CHAPLAINS IN THE WAR OF REVOLUTION

Any history of the War of the Revolution is incomplete without an inclusion of the religious elements. Chaplains and clergymen played a prominent part in the revolutionary struggle. This is the theme of an old book: The Chaplains and Clergy of the Revolution by J. T. Headley (Scribner's, 1864).

However, as J. T. Headley points out, most writers sadly overlook chaplains and the church. Suppose, he asks, religion was omitted from the Crusades. That would be like trying to build a structure without laying foundations.

Arthur Carl Piepkorn writes:

Chaplains were a part of all the colonies planted in the New World, and the British colonies had them in their colonial militia. Indeed, it is the regnant constitutional doctrine that in enacting legislation pertaining to chaplains in the Continental Congress in 1775 and the Congress of the United States in 1791 were exercising their authority to "raise and support armies" and "to make rules for their government and regulation of the land and naval forces.

Many of the chaplains during the French and Indian Wars, became pastors of churches. Most of them were still alive at the breaking of the Revolution, but too old to become chaplains once more. Yet they believed in the right of resistance; and they taught this to their congregations.

They were the humble pastors and from their flocks came numberless minutemen. At the battle cry that rolled over the land from Lexington to Concord, they shouldered muskets and went forth with the blessing of their pastor on their head; and his fervent prayers for their success following their footsteps.

One place in particular clergymen utilized the opportunity to set forth their view of the rights of man—that was the annual election day sermon. Thus through the pulpit they reached the masses showing
that the design and end of true government was the protection of the rights of all.

Two examples: Gad Hitchcock of Pembroke preached on May 25, 1774 on Proverbs 29:12:

When the righteous are in authority the people rejoice, but when the wicked bear rule the people mourn.

Hitchcock called attention to the suffering of the people under oppressive rulers. He challenged:

Society is cut from its mannerings, and hate and consternation reign on every side, and all because the wicked bear rule.
King George may say the evils that produce this state of things are imaginary, but I tell you; and I tell the tyrant to his face, it is because the wicked bear rule. 2

In 1774, Dr. Langdon of Harvard preached on the text:

And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city (Isaiah 1:26).

Langdon's sermon came after blood had already flowed at Lexington and Concord.

The election day sermons showed in what perfect harmony the pulses of the clergy and the people beat. Headley wrote:

The rebellion in New England rested on the pulpit--received its strongest impulse, indeed its moral character from it. 3

From the pulpit came the strong language:

Any people, when cruelly oppressed, have a right to throw off the yoke and be free. 4

King and Parliament have assumed to tax us without our consent... But if they have the right to take our properties from us without our consent, we must be wholly at their mercy for food and raiment, and we know, by sad experience, that their tender mercies are cruel...

Our towns have been burned; our brethren have been slain; our vessels have been taken; our goods have been spoiled. 5

In these sermons and in their action, the clergy performed the most active and important part in the education of New England for the revolution. Note one of their prayers:
Lord, raise a dreadful tempest and affright them, and let thy tremendous storms make them quake with fear, and pursue them with thine arrow, till they are brought to see that God is with us of a truth, and fighteth for us, and so return to their own lands, and covered with shame and confusion, and humble themselves before thee, and seek to appease thine anger by a bitter repentance for their murderous designs.

The appointment of clergymen to official positions in the army and navy, under designation of chaplains, is a custom of long standing. Washington in the French and Indian Wars had more than once requested the Governor of Virginia to allow him a chaplain for his regiment. Deeply gratified was he that the New England colonies were supplying chaplains.

On August 15, 1775, Washington reported fifteen chaplains who performed service for 23 regiments; while 29 regiments were without chaplains.

Late in December in 1775, Washington wrote the Continental Congress:

I have long had it in my mind to mention it to Congress, that frequent applications have been made to me respecting the chaplains' pay, which is too small to encourage men of abilities. Some of them who have left their flocks are obliged to pay the parson acting for them more than they receive. I need not point out the great utility of gentlemen, whose lives and conversation are unexceptional, being employed in that service in this army.

One is the advancement of their pay; the other, that one chaplain be appointed to two regiments. This last, I think, can be done without inconvenience. I beg leave to recommend this matter to Congress, whose sentiments hereon I shall impatiently expect.

