

Pam
F
Pa
7

Cornell University Library
Pamphlet F Pa. 7

Historical reminiscences of the United P



3 1924 031 734 449
olin, str1

CORNELL
UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY



GAYLAMOUNT
PAMPHLET BINDER
Manufactured by
GAYLORD BROS. Inc.
Syracuse, N. Y.
Stockton, Calif.

7. 9
F 123

not in

Historical Reminiscences.

Oxford

United Presbyterian

Congregation.

1753—1889.

216

Historical Reminiscences

OF THE

United Presbyterian Congregation

of Oxford, Pa.

*ONE OF THE OLDEST ASSOCIATE CONGREGATIONS IN AMERICA
AND THE CONNECTING LINK BETWEEN THE UNITED
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA AND
THE MOTHER CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.*

BY REV. J. B. DALES, D. D.

OXFORD, PA.:
HAYES & BRINTON, Printers.
1880.

F-7
7

ANNEX

The manuscript of the "Historical Reminiscences of the United Presbyterian Congregation of Oxford" having been solicited and granted for publication, the following committee was, at a joint meeting of Session and Trustees on March 25, 1889, appointed to publish the same, together with such other matter of historic interest as they might deem worthy of preservation.

REV. W. M. STORY,
J. CYRUS KERR,
JOSEPH R. STRICKLAND,
J. H. A. HUTCHISON,
Committee.

Copies can be had for twenty-five cents, by addressing the Treasurer of the Committee, J. H. A. HUTCHISON, Oxford, Chester county, Pa.

DIRECTORY OF 1889.

PASTOR.

REV. WM. MURRAY STORY.

SESSION.

JOHN A. KERR,

J. CYRUS KERR,

R. FRANK WILSON,

J. HERVEY A. HUTCHISON,

M. AUGUSTUS CROWL.

TRUSTEES.

M. JAMES WILSON,

JOS. R. STRICKLAND,

JOHN D. GROFF.

SUCCESSION OF OFFICERS.

PASTORS.

Rev. Alexander Gellatly,	-		1754—1758.
Rev. Matthew Henderson,	-		1758—1781.
Rev. John Smith,	-	-	1783—1794.
Rev. Ebenezer Dickey,	-		1796—1822.
Rev. William Easton,	-		1827—1854.
Rev. J. H. Andrew,	-	-	1855—1863.
Rev. E. T. Jeffers,	-	-	1865—1872.
Rev. G. A. B. Robinson,	-		1873—1876.
Rev. R. T. Wylie,	-	-	1877—1880.
Rev. A. H. Crosbie,	-	-	1881—1887.
Rev. W. M. Story,	-	-	1888—

RULING ELDERS.

William Fulton,	-	Elected 1828.
James Hutchison, Esq.,	-	" "
Matthew Gibson,	-	Ordained "
Joseph Hutchison,	-	Admitted 1830.
John Moore,	-	" 1831.
Nathaniel Hudders,	-	" 1844.
John A. Kerr,	-	Ordained 1855.
James W. Hutchison,	-	" 1855.
J. Cyrus Kerr,	-	" 1866.
R. Frank Wilson,	-	" "
Dr. J. F. H. Patterson,	-	" "
J. Hervey A. Hutchison,	-	" 1884.
M. Augustus Crowl.	-	" "

INTRODUCTION.

No apology is needed for the publication of these Reminiscences. The name of the author and his personal acquaintance for many years with the congregation recommend them.

The matter having reference to one of the oldest Associate Churches in America will prove interesting to every student of church history, and especially to every lover of the United Presbyterian Church. Our object is to save from oblivion many interesting facts concerning this historic congregation. Oxford congregation is a connecting link between the United Presbyterian Church of America and the mother church of Scotland. It is but just to say that Octoraro congregation shares in this honor, for tradition says both congregations were organized the same day into one pastoral charge.

The causes which led to this organization date back to the time when Revs. Ebenezer Erskine, Alexander Moncrief, William Wilson and James Fisher seceded from the Established Church of Scotland. The principles for which these men contended were maintained most faithfully by some of the noble men who had fled from Scotland and Ireland to America, where they could be free in the exercise of their religion. They, too, desired purity of worship. The word of God was their guide. Their consciences must be obeyed.

They could not unite with the Presbyterian Church of America without burying truth for which they believed the word of God required them to testify. Hence, as early as 1736 a communication was received by the Associate Presbytery of Edinburgh from Londonderry, Lancaster (now Chester) county, Pennsylvania, containing an urgent request for a minister of the gospel, or a probationer, to labor amongst the inhabitants of that district.

The demands, however, made upon the Associate Presbytery for laborers in the home field were so numerous that they were compelled to defer for a time the sending of Missionaries across the Atlantic.

Fourteen years after this petitions were again sent from the colonies of Lancaster and Chester counties, Pennsylvania, for supply of preaching. It was not, however, until 1753 that the mother church actually complied with their request by sending two missionaries, Revs. Alexander Gellatly and Andrew Arnott. These faithful men left Scotland in a short time after they received their appointment, and by November 2 of the same year they organized, as they had been instructed to do, the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania.

From the beginning of their labors they met with opposition from those who had been occupying the field of their labor before them. "The Presbytery of New Castle, subordinate to the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, now the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, issued a warning against them, denouncing them as schismatics and separatists, and as heretical on the subject of the gospel offer, the nature of faith and the obligation of the religious covenant engagements of our reforming forefathers. They first invited the Associate ministers to unite with them, and when they declined a union they published this warn-

ing to preserve their people from the dangerous infections of the unsound principles and schismatical practices with which they charged the Seceders." A controversy continued for several years, during which Rev. Alexander Gellatly defended the truth in a scholarly and Christian manner. The controversy was not unfavorable to the cause of the Seceders, for it brought their principles and practices, which proved to be sound, more into notice.

