great Britain, as well as of renewed and widespread American religious enthusiasm in 1740, when the Awakening merged into the greater international movement. This work became a revivalist manual, and was repeatedly reprinted during the Second Great Awakening after 1800..." —Nelson R. Burr: *Critical Bibliog. of Rel. in Amer.*, p.133.

Johnson: *The Printed Writings of Jonathan Edwards 1703-1758*, #8, the second London edition; a very early Edwards publications.

PAGE 2: *The general Character of the People of New-Hampshire*

The People of the *County*, in general, I suppose, are as *sober*, and *orderly*, and good sort of People, as in any Part of *New-England*; and I believe they have been preserved the freest by far, of any Part of the Country, from *Error*, and variety of *Sects* and Opinions. Our being so far *within* the Land, at a distance from *Sea-ports*, and in a Corner of the Country, has doubtless been one *Reason* why we have not been so much corrupted with *Vice*, as most other Parts. But without question, the *Religion*, and good Order of the *County*, and their purity in *Doctrine*, has, under God, been very much owing to the great Abilities, and eminent Piety, of my venerable and honoured Grandfather *Stoddard*. I suppose we have been the freest of any Part of the Land from unhappy *Divisions*, and *Quarrels* in our ecclesiastical and religious Affairs,

PAGE 3: till the late lamentable *\*Springfield Contention*.

We being much separated from other Parts of the Province, and having comparatively but little Inter-course with them, have from the beginning, till now, always managed our Ecclesiastical Affairs within ourselves; 'tis the Way in which the County, from its Infancy, has gone on, by the practical Agreement of all, and the Way in which our Peace and good Order has hitherto been maintained. ...

PAGE 12: ...

*A visible universal change of Conversation.*

Presently upon this, a great and earnest Concern about the great things of Religion, and the eternal World, became *universal* in all parts of the Town, and among Persons of all Degrees, and all Ages; the Noise amongst the *Dry Bones* waxed louder and louder: All other talk but about Spiritual and eternal things, was soon thrown by; all the Conversation in all Companies, and upon all occasions, was upon these things only, unless so much as was necessary for People carrying on their ordinary secular Business. Other Discourse than of the things of Religion, would scarcely be tolerated in any Company. The Minds of People were wonderfully taken off from the *World*, it was

treated amongst us as a thing of very little Consequence: They seem'd to follow their worldly Business, more as a part of

PAGE 13: their Duty, than from any Disposition they had to it; the *Temptation* now seemed to lie on that hand, to *neglect* worldly Affairs too much, and to spend too much Time in the immediate Exercise of Religion: Which Thing was exceedingly misrepresented by Reports that were Spread in different Parts of the Land, as tho' the People here had wholly thrown by all worldly Business, and betook themselves entirely to Reading, and Praying, and such like religious Exercises.

But altho' People did not ordinarily neglect their worldly Business, yet there then was the Reverse of what commonly is: *Religion* was with all sorts the great Concern, and the *World* was a thing only by the Bye. The only thing in their view was to get the Kingdom of Heaven, and every one appeared pressing into it: The Engagedness of their Hearts in this great Concern cou'd not *be hid*, it appear'd in their very Countenances. It then was a dreadful Thing amongst us to lie out of Christ, in danger every day of dropping into Hell; and what Persons minds were intent upon was to *escape for their Lives*, and to *fly from the Wrath to come*. All would eagerly lay hold of opportunities for their Souls; and were wont very often to meet together in private Houses for religious Purposes: And such Meetings when appointed were wont greatly to be thronged.

PAGE 14: There was scarcely a single Person in the Town, either old or young, that was left unconcerned about the great Things of the eternal World. Those that were wont to be the vainest, and loofest, and those that had been most disposed to think and speak slightly of vital and experimental Religion, were now generally subject to great awakenings. And the Work of *Conversion* was carried on in a most *astonishing* manner, and increased more and more; Souls did as it were come by Flocks to Jesus Christ. From Day to Day, for many Months together, might be seen evident Instances of Sinners brought *out of Darkness into marvelous Light*, and *delivered out of an horrible Pit*, and *from the miry Clay*, and *set upon a Rock with a new Song of Praise to God in their mouths*.