At first the chaplains were not numerous. On May 25, 1775, a Provincial of Massachusetts reported:

Whereas it has been represented to this Congress that several ministers of the religious assemblies within this Colony have expressed their willingness to attend the army in the capacity of chaplains, as they may be directed by the Congress, therefore:

Resolved, That it be and is hereby recommended to the ministers of the several religious assemblies within the Colony that, with the leave of their congregations, they attend said army in their several towns to the number of thirteen at one time, during the time the army shall be encamped, and that they make known their resolution to the Congress thereon, or to the committee of safety as soon as may be.

Washington did not let anything divert his mind from the importance
of having a full supply of chaplains. And Congress immediately adopted his views.

On July 9, 1776, Washington wrote:

The honorable Continental Congress having been pleased to allow a chaplain to each regiment, with the pay of thirty-three and one-third dollars per month, the colonels or commanding officers of each regiment are directed to procure chaplains—accordingly persons of good character and exemplary lives—to see that all inferior officers and soldiers pay them a suitable respect, and attend carefully upon religious exercises. The blessings and protection of Heaven are at all times necessary, but especially is it in times of public distress and danger. The General hopes and trusts that every officer and man will endeavor so to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier, defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country.

Many clergymen were appointed chaplains due to their outside influence. They were bold and active patriots and they stirred up rebellion; furthermore, they encouraged the weak and the timid by example, by teaching, and by a heroism and lofty trust in the righteousness of the cause they vindicated.

Honeywell in Chaplains of the United States Army writes:

What appears to have been the first instance in the English colonies of settled civilian pastors being selected officially to serve as military chaplains in an emergency was in the spring of 1637. The occasion was the calling of the first general court of the Colony of Connecticut. There shall be an offensive war against the Pequots...A draft of 90 men were were ordered to go on this expedition...John Mason was in command and Samuel Stone of Hartford, 35 years old, was named the chaplain....

In most parts of the country, the loyalist clergy and those who advocated nonresistance to British policy were a distinct minority...

That is to say, most clergymen were in active support of the Revolution. "It was said of Cleaveland that he preached his whole parish into the army, then went himself"... 9

This is not unusual. Clergymen and other colonists had come to America—many of them—to escape some form of restriction upon their political, economic, social or religious freedom.

In Rebel Religion by Herman Norden we find these facts:
179 chaplains served officially during the Revolutionary War...

July 29, 1775: Continental Congress adopted a resolution embodying the legal origin of the Corps of Chaplains.

John Hurt on the date March 4, 1791 became the first chaplain in the Army of the United States. He was an Episcopalian.

The Revolutionary War Records show three chaplains killed; two wounded; more than 10 captured; one drowned in a prison escape attempt; and eight claimed by natural death.

The chaplaincy was revitalized in 1838. On July 5, 1838, Congress increased the military establishment and specified 20 chaplaincy posts.

About 100 chaplains served officially between the days of John Hurt and 1861. 10

Where did the 179 chaplains of the Revolutionary War come from?

Honeywell lists them:

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<td>Massachusetts</td>
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\text{Total} = 179 \quad 11
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What were the denominations of those fighting the war? An enumeration of religious organizations shows 3,105 congregations in the thirteen colonies in 1775. These included 658 Congregational; 543 Presbyterian; 498 Baptists; 480 Anglican; 395 Quaker; 291 German and Dutch Reformed; 151 Lutheran; 50 Catholic; a few Jewish groups; the beginning of the Methodist movement and a few others. 12

Many clergymen ministered to the troops without formal appointment, for longer or shorter periods. Some were appointed by the governors.
others were chosen by brigade officers; others by field officers and captains; some by the legislatures. Later, the Continental Congress appointed chaplains.

What was their pay? Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire legislatures paid their chaplains six pounds a month at the outset; by 1777 they were paying ten pounds with a higher rate for brigade chaplains. In that year Delaware paid chaplains $40.

What was the date of the origin of the chaplaincy? Honeywell tells us:

On 29 July 1775 Congress adopted a scale of pay for the army. Chaplains were allowed $20 a month, the amount authorized for captains. As this is the earliest national legislation known to recognize the chaplaincy in the Army of the United States, the date has been established officially as that of the origin of the Federal chaplaincy. 13

The British were aware of the tremendous influence of the clergy in the Colonies. A chaplain when taken prisoner would usually be treated with courtesy. But some of the British were not so kind. Once they had laid their hands on an American chaplain who had opposed the British, then it was rough going. They were treated with barbarous severity. They hated the chaplains for the influence they bore. They hated them for their obstinacy and courage they infused in the "rebels." So they violated all the rules of war among civilized men in order to inflict punishment upon them.