Mr. Gellatly was the first Pastor of the congregation of East Nottingham (now Oxford), Chester county, Pa., and in addition to the Reminiscences of this congregation, furnished by Rev. J. B. Dales, D. D., a few words may be said concerning the

MEMBERSHIP.

At the installation of Rev. William Easton, in 1827, the number of members was 19. Six of these were the remnant of the minority of 1782 and the other thirteen the minority of 1822. From that time to the present there have been admitted to membership as follows: On profession of faith, 233; on profession and baptism, 36; on certificate, 72. Total admissions, 341. Total membership to April, 1889, 360. Of this number 95 have died while retaining their membership in the congregation; 119 were dismissed on certificate to other congregations; the names of 45 have been dropped from the roll, leaving the number of members at the present time 101.

FINANCE.

When the present brick church was erected in Oxford by the Associate congregation in 1851, at a cost of \$4000, it was all paid for except \$650. This remained a debt on the congregation until the Spring of 1865, when it was paid off.

At the time the call was made out for Rev. E. T. Jeffers, in

1865, the congregation agreed to provide a parsonage for him whenever he should need one.

This need becoming a fact in 1867 the trustees, in the spring of that year, purchased a house, barn and 27 acres of land in the eastern part of the town for \$5,000. The members raised \$1025 at the time for the first payment on it.

This property did not prove entirely satisfactory to either the pastor or people, and the opportunity of realizing anything of any amount from the sale of lots, not proving as great as had been expected, owing to the depreciation of land, it was determined to sell out. A good opportunity was presented in the beginning of 1869, when it was sold so that the trustees had about \$50 over the amount invested in it.

In the spring of 1869 the congregation agreed to build a two-story brick parsonage, 32 feet square, on the southern end of the church lot. This, with a stable, was completed at a cost of about \$3900. The amount remaining from the sale of the other property was paid on this, leaving a balance of near \$2,800. To pay this the trustees borrowed \$2,500 on a mortgage on the church property, secured by a judgment on their own individual properties and the balance on trustees' notes. By April 1872 this debt had increased to \$3,535, and varied but little from that amount for ten years.

To provide for the pastor's salary, congregational expenses and interest and make any perceptible reduction in the debt, was more than the people were able to do, and proved a source of great discouragement and annoyance, as new loans had to be made to pay old ones as they matured. The situation remained about the same for the next nine years.

In the spring of 1881 the Trustees applied to the Board of Church Extension for a donation of \$500 and a loan of \$2000 to pay off a mortgage of \$2500. After considerable correspond-

ence between the parties, the Board finally offered to grant a donation of \$700 on condition the congregation would raise the balance of the money, pay off the mortgage and leave the property clear of debt.

In the fall of the same year arrangements were made, a subscription started, and by April 1st, 1882, the congregation had contributed \$1,545, and kind friends had generously assisted to the amount of \$340. With these amounts and the \$700 donated by the Board, the mortgage was lifted, and the congregation rejoiced. A floating debt of \$1,198 still remained, which, though not so large as the other, was still an annoyance. It finally resolved itself into a mortgage on the parsonage for \$1,000 and a balance of floating debt.

On April 1st, 1887, the debt consisted of a mortgage of \$1,000, note for \$200, floating \$408. Total \$1,608. At the annual meeting of the congregation in May following a committee on finance was appointed to devise ways and means to liquidate this debt, consisting of the following persons: Mrs. Jane A. Hutchison, Miss Huldah Turner, Thomas Sloan, Esq., Wm. S. Spear, J. H. A. Hutchison. Different plans were tried and considerable money raised by this committee.

After Rev. W. M. Story came as pastor, in 1888, this debt was felt to be a hindrance to the work of the congregation. In December, 1888, a joint meeting of Session and Trustees was called to see what could be done to remove the entire debt. The Pastor and Finance Committee gave assurance that if the congregation would raise \$600 the balance would be forthcoming. The pastor was appointed a committee to canvass the congregation, which he did successfully. All went to work with a good will and when the reports came in from the Pastor, Finance Committee, Sabbath School, Young People's Society, Mission Band, Ladies' Aid Society,

friends outside and some generous unknown donors, it was found that there was enough to pay every dollar of the indebtedness and leave a balance of \$170. This was a surprise to the congregation and beyond their most sanguine expectations. \$140 of this money was used in purchasing a good heater for the parsonage, which was needed for the comfort of its occupants.

The Session and Trustees agreed that the canceling of the debt, which had burdened them so long, would be an event in the congregation worthy of special thanksgiving. The evening of March 20, 1889, was designated as a time suitable for appropriate exercises in the church. An invitation was extended to Rev. J. B. Dales, D. D., to prepare some Historical Reminiscences of the Congregation. Other ministers and former pastors were also invited to be present and take part in the services. A general invitation was extended to all the friends of the Congregation to be present. A deep interest was manifested, and, notwithstanding the evening appointed was the same one chosen for the equinoctial storm, the church was filled to overflowing. The Pastor presided, while the following program was rendered:

Anthem—As the Hart Panteth—Choir.

Prayer, Rev. W. M. Gibson, D. D.

Psalm 95, L. M. vs. 1, 2.

Address of welcome, Mr. J. Cyrus Kerr.

Response, Rev. W. W. Barr, D. D.

Historical Reminiscences, Rev. J. B. Dales, D. D.

Psalm 122, L. M.

Address, Rev. J. H. Andrew.

Address, Rev. E. T. Jeffers, D. D.

Address, Rev. A. H. Crosbie.

Telegram of Congratulation from Rev. M. M. Gibson, D. D., referring to Psalm 48: 11-14.

Letter of Congratulation from Rev. G. A. B. Robinson.

Anthem—The Lord is my Shepherd—Choir.

Ladies' Missionary Society, Rev. W. M. Gibson, D. D.

Young People's Society, Rev. J. M. Farrar.

Mission Band and Sabbath School, Rev. David Anderson.

Churches of Oxford, Rev. M. W. Jacobus.