*In Spring 1735. the Town full of the presence of God.*

This Work of God, as it was carried on, and the Number of true Saints multiplied, soon made a glorious Alteration in the Town; so that in the Spring and Summer following, *Anno 1735*, the Town seemed

to be full of the Presence of God: It never was so full of *Love*, nor so full of *Joy*; and yet so full of Distress, as it was then. There were remarkable Tokens of God's Presence in almost every House. It was a time of Joy in *Families* on the account of Salvation's being brought unto

PAGE 15: them; *Parents* rejoicing over their Children as new born, and *Husbands* over their Wives, and *Wives* over their Husbands. *The goings of God* were then *seen in his Sanctuary*, God's Day was a *delight*, and his *Tabernacles* were *amiable*. Our publick *Assemblies* were then beautiful; the Congregation was alive in God's Service, every one earnestly intent on the Publick Worship, every *Hearer* eager to drink in the Words of the *Minister* as they came from his Mouth; the Assembly in general were, from time to time, in *Tears* while the Word was preached; *some* weeping with Sorrow and Distress, *others* with Joy and Love, others with Pity and Concern for the Souls of their Neighbours.

Our publick *Praises* were then greatly enliven'd; God was then served in our *Psalmody*, in some measure, in the *Beauty of Holiness*. It has been observable, that there has been scarce *any part* of Divine Worship, wherein good Men amongst us have had *Grace so drawn forth*, and their Hearts *so lifted up* in the Ways of God, as *in singing* his Praises: Our Congregation excell'd all that ever I knew in the external Part of the Duty before, the Men generally carrying regularly, and well, *three Parts of Musick*, and the *Women* a Part by themselves: But now they were evidently wont to sing with *unusual Elevation*

PAGE 16: of Heart and Voice, which made the Duty pleasant indeed.

In all *Companies*, on *other Days*, on whatever *Occasions* Persons met together, *Christ* was to be heard of, and seen in the midst of them. Our *young People*, when they met, were wont to spend the Time in talking of the *Excellency* and *dying Love* of JESUS CHRIST, the Gloriousness of the way of *Salvation*, the wonderful, free, and sovereign *Grace* of God, his glorious Work in the *Conversion* of a Soul, the *Truth* and Certainty of the great Things of God's Word, the Sweetness of the Views of his *Perfections*, &c. And even at *Weddings*, which formerly were meerly occasions of Mirth and Jollity, there was now no Discourse of any thing but the things of Religion, and no appearance of any but *spiritual Mirth*.

*Persons before converted greatly edify'd.*

Those amongst us that had been *formerly converted*,

were greatly enliven'd and renewed with fresh and extraordinary Incomes of the Spirit of God; tho' some much more than others, *according to the measure of the Gift of Christ*: Many that before had laboured under *Difficulties* about their own State, had now their *Doubts* removed by more satisfying Experience, and more clear Discoveries of God's Love.

PAGE 17: *Strangers from neighbour-towns surpriz'd doubtful, and at last brought under the same Divine Impressions.*

When this Work of God first appeared, and was so extraordinarily carried on amongst *us* in the Winter, *others* round about us, seemed not to know what to make of it; and there were many that scoffed at and ridiculed it; and some compared what we called Conversion to certain *Distempers*. But it was very observable of many, that occasionally came amongst us from abroad, with disregardful Hearts, that what they saw here cured them of such a Temper of Mind: *Strangers* were generally surprized to find Things so much *beyond* what they had heard, and were wont to tell others that the State of the Town could not be conceiv'd of by those that had not seen it. The Notice that was taken of it by the People that came to Town on occasion of the *Court*, that sat here in the beginning of *March*, was very observable. And those that came from the Neighbourhood to our publick *Lectures*, were for the most part remarkably affected. Many that came to Town, on one occasion or other, had their Consciences smitten, and awakened, and went home with wounded Hearts, and with those Impressions that never wore off till they had hopefully a saving Issue; and those that before had serious Thoughts, had

PAGE 18: their Awakenings and Convictions greatly increased. And there were many Instances of Persons that came from abroad, on Visits, or on Business, that had not been long here before to all Appearance they were savingly wrought upon, and partook of that Shower of divine Blessing that God rained down here, and went home Rejoicing; till at length the *same Work* began evidently to appear and prevail in several other Towns in the *County*.

*The work went thro' several neighbouring Towns.*

In the Month of *March*, the People in *South-Hadley* began to be seized with deep Concern about the Things of Religion; which very soon became universal: And the Work of God has been very wonderful there; not much, if any thing, short of what it has been here, in proportion to the bigness of the Place. About

the same Time it began to break forth in the West part of *Suffield*, (where it has also been very great) and it soon spread into all parts of the Town. It next appeared at *Sunderland*, and soon overspread the Town; and I believe was, for a Season, not less remarkable than it was here. About the same time, it began to appear in a part of *Deerfield*, called *Green-River*, and afterwards fill'd the Town, and there has been a glorious Work there: I began also to be manifest, in the South part of *Hatfield*, in