In 1774 the Tory governor of Massachusetts refused the request of the Assembly to appoint a fast, "for," said he, "the request was only to give an opportunity for sedition to flow from the pulpit." 14

Headley's book, mentioned earlier gives brief biographical sketches of 74 chaplains and clergymen who were distinguished for their patriotism and who stand in the days of the Revolution and after as representatives of those who "fed the fires of liberty and sustained the courage of the people."
These were men of learning and culture; they were looked up to for advice and counsel; whose praise was not only in all the churches, but throughout the land for their integrity, ability and love of country.

A few quotes from these men or a penetrating word about what they did will give an understanding of the work of the chaplains during the war of the Revolution:

1. Were it not that my nerves are unstrung, and my limbs enfeebled with age, on such a call as you have, I think I should willingly quit the desk, put on my priestly garments, buckle on the harness, and, with trumpet in hand, hasten to the battle.
---Joseph Fish of Massachusetts at age 76

2. You see him stooping over the couch of the wounded; nursing the sick; aiding the destitute and suffering.
---Spoken of Dr. Nathan Strong of Connecticut

3. He sent four sons into the army, only one of whom lived to hear the anthems of peace that rolled over the liberated land.
---Dr. Samuel McClintock of New Hampshire

4. When an unusual number of his parishioners were drafted into the army, in order to encourage them, he shouldered his knapsack, and accompanied them as a common soldier on their campaign.
---Dr. Latta of Pennsylvania

5. He prayed with soldiers at Bunker Hill, then seized a musket and fought valiantly to the close of battle.
---John Martin

6. Was accustomed to make his parish visits with a musket on his shoulder, to protect himself from the tories who had sworn to hang him, and kept his garret full of gunpowder, for the use of his parishioners in case of attack.
---Nathaniel Barlett of Pennsylvania

7. At two o'clock at night, peal after peal from the belfry called the excited inhabitants together. The pastor was already there. His people had already been taught that resistance to tyranny was obedience to God. The pastor said: "From this day will be dated the liberty of the world."
---Jonas Clark of Massachusetts

8. Look down we beseech thee on these our American states, who have fled to thee from the rod of the oppressor.
---Jacob Duché in a prayer before Continental Congress

9. Some regarded chaplains as adjuncts of the army, not expected to share perils and sufferings of the common soldier. But in the Revolutionary War it was not so. We find them huddled down at Valley Forge; facing the storm in the wintry march on Trenton; covered
with smoke of the conflict at Bennington, attached to every expedition, and standing under the enemy's fire at Yorktown.

10. They killed their dogs for meat to eat; they tore off their moose skin moccasins and boiled them to extract a little nourishment. Spring bore his part in all these hardships and disasters with unshaken fortitude.

   --Samuel Spring, Massachusetts

11. Shall I then sit still, and enjoy myself at home, when the best blood of the continent is spilling? --Peter Gabriel Muhlenburg
   (This is the question that sent many preachers into the chaplaincy.)

12. He is a marked man; and his clerical profession will not save his neck from the halter, if he once falls into the hands of the enemy. --Spoken of Thomas Allen

13. Our camp is filled with blasphemers, and resounds with the language of the infernal regions. Oh, that officers and men might fear to take the holy and tremendous name of God in vain....

   --Thomas Allen

14. Just before the death of Allen he was urged to take some nourishment for he could not live otherwise. He replied: "Live; I am going to live forever."

   --Thomas Allen

15. Timothy Dwight entered Yale College at age 13. As man of God "his form was finely proportioned, while his voice, rich, full and melodious, fell like the softened strains of a bugle on the ear."

16. Let me write the songs of the nation, and you make its laws. --Timothy Dwight

17. Dubois' regiment is unfit to be ordered on duty, there being not one blanket in the regiment. Very few have either a shoe or a shirt, and most of them have neither stockings, breeches, nor overalls. Several companies of enlisted artificers are in the same situation, and unable to work in the field. Several hundred men are rendered useless merely for want of necessary apparel, as no clothing is permitted to be stopped at this post.

18. His fame as a theologian, his eloquence as a preacher, his brilliant talents and best feelings were given to his country and to his God.