Psalm 102, 7s, vs. 11, 12.

Disposing of Mortgage, Trustees.

Psalm 113, L. M. 1-3.

Benediction.

There was general rejoicing when Mr. Joseph R. Strickland, on behalf of the Trustees told the audience that all indebtedness had been paid. He held the canceled mortgage up in his hands as an assurance that they were free.

The property for which the struggle was made consists of a lot of over one acre, well located in a growing part of the town; a good brick church, 40 by 60 feet, which has cost for building and remodeling over \$5000; also on the same lot a two-story brick parsonage 32 by 32 feet, which in 1869 cost \$3875. These buildings and surroundings have been kept in good repair and are both comfortable and attractive.

STATISTICAL TABLE.

Financial year ending March 31.	Amount raised by Congregation.	Aid rec'd outside Congregation.	Aid from Board of Home Missions.	Salary paid by Congregation.	Interest paid.	Congregational expense.	Paid to Mission Funds.	Debt Paid.	Increase of Debt.	Amount debt April 1.
1865	\$1000	\$ 182	\$150	\$380		\$ 37	\$115	\$ 650		
1866	942		200	450		410	82			
1867	2265		200	500		491	198	1076		
1868	977		200	525		285	167			
1869	827		50	600		118	109			
1870	1174			600	\$182	266	126			
1871	947	61		600	40	291	79			
1872	1086	100		598	40	152	150			
1873	865	435		702	17	215	63			
1874	897		200	557	416	402				
1875	1099		200	409	151	136				
1876	948		200	556	217	179		190		
1877	686		11	605	212	73			48	
1878	808		69	526	209	155	15		137	
1879	972		156	391	230	183	37		5	
1880	650		125	362	189	97	21	217		
1881	477		125	490	231	33	33		201	
1882	2139	1040	75	330	78	17	20	32		
1883	1279	188	100	421	356	1068	26	2305		
1884	683	145	200	591	123	55	17		332	
1885	889		175	445	53	55		275		
1886	815		125	512	59	142	121	55		
1887	860		100	545	64	251	45	90	90	
1888	1068		50	541	66	139	24	90		
1889	2073	500	50	660	54	87	24	1250	50	
	\$26426	\$2651	\$2436	\$13249	\$30222	\$5772	\$1608	\$6354	\$928	None

The aid received from the Board of Home Missions was used to supplement the salary paid by the congregation.

HISTORICAL REMINISCENCES.

Nearly 135 years ago this day or on the 20th of October, 1754, a number of persons, who had emigrated, mainly from Scotland, to this region and had earnestly desired to have a church with the doctrines, usages and worship of the land of their fathers, were organized into a church at Octoraro, Lancaster county, Pa., by the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania, subordinate to the Associate Synod of Edinburgh. Almost the same day and by the same Presbytery, the church with which we so happily meet to-day was organized at East Nottingham as it was then termed, and thus these two churches, Octoraro and East Nottingham, or Oxford, as it has long been called, organized at nearly the same time—forming early and long one pastoral charge—and well nigh twin sisters in their birth, their aims and their history—have the honor of being the first organized, and hence the oldest of all the churches in these United States that have successively borne the Associate, the Reformed Presbyterian, the Associate Reformed and the United Presbyterian name among the tribes of the American Israel of God.

Taking up this Oxford church it will be of interest to notice:

FIRST. ITS HISTORICAL NAMES.

In this it has been peculiar. With a uniform and mark-

ed devotion to the principles and practices of its profession at the beginning, this church has had four denominational connections: 1st. The Associate, in the Associate Presbytery of Pennsylvania, which was organized November 2, 1753, by Revs. Alexander Gellatly and Andrew Arnot. 2d. The Associate Reformed, when on June 13, 1782, a union was consummated between the Associate and the Reformed Presbyterian churches, and the uniting bodies called themselves the Associate Reformed Church. 3d. The Associate again, when on a partial union being made May 21, 1822, between the Associate Reformed church and the Presbyterian church of the United States, several men and women of this congregation conscientiously declined to enter it, and joining a number of others who had stood out against the union of 1782, they were received, with the congregation of Octoraro, into the Associate Presbytery of Philadelphia, and taking again the Associate name happily continued to bear it until the Union of the Associate and Associate Reformed churches on the 26th of May, 1858, when, heartily entering that union, they took the name of the United Presbyterian Church. Thus this church has been a church of various names, but ever of the same principles.

SECOND. ITS PASTORS.

In the 135 years of its existence this church has had eleven ministers in its pastoral charge, viz: Rev. Alexander Gellatly, its founder, who was settled here from 1754 to 1758, when he retired to Octoraro, where he died March 12, 1761; Rev. Matthew Henderson for twenty-three years, here until 1781, when he resigned and entering upon the much needed Home Mission work of that day, was the first minister of the Associate Church that preached west of the Allegheny mountains; Rev. John Smith from 1783 to 1794; Rev.

Ebenezer Dickey for the twenty-six years from 1796 to 1822, —a man whose name was long of sweet savor to many in this community; Rev. William Easton D. D., from June 7, 1827, to April 30, 1854, an able man of great simplicity and whose marked characteristic was that he boldly loved what he conceived to be the truth; Rev. J. H. Andrew from 1855 to 1863; Rev. E. T. Jeffers D. D., from 1865 to 1872, when he became President of Westminster College; Rev. G. A. B. Robinson from 1873 to 1876; Rev. R. T. Wylie from 1877 to 1880; Rev. A. H. Crosbie from 1881 to 1887, and last and one of much promise, Rev. W. M. Story, since June 21, 1888—a series of ministers of Christ, the first five of whom, after an aggregate service of just one hundred years in the history of this church, ceased from their labors and entered into their rest—ministers, eight of whom came here in the dew of their youth and were here ordained to their holy office by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery—and ministers of all of whom it may well be said, that while often in their personal needs and in the needs of their people, they had to endure hardness, yet they ever gave full proof of their ministry in watching for souls and in testifying to all, the Gospel of the grace of God.

