Basil Woodd

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Woodd, Basil

(1760–1831)

E. I. Carlyle, revised by Leon Litvack

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Woodd, Basil (1760–1831), hymn writer, was born at Richmond, Surrey, on 5 August 1760, the only son of Basil Woodd (1730–1760) of that town, and his wife, Hannah (*d.* 12 Nov 1784), daughter of William Price of Richmond. He was educated by Thomas Clarke, rector of Chesham Bois in Buckinghamshire, and matriculated from Trinity College, Oxford, on 7 May 1778, graduating BA in February 1782 and MA in 1785. On 16 March 1783 he was ordained deacon, and in 1784 priest. On 10 August 1784 he was chosen lecturer of St Peter's, Cornhill, a post which he retained until 1808. In February 1785 he was appointed morning preacher at Bentinck Chapel, Marylebone, and soon after entering on his duties established evening preaching, an innovation which at first provoked opposition and afterwards imitation. He was able to purchase the lease of Bentinck in 1793, since it was a proprietary chapel. On 5 April 1808 he was instituted rector of Drayton Beauchamp, Buckinghamshire.

Woodd exerted himself successfully in establishing schools. Under his superintendence at least 3000 children passed through the schools connected with Bentinck Chapel. He was an active member of many religious societies, including the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the Church Missionary Society, and the British and Foreign Bible Society. During his lifetime he published devotional works, a metrical psalter, and some original hymns, a few of which came into general use; the most notable of these was 'Hail, thou source of every blessing'. Woodd was twice married: first, on 8 February 1785, to Ann (*d.* 23 April 1791), daughter of Colonel Wood, and, second, on 3 July 1792, to Sophia Sarah (*d.* 15 Aug 1829), daughter of William Jupp of Wandsworth, an architect. With his first wife he had a son, Basil Owen (*d.* 1811), and two daughters, Anne Louisa (*d.* 1824) and Anna Sophia (*d.* 1817); with his second wife he had two sons and a daughter. Woodd died at Paddington Green, Middlesex, on 12 April 1831.

Sources

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J. Julian, ed., *A dictionary of hymnology*, rev. edn (1907)

Likenesses

R. W. Sievier, stipple, pubd 1817 (after miniature by J. Barry), BM, NPG

portrait, repro. in *A family record*

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