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DR. ROBERT SMITH'S ACADEMY AT PEQUEA,  
PENNSYLVANIA.

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James Madison, while a student at Princeton in 1769, wrote to his father describing the Commencement at Nassau Hall and among other things mentioned that "the head oration, which is always given to the greatest scholar by the President and Tutors, was pronounced in Latin by Mr. Samuel Smith, son of a Presbyterian minister in Pennsylvania."<sup>1</sup> This same Samuel Smith is described on his tombstone in the presidents' row in the cemetery in Princeton as "Evangelii Ministri insignis Filius, ipse insignior."

The distinguished minister in Pennsylvania was Robert Smith, pastor for forty-two years of the church at Pequea, in Lancaster County, an educator widely known in his day, and a prominent leader in the councils of the early Presbyterian Church in America. His renown was soon overshadowed by that of his sons Samuel Stanhope Smith and John Blair Smith, though he was thought to excel both of them in eloquence.<sup>2</sup> Through neglect much of interest con-

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<sup>1</sup> *Letters and Other Writings of James Madison*, Philadelphia, 1865. Vol. I, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Statement of one of his pupils, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Martin, of Chanceford, York County, Pa., quoted by Dr. John Leaman in his *History of the Cedar Grove Presbyterian Church, Pa.*, Philadelphia, 1857.

cerning his life and activities has been lost. He seems to have left nothing of an autobiographical nature.<sup>3</sup> Much that is known about him rests on the authority of Dr. Archibald Alexander, who spent several days at Pequea in 1791.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Alexander wrote a sketch of Dr. Smith's life which was published in the *Presbyterian Review* of July, 1855. The marked similarity in the wording of this sketch to an anonymous article in the *Assembly Missionary Magazine* for January, 1806, leads to the supposition that Dr. Alexander was the author of the earlier article, and that the later one is an adaptation. For additional facts concerning his life and the school he conducted, I have made use of the manuscripts in the possession of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Philadelphia (especially of a sermon preached at Dr. Smith's funeral by the Reverend Alexander Mitchell), and of the copies of Dr. Smith's sermons in the library of the Pennsylvania Historical Society. I have also made frequent use of local tradition and of bits of family history given by members of the Jenkins (Cummins), Ellmaker and McCamant families who still live near Pequea. There is much, however, still to be learned about Dr. Smith and his school.

In consequence of the provisions for freedom in faith and worship made by the founders of Pennsylvania, of the reputation of the colony for tolerance and freedom, of the ease of accessibility from the harbors of New York or those on the Delaware River and Bay and on the Chesapeake Bay and Susquehanna River, as well as in consequence of the salubrity of the broad uplands of the region between the Delaware and the Susquehanna, large settlements of the Scotch-Irish were early made in the eastern part of the state. These Scotch-Irish began to come to Pennsylvania, and to establish Presbyterian churches where they settled, as early as 1708

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<sup>3</sup>Dr. P. J. Timlow, *History of the Leacock Presbyterian Church*, Philadelphia, 1855, mentions and gives extracts from entries in Dr. Smith's family Bible. I have been unable to find this Bible.

<sup>4</sup>J. W. Alexander, *Life of Archibald Alexander*, New York, 1854, pp. 91ff.

if not earlier.<sup>5</sup> The larger number came after 1718, and in 1729 alone more than six thousand arrived.<sup>6</sup> As soon as they had made a settlement, usually near the head of some creek or river, they assembled themselves into congregations and erected churches. Of the older Presbyterian churches of this region there are very few that do not lie near a stream of water or a large spring. In locating the churches the people had to make provision for the necessities of those who came a long distance to church and remained there all day.