THIRD. ITS RULING ELDERS.

Of these it is deeply regretted we have no full record during the first seventy-four years of the history of the church. Yet tradition and a partial record show that there were ever here more or less of good men in the oversight of this church—men who understood and recognized the obligations that were upon them—men who faithfully held meetings of the congregation for worship when the pulpit was vacant—men who watched and warned against evils and errors that are ever ready to attempt inroads upon even the professing people of God—and men who were so true to their convictions of what they believed was

the truth of God that in 1822 several of them refused to go with the Pastor whom they loved, into another church, by a union which they did not think was agreeable to the word of God, and which they feared would sooner or later lead to an abandonment of principles and usages which they had solemnly professed to believe were founded upon the word of God, and which were ever dear to them and to the church of their fathers. Thus much for the elders of the long past.

From March 21, 1828, however, we have a full record. On that day Messrs. William Fulton and James Hutchison, Esq., who had been Ruling Elders when the congregation was in the Associate Reformed Church, were introduced into that office here and thus completed the organization of this church under the Associate Presbytery of Philadelphia. Shortly afterward these brethren were joined in the session by Mr. Matthew Gibson, who had been ordained a Ruling Elder at Octoraro, May 23, 1828. And now in the sixty-one years since that time these men have been followed in that office by Joseph Hutchison, John Moore, Nathaniel Hudders, John A. Kerr, James W. Hutchison, J. Cyrus Kerr, R. Frank Wilson, J. F. H. Patterson, M. D., J. Hervey A. Hutchison and M. Augustus Crowl—thirteen in all—eight of whom have rested from their labors—and five of whom—John A. Kerr, J. C. Kerr, R. F. Wilson, J. H. A. Hutchison and M. A. Crowl, remain to be congratulated this day, as they well maybe, at all they see and hear of the condition and the good of the church of their watch-care and love.

FOURTH. ITS TRUSTEES.

Of this important class of congregational officers, and who in the long history of this church must have had much work to do, we are able to obtain a list of only seven—James Hutchison, Esq., J. Hervey Hutchison, J. Latta Crowl, James Sloan,

M. James Wilson, Esq., Joseph R. Strickland and Robert Griffith—the last three of whom now fill the office and are to be most cordially congratulated at the cheering state, at this time, of all the temporal affairs of this old historic and to many, very dear church.

FIFTH. ITS WORK.

This has been varied and is well worthy of notice—though we regret we are unable to go back in its history for more than about sixty years.

1. Its work for the young. In the ministry of the late Dr. Easton, which began early in the summer of 1827, the custom was introduced and long carried on, of having the whole congregation, as far as possible, formed every Sabbath into a kind of Bible class. In that way many of the people carefully committed to memory and recited and had properly explained to them, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the distinctive principles of the church, and most of all the Psalms, and large portions of the Holy Scriptures. The effect of this was most salutary and has had much to do, probably, in holding the membership of this church, young and old, so happily steadfast and unmovable during all the changes in their midst and around them.

In 1855, shortly after Rev. J. H. Andrew became the Pastor, the Sabbath School, in the more modern sense of the term, was organized and has continued to this day—an active and useful part and nursery of the church—and whence there have steadily come into it on their personal confession of Christ, more persons, perhaps, than from any other source. Over this school the pastor had charge until May, 1860, when Mr. J. C. Kerr was elected by the congregation the first superintendent and usefully held the position for the following twenty-three years.

2. In furnishing Ministers to the church and the world. As a fountain this church has sent out living streams to make glad the city of God. Five of its immediate children have gone from it into the ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, viz: F. A. Hutchison, W. R. Hutchison, M. M. Gibson, D. D., J. P. Gibson and J. H. Gibson.

Besides these and more or less identified with the congregation and in some measure its gift to the world, Rev. E. H. Stevenson and Dr. J. F. H. Patterson became ministers of Christ—who sowed much of the good seed of life far hence among the millions of India and Syria.

3. Nor has the work of this church been without interest in seeking proper places for worship. While its members ever properly sought dwellings for themselves, they were not unmindful of a sanctuary suitable for their God. Almost immediately after their original organization, near the middle of the last century, one of their first acts was to build a house of worship, small and simple indeed, but well fitted for its purpose. Later, the Associate Reformed house of worship in Oxford was built on land which was given for the purpose by one of the two venerable men who became the first Elders of this church on its reorganization after the so-called Union in 1782. When that Associate Reformed church property was removed into another body in 1822, and the people here were without a church edifice, the congregation worshiped for a time in a paper mill of Mr. James Fulton, a short distance east of Oxford. But almost immediately after the installation of their young Pastor, Rev. Wm. Easton, in 1827, an event which took place in that mill—they set themselves to build another church, (now Mount Airy school house) which stands to this day, near the site of the old mill.

That house served its good and useful purpose well, but

a better location was needed. This house was resolved upon.

On December 14, 1851, the Pastor preached his last sermon there from the wonderful Birth and Name, in Isaiah ix : 6. On the 4th of the following April, 1852, he preached the opening sermon here in this their then new built house of God from the words, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts," Zech. ix : 6—a house that from the first was marked for its plain and simple fitness for its purpose—a house which for thirty-seven years now has been a training place of souls for heaven—and a house, that while long burdened with debt, is, as all will be most happy to know, this day declared to be free from every vestige of debt, and to be henceforth the Lord's House, no man nor woman being owed anything for it.

4. No history or reminiscence of this church can be just or complete without a reference to its Christian women. So far as known there has not been a pastor of this church who has not had occasion to speak gratefully of women here who labored together with him in the Gospel. Here Hannahs have lent their Samuels to the Lord to be His for service so long as they should live. Here in many of the dark hours of the church's history women have devised plans, made personal sacrifices and appeals, and, literally, often gave themselves no rest until needed light arose or needed relief was found. Here in some good sense many a Mary has broken her alabaster box for Christ and for this church that was ever dear to her for His sake. And here, standing in this high place of rejoicing to-night, and with many precious memories of the last thirty years especially crowding upon us, it may well be said of many a woman of this church, and as it is felt is most justly due, "She hath done what she could."