   --Spoken of Timothy Dwight

19. I do not know whether I shall do more for the cause in the capacity of chaplain than I could in that of poet. I have great faith in the influence of songs, and I shall continue while fulfilling the duties of my appointment to write one now and then to encourage the taste of them which I find in the camp. One good song is worth a dozen addresses or proclamations.

   --Joel Barlow
20. Gave toast after news of Declaration of Independence: "Harmony, honor, and all prosperity to the free and independent United States of America." The darker the prospects became, the higher rose his resolution.

--James Caldwell of Virginia

21. Told his case was hopeless, he replied: "I have always remembered my God. I have never forgotten Him in my study, in my family, in my rural neighbors, and on the field of battle, and I doubt not He will support me now in old age, and in death."

--Benjamin Trumbull of Connecticut

22. One cannot look anywhere over the thirteen States during that struggle or along their bleeding frontiers without seeing the clergy standing as bulwarks of freedom or toiling singlehanded for its success.

--Samuel Kirkland of Connecticut

23. He believed he was equally doing God's service whether fighting or praying.

--James Hall of Pennsylvania

24. I could not remain at home as a spectator.

--So said Daniel McCalla of Pennsylvania

25. Clergymen in the field, in the pulpit, in the councils of the nation, in the halls of government lending both the sanctions of their office and the ripened fruit of long years of experience to promote the success of the revolutionary cause.

--John Witherspoon of New Jersey

26. He was beside Washington in his melancholy retreat through New Jersey. Commented: "The lustre of our commander's presence and magnanimity gave a charm to our gloomy misfortune—it animated and raised our spirits above the power of undue fear."

--David Avery of Connecticut

27. Washington warmly received him and "saw in him the embodiment of all those qualities he wished in a chaplain": Intrepid and fearless in battle; unwearied in his attention to the sick and wounded; love for country so strong it became a passion; cheerful under privations; ready for any hardship; and never losing that warm and glowing piety which characterized the devoted minister of God.

--David Avery of Connecticut

28. A thrilling spectacle to see: Israel Evans "the war-worn chaplain standing on the bloody field of Yorktown—the wreck of the fight strewn all around him, and lifting his peans of praise to Washington and his shout of thanksgiving to God."

--Israel Evans of Pennsylvania

29. These things I have preached to others, and these things I
believe as fully as that the Bible is the word of God, and this I believe as fully as that the Son of God was made manifest in the flesh, and this I believe as fully as that God governs the world, and this I believe as fully as I believe in my own present existence and approaching dissolution. Lord, help mine unbelief.

--Cotton Mather Smith of Connecticut

30. When they wanted the destruction of the foe, they didn't say some-else. Their enemies were the enemies of God. Prayer of Judah Champion: "Make them strong men, one to chase a thousand; hold before them the shield of protection; give them swift feet and swords terrible as those of thy destroying enemies; preserve these servants of thine; bring them once more to their homes and their friends; if they shall die in battle, may they go up as a sweet sacrifice into the courts of thy temple."

--Connecticut

31. He took sides fearlessly with the colonies. He denounced sternly and fearlessly the encroachments of the mother country. He became an object of dread and hate to the tories. People flocked to hear him.

--George Duffield of Pennsylvania

32. For after all the definitions of patriotism that ever was or ever will be given, this is the quintessence of it, the opposing of ourselves foremost in the field of battle against the enemies of our country.

--John Hurst of New Jersey

33. It is natural to be afraid; but "Be not afraid of them" is the voice of heaven. It is the voice of your bleeding country, the voice of the Church, and the voice of all who are dear to you. The hour is expected when you will have it in your power to do the most signal, important and lasting service to your native land. Let her not be disappointed. Rejoice that you have an opportunity to contribute your whole might for the deliverance of your country from the disturbers of the common peace, and robbers of the rights of mankind. They are armed to deprive us of our liberty and prosperity, they are armed to ruin our families, to murder both them and us or to reduce us to the most abject slavery.

--William McKay Tennent of Connecticut

The most distinguished Baptist chaplain during the Revolution was John Gano. He was born in Hopewell, New Jersey, July 22, 1727. Called to preach, he was ordained, then went as a missionary to Virginia, a pastor to North Carolina (1758), then back home again as minister and as a chaplain to American troops.