It appears that the congregations were poorly supplied with ministers, for the emigrants did not bring any with them.<sup>7</sup> The people were under the necessity of distributing the few ministers there were among the various churches, sometimes six or eight churches uniting to secure the services of a minister who apportioned his time among them. Though living under rude conditions, the people allowed no irregularity in the ministry. The preachers, with very few exceptions, were well educated and of attainments as high as those demanded of the ministers in Scotland and Ireland. In this deep concern for the education of the ministry lies the cause for the establishment of several schools in Pennsylvania, to the most famous of which—the Log College of the Tennents on the Neshaminy—Princeton University owes its origin. The early pastors of the Pennsylvania churches were educated either in Europe, coming to Pennsylvania by way of New England under Cotton Mather's influence,<sup>8</sup> as did Adam Boyd, Thomas Craighead and George Gillespie, or at Harvard and Yale, whence came a large number. The reasons for the existence of schools in Pennsylvania were forcible and plain—a pure and efficient church requires a learned ministry and the ministry must be raised up in and

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<sup>5</sup> H. J. Ford, *The Scotch-Irish in America*, Princeton, 1915, p. 260.

<sup>6</sup> Proud, *History of Pennsylvania 1681-1742*; Briggs, *American Presbyterianism*, New York, 1885, p. 184.

<sup>7</sup> R. E. Thompson, *A History of the Presbyterian Churches in the United States*, New York, 1895, p. 29.

<sup>8</sup> Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

by the church; for the churches could not continue to look abroad for their ministers, and the cost of travel to the centers of education in New England was too great.

It was mainly this consideration which in 1718 induced William Tennent to establish his Log College at Neshaminy, and here were educated some of the men most deeply interested in the founding of the College of New Jersey; among others his sons Gilbert and William, and Samuel Blair, all three charter trustees of Nassau Hall, John Blair, vice president and Samuel Finley, fifth president of the new college. The history of the Log College has been told by Dr. Alexander.<sup>9</sup> In 1744 a school was opened at New London, in Chester County, known as the Synodical Academy, under the charge of the Synod of Philadelphia. The organization of this school was one of the circumstances attending the "Great Schism" of 1741, by which the Presbyterian Church was divided into the "New Side," which held to the College of the Tennents, and the "Old Side," which judged that the students of the Log College lacked sufficient qualifications to enter the ministry and "even denied the usefulness of some parts of learning which they [the "Old Side"] thought necessary."<sup>10</sup> So the Old Side decided to open another school. But it soon turned out that all justice was taken from the reproach against the Log College, when it was found that the New London school had no better advantages for instruction; so the proposal was made to send the young men to Yale to finish their education, but no evidence exists to show that this was ever done. Among the students of this Academy were John Ewing, later Provost of the University of Pennsylvania; David Ramsay, the historian, and Thomas McKean, George Read and James Smith, Signers of the Declaration of Independence. When, in 1752, Dr. Francis

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<sup>9</sup> A. Alexander, *Biographical Sketches of the Founder and Principal Alumni of the Log College*, Princeton, 1845.

<sup>10</sup> Gillett, *History of the Presbyterian Church*, Philadelphia, 1864, Vol. I, pp. 58-64.

Alison, who was in charge of the school, went to Philadelphia to take charge of the Academy there, the school in New London was abandoned, and doubtless the pupils followed their teacher. In 1755 the Philadelphia Academy became a college, known to-day as the University of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Alison became Vice Provost.

There remain to be mentioned two other schools which, prior to the founding of Nassau Hall, grew out of the Log College. One is the school started in 1744 at Nottingham, Maryland, and discontinued in 1761, when its founder, Samuel Finley, succeeded Jonathan Edwards as President at Princeton. The other is the institution founded at New Londonderry, or Fagg's Manor, in Chester County, Pennsylvania, by the Reverend Samuel Blair in 1740 and continued after his death by his brother John, who was later Vice President of Princeton. It was in this school that Samuel Davies, sixth President of Princeton, and Robert Smith, the subject of this sketch, were prepared for the ministry.

After the founding of the College of New Jersey the mission of these schools was ended and they were soon absorbed in the new and greater institution. But shortly afterwards another school was established by Robert Smith at Pequea in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, which, with a different aim and with close relations with the young College, co-existed with it more than forty years and was one of the forerunners of Princeton Theological Seminary. For Robert Smith's school both prepared boys for the college course and received them again after graduation to fit them for work in the ministry of the church.