And now before sitting down may I not suggest :

1. Admonition. Time is ever on the wing. The living are passing away. The Fathers of this church, in the pulpit, in the session, in the pews—where are they? Passed away. And passing away is just as certainly written upon all who remain. Pastors, elders, members of this United Presbyterian Church of Oxford, work while it is now *your* day. The night cometh to you as it did to all the long company who have gone before you. Work now, and work on.

2. Encouragement. From that day of small things when this church was first organized what a succession has followed. That Presbytery which at the beginning, in 1753, had only two ministers and at its taking the United Presbyterian name in this house, October 19, 1859, had eleven ministers, has had upon its roll 47. The Church that as an ecclesiastical body had in 1754 the small beginning of only this church and Octoraro, has now 10 Synods, 61 Presbyteries, 907 congregations, 810 preachers of the gospel, 3580 ruling elders and 98,992 communicants. Then there were in it no Sabbath Schools, now there are 953, with 86,450 scholars in them. Then no Foreign Missions; now 156 stations among nearly twelve millions of people, committed in some measure to us, in India and Egypt, with nearly 60 male and female missionaries, 367 native laborers, 32 well organized native churches and 6,876 communicants in them—and all this while now, as never before, the fields are everywhere white for the harvest, and when, more than at any one time, young men and women of God are saying, “Here are we—send us.” Hath not God done great things for us whereof we may well be glad? Are there not encouragement and incitement of the highest kind in every way and for every one to work—to work?

But enough. And now as tradition reports that among the last words from which the early sainted Gellatly preached,

in this then young church, were those of mingled promise and prophecy, *Jehovah Jireh*—the Lord will provide, so now, in the name of the Presbytery and from a full heart, I would say let the name of this church as a holy city of God be now and ever *Jehovah Shammah*—the Lord is there! And of very many in the great day may it be said, “They were born in her.”



BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

REV. ALEXANDER GELLATLY.

REV. ALEXANDER GELLATLY was born about the years 1720-2 in Perth, Scotland; was liberally educated and studied theology in the Anti-burgher Hall; was licensed in the spring of 1752 and ordained in August of the same year.

“He was a man of vigorous intellect, of great wit, and of a gentle and amiable spirit. He never wavered in his adherence to what he believed to be truth, and never shrunk from any effort or sacrifice necessary to its defence. In the expression of his countenance, especially in the pulpit, there was a mingled mildness and majesty that gave great effect to his evangelical utterances. He was an earnest, faithful and able minister of the gospel.”

His grave-stone bears the following inscription:—

The Reverend and Learned
MR. ALEXANDER GELLATLY,
Minister of the Gospel, Middle Octoraro;
Who came from Perth in Scotland into Pennsylvania, 1753,
And departed this life, March 12, 1761,
In the Fortieth and Second year
of his age.

REV. MATTHEW HENDERSON.

REV. MATTHEW HENDERSON was born in Scotland in the year 1735. His children suppose that his birth place was Glasgow, and that his classical education was obtained in Edinburgh. He studied theology under the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff, was licensed at the age of 21, and ordained two years afterwards, in 1758. He was the third permanent missionary sent by the Associate Church to Pennsylvania. After a pastorate of 20 years at Oxford, he accepted a call to Charliers and Buffalo, Washington county, Pa., in 1782, where he spent the remainder of his life. He had much to do with the incipient measures which finally resulted in the establishment of Jefferson College. His life was one of much labor and hardship, and as he abounded in labors, so an evident blessing attended his ministry. His voice was remarkable for distinctness and power. His manner of addressing the people was plain and familiar. His reproofs, especially in the pulpit, were sometimes exceedingly pointed and scathing, but not ill-tempered. It has been related, that on one occasion, when a young lady had made her appearance in the church in a new calico dress, which in those days was regarded as the height of female extravagance, and when she had frequently risen from her seat, and gone to different parts of the assembly, Mr. Henderson having noticed her movements, and observed her rising from her seat a fourth time, said to her very calmly—"That is the fourth time, my lass, that you have left your seat. You can sit down now, we have a' seen your brow new gown." The young lady, of course, did not wait for a second invitation to do as she was directed.

In appearance, Mr. Henderson was of a very swarthy complexion. He had very keen dark eyes, was of a large size, of an erect and majestic figure, and possessed uncommon mus-

cular power. An anecdote has been related of him, and sometimes erroneously attributed to others, which illustrated his physical powers, and also the treatment to which even ministers of the gospel were exposed in those early times. On one occasion, when traveling over the mountains to meet with his brethern in Presbytery, he happened to lodge at a tavern where two men took the liberty of treating him with great rudeness. This he endured for some time with much patience. His patience, however, was mistaken for timidity, and only encouraged their impertinence, till at last nothing would do but he must fight. This, of course, he was disposed to decline; but, whether he would or not, they were determined upon an assault. Finding that he could not otherwise evade rough usage, he arose and deliberately stripping off his black coat, laid it aside, saying—"Lie there, the Rev. Mr. Henderson, and now Matthew, defend yourself." So saying, he seized one of the ruffians, dashed him out through an open window, and was preparing to send the other by the same road to keep him company. But this one, seeing the kind of man they had to deal with, was in no hurry to put himself in the way of such rough usage. Mr. Henderson having thus taught them somewhat after the manner of Gideon's teaching the men of Succoth with the thorns and briars of the wilderness, passed the rest of the night in peace and quietness.