He saw Washington's retreat through New Jersey and was distressed at
the failures of his countrymen; yet he wanted to share their perils. He accompanied the army in its retreat to North Castle; made the midnight march on Trenton and shared the dangers that followed.

General Clinton's brigade, consisting of four regiments, had no chaplain and urged Gano to accept the post. Soon he received his commission from Congress. When the brigade was not in active service, Gano was a pastor among his people.

He served at Fort Montgomery, just below West Point; at Fort Clinton; and with the expedition against the Indians in Western New York. He was popular among the troops and always had an attentive audience.

His known coolness in danger, and even complete sang froid when under fire of the enemy made him a great favorite with the troops, and indeed an admiration to the officers. 15

Yet he did not hesitate to rebuke sin and put in words of admonition. One morning on way to regimental prayers, he passed by a group of officers. One did not see him and was swearing in an excited manner. When the profane lieutenant turned around and saw Chaplain Gano, he checked himself.

"Good morning, doctor," he said.

Gano replied: "I see you pray early."

The abashed officer stammered out: "I beg your pardon, sir."

Gano replied, passing on: "I cannot pardon you, you must carry your case to God."

On one occasion, General Clinton prepared to celebrate the Fourth of July. In the afternoon the ground was cleared of brushes; and in the evening there was a parade and a sermon afterward. Gano mounted the platform and exclaimed: "This day shall be a memorial unto you throughout your generations."
George Washington collected the army in New Jersey and suddenly broke camp and marched into Virginia. Cornwallis was shut up at Gloucester Point and compelled to capitulate. Clinton asked Gano to stay behind with his aid who was sick. They did not again reached the troops until the British had capitulated.

Gano returned to Newbury; and then went on to New York. He found his house dilapidated and plundered; but he settled down and pastored his people for some time.

Later he moved to Kentucky (1781) where he settled near Frankfort. Death came in 1804 in his 75th year.

Sprague in *Annals of the American Pulpit* (pp.237-238), says in part:

Gano's presence was manly, open and engaging. His voice strong and commanding, yet agreeable and capable of all those inflections which are suited to express either the strong or tender emotions of an intelligent, feeling mind. In mental endowments and acquired abilities he appeared highly respectable; with clear conception and penetrating discernment, he formed, readily, a correct judgment of men and things....To the refinements of learning he did not aspire--his chief desire was such a competent acquaintance with the principles as would enable him to apply them with advantage to purposes of general usefulness in religion, and the most important uses of society; and to this he attained....Such was the trusted friend of Washington. He was brave and true, and made an indelible impression on the soldiers with whom he associated. 16

Henry Clay said of the ministry of John Gano of Lexington, Kentucky:

He was a remarkably fervent preacher and distinguished for a simple and effective manner. And of all the preachers I ever listened to, he made me feel the most that religion was a divine reality. I never felt so religious under any one's preaching as under his.

"THE JOHN GANO EVIDENCE OF GEORGE WASHINGTON'S RELIGION"

This bulletin of William Jewell College deals with two questions:

1. What was the status of the Baptists during the Revolution?
2. Did John Gano baptize George Washington?

The revolutionary period was a time of rapid multiplication for the
Baptists. In 1770 there were but 97 churches. (The 34 churches in the Philadelphia Association averaged 69 and 2/3rds members each. If this average held out through the Colonies, the total Baptist membership would be around 6,800.

In 1784 (14 years later) there were 471 churches, with 35,101 members.

In that 14 years of general distress and distraction, some churches like that of John Gano were utterly scattered—"forsaken and occupied for civil and martial purposes." Yet the membership multiplied by more than five.

The first Baptist church in Virginia, north of the James River, was not organized until Washington was 11 years old, then it was 75 or 100 miles away, on the frontiers of the inhabited portion of the State. It was there Washington did his first work as a surveyor. Note three things: 1. Washington surveyed these woods; 2. These woods were full of Baptists; 3. Baptists in those days did not hide their light under a bushel. They were busy evangelizing. James Reed of North Carolina and Colonel Samuel Harris visited, and preached, and there were many converts. In one case more than 200 were baptized.

This all did not happen smoothly for Baptists were persecuted. But while kept in prison they preached through open-grated windows. We know that Washington was opposed to persecution. We know, too, that John Blair, attorney-general endorsed the Spotsylvania Baptists. Once more, John Waller, a notorius character was converted.