Robert Smith was installed pastor at Pequea in 1751 and the school was established the next year. Its first student was probably George Duffield, who, having graduated at the College of New Jersey in 1752, returned to Pequea, his birthplace, to study theology with his pastor. The preparatory or classical academy must have been started soon after, for David Caldwell, who in 1761, at the age of thirty-six, graduated at Nassau Hall, began his preparatory studies at Pequea. Samuel Stanhope Smith, born in 1751, was a student there at

the early age of six,<sup>11</sup> and at that time the school was large enough to warrant the employment of a tutor to help the principal in its management. The school lasted till 1792 when, on account of the failing health of its head, it was removed to Brandywine Manor, twenty miles from Pequea, and placed under the charge of the Rev. Nathan Grier.<sup>12</sup> Most of the students who came to Dr. Smith's school were sons of the original Scotch-Irish settlers in Pennsylvania but in later years it was attended by sons of the German settlers. Unfortunately no complete list of the students can be given, for Dr. Smith probably kept no records. The statement has been made that as many as fifty ministers received part of their education there; there were probably as many more students who did not enter the ministry. Mitchell tells us that in 1769 there were thirty students.<sup>13</sup> From Sprague's *Annals* and from local tradition and family history I have constructed a partial list, which follows later, of those who received a part of their training there.

Most that is known of the methods of teaching in the school was probably told by President Smith to his intimate friend and former pupil, Frederick Beasley, later Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, and by the latter inserted in the memoir which forms the introduction to a volume of Stanhope Smith's sermons. Could the sermon delivered by Dr. John Woodhull at the funeral of President Smith be found, it might offer us something valuable, for Dr. Woodhull was for ten years (1769-1779) pastor of the adjoining church of Leacock, and must have had excellent opportunities of knowing the school and Dr. Smith and his sons.

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<sup>11</sup> Memoir of Samuel Stanhope Smith, as introduction to a volume of his sermons and probably written by the Rev. Dr. Frederick Beasley.

<sup>12</sup> McClune, *History of Brandywine Manor Church*.

<sup>13</sup> *A Sermon Occasioned by the Much Lamented Death of the Reverend Robert Smith, D.D.*, by the Reverend A. Mitchell, pastor of the Upper Octoraro Presbyterian Church. Ms. in the Library of the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia.

Says Dr. Beasley :

“It was the custom of the school to require the pupils not merely to dip into the Latin and Greek classics, or pass in rapid transition from one to the other, by which means a very superficial knowledge of any is obtained, but when once they had commenced an author, to read carefully and attentively the entire work. Besides this laudable and beneficial custom, the scholars of this academy were stimulated to exertion by being brought into frequent competition and by having conferred upon the successful candidates for distinction such honors as were calculated to awake their boyish emulation and to quicken their diligence and attention. Latin was the habitual language of the school and after the pupils had passed through a few of the elementary works, as the colloquies of Corderius and the fables of Æsop, any error which they committed in grammatical propriety either in addressing the teacher or in speaking with one another was punishable as a fault. One literary exercise in the school was contested with more than ordinary emulation. When any class had advanced in its course beyond the *Metamorphoses* of Ovid and the *Bucolics* of Vergil, the members of it were permitted to enter into voluntary competitions for preëminence. On alternate Saturdays, eight or ten of the better scholars from different classes were allowed to try their skill in the languages in the presence of the principal teacher. Each competitor was suffered to select a sentence within a certain compass of one or two hundred lines, consisting of not more than six or seven hexameter verses. On this selected portion, he was the sole examiner, and was permitted to inquire about everything with which he could make himself acquainted by the most diligent previous investigation; such as the grammatical construction of the sentences, the derivation of the words, their composition, relations and quantity, the history or mythology referred to in the passage, the beauty and pertinence of the figures and allusions together with the taste and delicacy of sentiment displayed by the poet. After the whole contest, which usually lasted several hours, was concluded, rewards were bestowed by the master upon those who discovered the greatest address and ingenuity in conducting it.”