The circumstances of his death, as related by the daughter who was with him at the time, are as follows:—On the evening of October 1st he had expressed to his children a wish that they would fell a bee-tree which had been discovered on his farm, and preparations were accordingly made to proceed to it early in the morning. He had acquainted his daughter Elizabeth, then a child ten years of age, with their purpose, and told her that if she could get up in the morning

without awakening her younger sister, Jane, she might go with him. Accordingly, the next morning he went quietly to her bed, and touched her gently to awake her without disturbing her sister. She was soon up; and having dressed herself for the expedition, hurried into her father's room, supposing him also to be ready. She found him on his knees engaged in secret prayer, and immediately withdrew. Soon after this she observed him going down to the spring with a basin and towel to wash himself, as was his custom in the morning. Some time after he had returned she again ventured into his room, and again found him engaged in prayer. Soon afterwards he came out, and taking her by the hand he led her to the place where his sons Ebenezer and Robert had been for some time engaged in felling the tree. The tree stood upon a bank, and it was supposed would fall down the side of it. Mr. Henderson and his daughter approached towards it on the higher ground, where it was thought there was no danger. Here they stood for a little time, at some distance from the tree, awaiting its fall. It proved to be decayed in the centre, and fell much sooner than had been anticipated, and also in an opposite direction from what had been calculated. Mr. Henderson, notwithstanding repeated cautions given him, would always, when a tree began to fall, run from it in a direction opposite to that in which he supposed it to be falling. On this occasion, as usual, he ran, but in the same direction with the falling of the tree. His daughter followed his example, but varied somewhat in her course, and escaped any injury. Her father had run to such a distance that it was only the branches which struck him, and his body was but little mutilated. Only a slight flesh wound was discovered on his head; yet he appeared to have died in

stantly, not having been observed to move or breathe by his sons, who were immediately beside him.

Mr. Henderson was among the first buried in the graveyard of Chartiers over whose remains a stone was erected. The following is a copy of the inscription on it :

“In memory of the Rev. Matthew Henderson, who departed this life October 2, 1795, aged 60 years, and in the 37th year of his ministry.

In Heavenly toils, O Henderson, grown gray,
 Thy earthly frame was hastening to decay.
 Thy growing languor threatened to detain
 Thee from thy loved employment, but in vain.
 For in thy course no Sabbath failed t' attest
 The love of souls which burned within thy breast;
 Till by one transient stroke which gave release,
 Thy Saviour bade thee enter into peace.
 Great and (most) happy change from battered dust
 Unto the glorious mansions of the just!
 Let us prepare to measure that bright road,
 The best of all our friends is there—our God.

REV. JOHN SMITH.

REV. JOHN SMITH was born near Sterling, in Scotland, in 1747, graduated at the University of Glasgow, was ordained by the Associate Presbytery of Sterling, in 1769—arrived in this country early in 1771, and was received by the Presbytery of Pennsylvania at a meeting at Pequea, Pa., on the 4th of June in that year. On the 6th of the following May, 1772, he was installed pastor of Middle Octoraro, Pa., and on the 19th of March, 1783, as the congregation of Oxford was added to

his charge, he became pastor of that church also. This relation he sustained until 1794, when giving it up he removed to western Pennsylvania, where, after preaching in various places and undergoing some of the severest discipline of the church, he at length suddenly died March 25, 1825, from a disease of the heart just after he had asked a blessing as he sat down with the household at the breakfast table.

At the time of his death he was in the communion of the Presbyterian church.

REV. EBENEZER DICKEY, D. D.

REV. EBENEZER DICKEY, D. D., was born near Oxford, Chester county, Pa., March 12, 1772. His ancestors migrated from the North of Ireland and were members of the Associate Presbyterian Church. He graduated at the University of Pennsylvania in the year 1792. He was licensed in 1794, and in 1796 became pastor of the Associate Reformed congregations of Oxford and Octoraro. He was an instructive preacher and an active and efficient pastor. He was amiable, cheerful, social and affectionate.

In 1811 the names of the heads of the families in the congregation of Oxford were as follows:

Samuel Hutchison, Quinton Anderson, Andrew Bryber, James Ramsey, Samuel Dickey, Samuel Hill, William Sloan, John Moore, William McNally, Anne Brown, John Watt, Jerome Dunlap, Elizabeth Ancrim, Joseph Scott, Hugh Moore, James Patton, Robert Patton, William Ervin, James Ervin, William Ervin, Robert Hogg, Widow McClarg, John Dickey, James Wilson, John Wallace, George Cresswell, Widow Russell, Thomas Richardson, James Jackson, Andrew Walker, Walter Bunting, James Henry, Widow Andrews, James An-

drews, John Ross, Benjamin Dickey, James Dickey, John Downey, William Henry, George Mitchell, William Love, Thomas Lesly, Thomas Ervin, George House, James Watt, Thomas Henderson, George McDowell, David Whiteside, Robert Richardson, John Andrews, Isaac Walker, William Bunting, William Brown, William Cooper, Arthur Andrews, William Drummer, William Ross, William Murdagh, Widow Russell, Joseph Montgomery, Philip Scott, Hannah Lowry, Isaac Rogers, Matthew Gibson, Charles Spear, William Fulton, Isaac Hall, John Boyd, Widow Fleming, John Ervin, Jesse McCormick, James Whiteside, James Hall and James Ramsey.

These families included a membership of 149 persons.