Washington insisted on having good chaplains, on having them adequately paid, and on having them diligently to attend to their religious work. His "Orderly Book" showed the following order as issued July 9, 1776:

The honourable Continental Congress having been pleased to allow a chaplain to each regiment, with pay of thirty-three dollars and one-third per month, theolonels or commanding officers of each are directed to procure chaplains accordingly persons of good
character and exemplary lives to see that all inferior officers and soldiers pay them suitable respect. The blessing and protection of Heaven are at times necessary, but especially so in times of public distress and danger. The General hopes and trusts, that every officer and man will endeavor to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier, defending the dearest liberties and rights of his country. 18

After a time is was decided to have only one chaplain for each brigade instead of having one for each regiment or two, thus reducing the number but exalting the rank and requirements of the office. The resolution of Congress May 27, 1777, reads:

Resolved, that for the future, there be only one chaplain allowed each Brigade of the army and that such chaplain be appointed by Congress. That each brigade chaplain be allowed the same pay, rations and forage allowed to a colonel in said corps:

That each brigadier-general be requested to nominate and recommend to Congress a proper person for chaplain to his brigade.

And that they recommend none but such as are clergymen of experience, and established public character for piety, virtue and learning.

It is interesting to note that in a list of 21 Brigadier-Chaplains which had been chosen within a year after the order calling for them, more are Baptists than any other denomination. Five were Congregationalists; three were Presbyterians; two were Episcopalians; six were Baptists. And five were unknown.

The six Baptists were: Hezekiah Smith, William Vanhorn, Charles Thompson, John Gano, David Jones, and William Rogers. We know quite a bit about Gano; and something of Hezekiah Smith and William Rogers. For example, Hezekiah Smith wrote in his diary:

Aug. 1778. I preached a sermon to our brigade from Malachi 2:5. His excellency General Washington attended. I dined with him the same day.

Smith was founder and 40 years pastor of the church in Haverhill, Massachusetts. He was chaplain in the army for over five years.

The first student in Brown University and for a while the only one was William Rogers. In 1778 he was promoted to brigade chaplain in the
Continental Army where he served five years.

The question: Did Chaplain John Gano baptize General George Washington? may be answered, of course, yes or no. Those who say no find no direct evidence in support of this view. On the other hand, some very serious studies and research have indicated a strong probability that the answer is yes. A small, convincing pamphlet written by L. C. Barnes and published by William Jewell College sets forth direct and indirect evidence. Bulletin, Wm. Jewell College. Series 24, Volume 1. Published September 15, 1926.

The point-of-view of this pamphlet is that Washington became convinced that he had never personally obeyed one of the explicit teachings of Christ, taught by word and example. And he carried this out privately. "He was too wise a man to make public in any way a purely private religious matter."

Direct evidence is presented:

1. Dr. S. F. (?) Gano declared in a notarized statement (August 16, 1889) that he had often heard his mother say that her father (the Rev. John Gano) had baptized (immersed) General Washington.

2. Jacob Creath, brother of Joseph W. D. Creath, lived in Palmyra, Missouri, in 1874. David Benedict visited there. He gave my mother the life of Doctor John Gano. He told my mother Gano was Chaplain to General Washington; and that he immersed Washington during the war privately; and that Washington did not wish to make it known.

Barnes sets forth his point of view: We have reasonably gathered that the Episcopalian atmosphere which Washington breathed may have been, if not favorable, at least not hostile to a correct view as to what was the primitive act of baptism.

Washington never severed his connection with the church of his birth,
but we can easily understand how he may have believed that change of ecclesiastical relation might impair in his judgment and influence as the leader of the people in those bitterly partisan and troublous times especially as the few Baptists were surely devoted to the Republic anyway.

Washington might well have been privately immersed and yet remained an adherent of the Episcopal Church.

It is also probable that Gano baptized Washington without a vote of a church and without his becoming a member of a Baptist church. During the Civil War hundreds of soldiers were baptized by Baptist chaplains, many of them during active campaigns.

Stephen Gano (M. D. and minister), 36 years pastor of the First Baptist Church, Providence, Rhode Island, said of his father:

He had no scruples at administering the ordinance of baptism to all in whom we could recognize the characteristics of genuine discipleship of our blessed Lord, whether they were about to become church members with his own denomination, or to unite in other communities. 21

Washington knew that Baptists were his strongest supporters, not simply because they were Americans, but also because they were Baptists, and it was in their fibre to fight for liberty. 22