PAGE 19: a place called \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ the whole Town, in the second Week in *April*, seemed to be seized as it were at once, with Concern about the Things of Religion; and the Work of God has been *great* there. There has been also a very general Awakening at *West-Springfield*, and *Long-Meadow*; and in *Enfield*, there was for a time a pretty general Concern amongst the some that before had been very loose Persons. About the same time that this appeared in *Enfield*, the Reverend Mr. *Bull* of *Westfield* informed me, that there had been a great Alteration there, and that more had been done in one Week there than in *seven Years* before. Something of this Work likewise appeared in the first Precinct in *Springfield*, principally in the *North* and *South* Extremes of the *Parish*. And in *Hadley* old Town, there gradually appear'd so much of a Work of God on Souls, as at another time would have been thought worthy of much Notice. For a *short* time there was also a very great and general Concern, of the like nature, at *Northfield*. And wherever this Concern appeared, it seemed not to be *in vain*: But in every place God brought saving Blessings with him, and *his Word* attended with his *Spirit* (as we have all reason to think) return'd *not void*. It might well be said at that time in all Parts of the County, *Who are these that fly as a Cloud, and as Doves to their Windows?*

## PREFACE

...

Northampton, March 19th, 1737.

*We in this Town were the last Lord's Day the Spectators, and many of us the Subjects, of me of the most amazing Instances of divine Preservation, that perhaps was ever known in the Land: Our Meeting-House is old and decay'd, so that we have been for some time building a new one, which is yet unfinish'd: It has been observed of late, that the House that we have hitherto met in has gradually spread at bottom, the Cells and Walls giving way, especially in the Foreside, by reason of the Weight of Timber at top, pressing on the Braces that are inserted into the Posts and Beams of the house. It has so done more than ordinarily this Spring;*

*which seems to have been occasion'd by the heaving of the Ground by the extream Frosts of the Winter past, and its now setting again on that side which is next the Sun, by the Thaws of the Spring: By this means the under-pining has been considerably disorder'd, which People were not sensible of, till the ends of the Joysts which bore up the front Gallery, by the Walls giving way, were drawn off from the Girts on which they rested; so that in the midst of the publick Exercise in the Forenoon, soon after the beginning of Sermon, with all the Seats and Timber, suddenly and without any Warning sunk, and fell down, with most amazing noise, upon the Heads of those that sat under, to the astonishment of the Congregation, the House being fill'd with dolorous Shrieking and Crying; and nothing else was expected than to find many People dead, and dashed to pieces.*

*The Gallery in falling seem'd to break and sink first in the middle; so that those who were upon it were thrown together in heaps before the front Door: But the whole was so sudden, that many of them that fell knew nothing in time of it what it was that had befallen them; and others in the Congregation knew not what it was that had happen'd with so great a Noise; many thought it had been an amazing Clap of Thunder: The falling Gallery seem'd to be broken all to pieces before it got down; so that some that fell with it, as well as those that were under, were buried in the Ruins, and were found press'd under heavy Loads of Timber, and could do nothing to help themselves.*

*But so mysteriously and wonderfully did it come to pass, that every Life was preserved; and tho' many were greatly bruised, and their Flesh torn, yet there is not, as I can understand, one Bone broke, or so much as put out of Joint among them all: Some that were thought to be almost*

*dead at first, are greatly recover'd; and but one young Woman seems yet to remain in dangerous Circumstances, by an inward Hurt in her Breast: but of late there appears more Hope of her Recovery.*

*There is none can give any Account, or conceive by what Means it should come to pass, that People's Lives and Limbs should be thus preserov'd when so great a Multitude were thus imminently exposed: It looked as tho' it was impossible it should be otherwise, than that great Numbers should instantly be crushed to death or dashed in pieces: It seems unreasonable to ascribe it to any thing else, but the Care of Providence in disposing the Motions of every Stick of Timber, and the precise Place of Safety where every one should fit and fall, when none were in any Capacity to take care for their own Preservation. The Preservation seems to be most wonderful, with respect to the Women and Children that were in the middle Ally, under the Gallery, where it came down first, and with greatest Force, and where was nothing to break the Force of the falling Weight.*

*Such an Event may be a sufficient Argument of a Divine Providence over the Lives of Men. We thought ourselves called to set a-part a Day to be spent in the solemn Worship of God, to humble ourselves under such a Rebuke of God upon us in the time of publick Service in God's House by so dangerous and surprizing an Accident; and to praise his Name for so wonderful; and as it were Miraculous a Preservation; and the last Wednesday was kept by us to that End: And a Mercy in which the Hand of God is so remarkably evident, maybe well worthy to affect the Hearts of all that bear it.*

JONATHAN EDWARDS.

**Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you;  
considering the result of their conduct imitate their faith. Heb. 13:7**

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