A majority of these members were in 1822 influenced to leave the Associate Reformed Church and unite with the Presbyterian Church. The following account of the manner in which the union of these members, together with a part of the Synod of the Associate Reformed Church, was consummated with the Presbyterian Church, has been preserved from the pen of Rev. William Easton :

“At a small meeting of the General Synod of the Associate Reformed Church a projected union with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church was declared consummated, and the Associate Reformed Synod declared dissolved by one vote, the casting vote of the moderator; seven for union, five against it, and four silent. Though a large majority of presbyteries and congregations had sent in strong remonstrances against this projected union, and the presence of members on their way to Synod when the vote was taken would have defeated the scheme, with a haste that seems to us now very unwarrantable and unbecoming, these seven men not only declared the General Synod of the Associate Reform-

ed Church dissolved, its members merged in and invited to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, but also, as one observes, in palpable violation of the constitution of that church, 'they were at once admitted as members of the Assembly, to which they had never been chosen.' The great body, however, of the ministry and membership of the Associate Reformed Church remained true to their principles and covenant vows, and repudiated the acts of this Synod of 1822. Immediately after the vote of these seven men (within a week, it is said), with indecent haste, as some of you know, the valuable library of the Associate Reformed Theological Seminary was removed from New York to the Theological Seminary of the General Assembly at Princeton. Forced to make an appeal for justice and right to the civil tribunals, though stoutly resisted, after a tedious law suit, justice prevailed; the library was recovered, and is now in our Theological Seminary in Newburgh, New York.

Rev. Ebenezer Dickey having at this time connected himself with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, his connection with this congregation consequently ceased." He died May 31, 1831, in the 60th year of his age.

REV. WILLIAM EASTON, D. D.

REV. WILLIAM EASTON, D. D., was born in Ancrum, Parish of Maxton, county of Roxborough, Scotland, October 2, 1804. His parents emigrated to this country in 1816, and settled in Washington county, New York. He was educated at the Cambridge Academy, Washington county, N. Y., taught by Dr. Alexander Bullions, and afterwards at Union College, in the same State, where he graduated in 1822.

He received his theological training under Dr. Banks, in the Associate Theological Seminary, Philadelphia. He was licensed by the Associate Presbytery of Philadelphia, June 7, 1826, and ordained and installed pastor of the united congregations of Octoraro, East Nottingham (now Oxford,) and Muddy Run, June 7, 1827, preaching one-half the time in Octoraro, one-fourth in Oxford, and the other fourth in Muddy Run. He resigned the Oxford portion of his charge in 1854, on "account of distance and his own inability fully to attend to all the duties as he could wish," but continued to preach in Octoraro until 1878, when the infirmities of age compelled him to ask for a dissolution of the pastoral relation, which was granted October 22, of the same year.

On June 12, 1879, the life which had begun in Scotland three-quarters of a century previous, which had continued for half a century in the congregation of Octoraro, through the vigor of youth, the prime of manhood, and the infirmity of years, had at last drawn to a close, and the weary body laid down to rest in Jesus.

At Dr. Easton's funeral, the late Rev. J. T. Cooper, D. D., paid the following tribute to the memory of the deceased: "As a man he was distinguished for the great gentleness of his disposition. His heart was overflowing with kindness. Sometimes, it is true, he rebuked sin in a manner calculated to give offense, but he was prompted to do so by such a deep conviction of divine truth, that no consideration of expediency seemed to him to justify surrendering its claims. He was unflinching in his fidelity to the cause of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He was a man of remarkable candor, despised time serving, and lived in open antagonism to all phases of sham, duplicity and darkness. He could say with

the Apostle, that in 'simplicity and Godly sincerity' he had his conversation in the world."

At the semi-centennial of Dr. Easton's pastorate, June 7, 1877, Mr. J. M. W. Geist, Editor of the *New Era*, Lancaster, Pa., who was brought up under Mr. Easton's pastorate, bore testimony to the good man's faithful ministry. Mr. Geist said he knew well his tenderness and fidelity as a pastor, especially where there was affliction, as he had often witnessed in the family of his father, who lived and died a member of this church. When the speaker himself was in trouble, borne down by a deep affliction, Mr. Easton had written a letter of fatherly counsel, breathing the deepest solicitude, and the tone of that letter was the turning point of his life. A deep impression was made by the words of the Psalmist quoted in that letter, "Before I was afflicted I went astray; but now have I kept thy word. It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." He gave his recollection of the first sermon he heard from the venerable man's lips against the sin of slavery, a scorching rebuke of those who profaned the Bible by attempting to sustain slavery as a scriptural institution; of his example in being the first in that section to refuse liquor in the harvest field; and of his consistent opposition to secret societies, which culminated in his able debate with the late Rev. Dr. Dewitt. The rule of his life was to speak his convictions of truth, always leaving the consequences with God; and early in his pastorate he incurred the enmity of the infidelity of the neighborhood by his rebukes, "in season and out of season," of the sin of Sabbath-breaking. There was no man in the ministry for whom he had greater love and respect.

Dr. Easton's body was buried in the old graveyard adjoining the church where his life-work had been performed,

on the same hillside where reposes the dust of the sainted Gellatly and not far from the grave of Rev. Alexander Cuthbertson, the founder of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America.

REV. JAMES HERVEY ANDREW.

REV. JAMES HERVEY ANDREW was born May 23, 1823, in Xenia, Ohio; was graduated at Washington College in 1849, and studied theology in Canonsburg; was licensed October 5, 1852, by the Presbytery of Chartiers, and ordained February 20, 1855, by the Presbytery of Philadelphia; was Pastor of Oxford, Pa., February 20, 1855–July 29, 1863; South Argyle, N. Y., April, 1864–January 13, 1874; First Church, Brooklyn, N. Y., since May 15, 1876.

REV. ELIAKIM TUPPER JEFFERS, D. D.

REV. ELIAKIM TUPPER JEFFERS, D. D., was born April 6, 1841, at Upper Stewiacke, Nova Scotia; was graduated at Jefferson College in 1862, and studied theology at Princeton and Allegheny; was licensed December 28, 1864, by Monongahela Presbytery, and ordained September 25, 1865, by the Philadelphia Presbytery; was Pastor of Oxford, Chester Co., Pa., from September, 1865–July 31, 1872; President of Westminster College, September 25, 1872–1883; was Moderator of the General Assembly of 1880; joined the Presbyterian Church in 1883 and became Professor of Theology in Lincoln University, Pa.

REV. GEORGE ALEXANDER BOYD ROBINSON.

REV. GEORGE ALEXANDER BOYD ROBINSON was born July 17, 1844, in Allegheny county, Pa.; was graduated at Jefferson College in 1866, and studied theology at Allegheny; was licensed April 21, 1868, by Monongahela Presbytery, and ordained June 29, 1869, by the same; was Pastor at Temperanceville, near Pittsburgh, from June, 1869–March 26, 1872; Oxford, Chester county, Pa., May 19, 1873–March 27, 1876; Jersey City, N. J., June 27, 1877–April 9, 1878; Brookville and Jefferson, Jefferson county, Pa., since May 8, 1878.

REV. ROBERT TEMPLETON WYLIE.

REV. ROBERT TEMPLETON WYLIE was born November 22, 1844, at Lagrange, Ind.; was educated at Monmouth College and Glasgow University, Scotland, and studied theology at Newburgh; was licensed in April, 1871, by Michigan Presbytery, and ordained May 28, 1872, by Second New York Presbytery; was Pastor of First Brooklyn, N. Y., May, 1872–November 9, 1875; Oxford, Pa., May 31, 1877–October 14, 1880; Stated Supply in Michigan; Newark, N. J., May, 1885; passed May 5, 1887, to the Associate Church.

REV. ALEXANDER HODDER CROSBIE.

REV. ALEXANDER HODDER CROSBIE was born March 5, 1855, in Washington, Pa.; was graduated at Washington and Jefferson College in 1878, and studied theology at Allegheny; was licensed April 12, 1881, by Chartiers Presbytery, and ordained November 3, 1881, by Philadelphia Presbytery; was Pastor at Oxford, Chester county, Pa., November 3, 1881–May 22, 1887; 119th street, New York, since September, 1887.

REV. WILLIAM MURRAY STORY.

REV. WILLIAM MURRAY STORY was born in South Shennango, Crawford county, Pa., July 25, 1853; was graduated at Westminster in 1877; studied theology at Allegheny; was licensed April 13, 1880, by the Lake Presbytery, and ordained June 23, 1881, by Bloomington (now Central Illinois) Presbytery; was Pastor at Low Point, Woodford county, Ill., from 1881-1887; was installed at Oxford June 21, 1888.

SESSIONAL RECORDS.

The following persons constituted the Session of the church in 1760. They were therefore likely the first Ruling Elders, elected during the time of Mr. Gellatly, and ordained by him, viz: Samuel Jackson, John Hawthorn, John Fulton, William Ramsey, James Wherry and William Ross.

The records of the Session during Mr. Henderson's pastorate are still in existence; and as these illustrate both the state of the church and habits of the people more than one hundred years ago, we give the following, which is the first minute in the book:

"At Oxford, March 3d, 1760. The Session being met, and constituted with prayer by Mr. Henderson, Moderator, names present, Samuel Jackson, John Hawthorn, John Fulton, Wm. Ramsey, James Wherry and William Ross, Elders. The Session had several matters laid before them, and they agreed to the following particles, as, that a day of fasting be appointed

and kept by the Session, and for privy censures and for examining the Session as to the nature of church government. They also agreed that the following particles be intimated the next Lord's day in Oxford congregation, as, 1. To beware of needless going to or from the place of worship in the time of it. 2. To beware of frequenting stores on the Lord's day, and especially in the time of divine worship. 3. To beware of carnal conversation on the Lord's day, in going to, interval of, and going from, the place of worship. 4. That every one who can read to bring their bibles with them to public worship. 5. That they who have children to baptize, or who are to publish, that they come and converse with the minister before Sabbath. 6. That members of the congregation make certain of attending the worship of God, here or in neighboring congregations of the same communion. At the same time they appointed John Hawthorn and John Fulton to attend as a committee at Pencader for the regulation of matters there. They also agreed that every Elder shall have his quarter allotted to him. And also that young communicants be all examined this season; and every Elder shall be with the minister during the examination of their respective quarters. They also called for John Lossridge to compear before them, according to a former appointment, but he compeared not. Closed with prayer."

RESOLUTIONS adopted June 4, 1877, as the expression of the Session of the Oxford United Presbyterian Church to Rev. William Easton, on the 50th anniversary of his Pastorate, June 7, 1877.

From the Session of the United Presbyterian Congregation of Oxford to Rev. William Easton, Semi-Centennial Pastor of Octorard United Presbyterian Church, Greeting:

WHEREAS, This day marks a semi-century on the course of time since you, Beloved Father, were ordained as a Gospel Minister and installed Pastor of the Associate Congregations of Octoraro, Muddy Run and East Nottingham, now Oxford; and

WHEREAS, The memory of your goodness and faithfulness still lingers among us like the fragrance of Lebanon, and the graces which you, as the instrument of God, implanted in the hearts of many, grew like the lily, beautiful as the olive, steadfast as the cedar, and fruitful as the vine; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Eliza J. Kerr alone remains in the congregation of all those who were with us when you became our Pastor; therefore, by this Session it is

Resolved, 1, That with gratitude we recognize the hand of God in sending you to this part of his vineyard, in blessing your labors to the conversion and upbuilding of souls, and in permitting you to remain in one place for the unusual period of fifty years.

2, That as a Session we bless God that you came to us and laid many stones upon the foundation Christ Jesus, and left us well adapted for others to continue building.

3, That while you have outlived so many of your flock, and have seen the dear companions of your toils, joys and sorrows pass on before you to the better land, and while you find your limbs trembling, your eyes growing dim, and your mind taking the retrospect, we do pray that God will not leave you—that He will be your everlasting strength and reward. “They who sow in tears shall reap in joy.”

4, That while this day you devoutly cast your crown at the feet of Jesus, we too bless the Chief Shepherd of the sheep for the stated Gospel Ministry. By order of Session,

R. T. WYLIE, Moderator.

Oxford, Pa., June 7, 1877.

J. C. KERR, Clerk.

DATE DUE

JUL 30 2007

GAYLORD

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