These rigorous ideas of scholastic discipline, says Dr. Beasley, were brought from Ireland by the instructors employed to teach in the school. They insisted on the minute accuracy which was prevalent in their native country. Some of the later instructors were native Americans and we have record of a few of these. At some time prior to 1760, James Waddel, later renowned as a pulpit orator in the South—the original of William Wirt's “Blind Preacher”—was for

a year or two one of the teachers.<sup>14</sup> Dr. Smith's oldest son, Samuel Stanhope Smith, spent a year (1769-1770) after graduation from Nassau Hall as teacher in the school, until he was appointed tutor in Princeton.<sup>15</sup> Another instructor whose name is known was Samuel Doak.<sup>16</sup> He taught there for a year or two, after his graduation at Princeton in 1775, and then went South to become tutor in Samuel Stanhope Smith's infant college at Hampden Sidney. He later became the pioneer preacher in what is now the state of Tennessee and the founder both of Washington College, which still exists, and of Tusculum College at Bethel in Greene County, North Carolina, now part of Tennessee. The present site of Tusculum College is Greeneville, Tennessee.

The students who prepared at this school for admission to the College of New Jersey were:<sup>17</sup> David Caldwell, 1761; Samuel Stanhope Smith, 1769; John Blair Smith, 1773; William R. Smith, 1773—these last three sons of Dr. Smith; John Francis Armstrong, 1773; James Dunlap, 1773; John Linn, 1773; John McMillan, 1772; John Springer, 1775; Nathaniel Welshard Semple, 1776; William Jenkins, 1799; and Elias Ellmaker, 1801. The two last mentioned could not have finished their preparation there; in fact, the only evidence of their having been students at the school rests on not well-authenticated tradition in their families still living near Pequea. Besides those we have just mentioned there were others who did not go to college, or at least not to Princeton. Some of these were: William Jenkins' brother Robert, Member of Congress from Pennsylvania, 1807-1811; Ebenezer Smith and Robert Smith, sons of Dr. Smith, both of whom later became physicians; John Smith<sup>18</sup> and Robert Smith, nephews of Dr. Smith, the former of whom became a lawyer in Lancaster (admitted to practice 1788) and the latter a

<sup>14</sup> Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, Vol. III, p. 235.

<sup>15</sup> Sprague, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 336.

<sup>16</sup> Sprague, *op. cit.*, Vol., III, p. 393.

<sup>17</sup> The date after each name is the year of graduation at college.

<sup>18</sup> As stated by his descendants, the daughters of the late Isaac McCamant of Pequea.



minister, preaching for some time in Schenectady, N. Y.;<sup>19</sup> John Miller, Adam Miller and John Watson, all three of whom were later physicians in Lancaster County; Elisha Cullen Dick, later physician<sup>20</sup> in Alexandria, Virginia (died 1825); James Mitchel, later tutor in Hampden Sidney College and a noted preacher in Virginia; and Samuel Martin, who was minister of the gospel at Chanceford, York County, Pa.; and according to local tradition, which I could not verify, Henry Lightner, William Linville, Isaac Atlee, James Whittle and Isaac McCamant. Also according to a tradition, not well authenticated, a Governor of Pennsylvania received his elementary education there.<sup>21</sup>

Among those who, after their college or classical course of studies, studied theology with Dr. Smith, were George Duffield, Chaplain of the Continental Congress which adopted the Declaration of Independence, Samuel Stanhope Smith, John McMillan, the founder of Jefferson College in Western Pennsylvania, Samuel Doak, James Waddel, and Samuel Martin.

The stone house in which Dr. Smith lived and conducted the school is still standing in good condition, a few hundred yards from the church in which he preached for forty-two years, and near whose door is his grave and monument. A schoolhouse and dormitory were built by Dr. Smith to accommodate his students, but having been constructed of wood, they have long since disappeared. The Pequea Church was founded in 1724. Its first two pastors were Adam Boyd and Thomas Craighead, both having come from Ireland to New England, and having been sent to Pennsylvania with recom-

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<sup>19</sup> Gillett, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 390.

<sup>20</sup> He studied medicine with Dr. Rush and Dr. Shippen. He was summoned from Alexandria to attend Washington in his last illness. *Century Magazine*, LXVII, p. 627

<sup>21</sup> Alexander, *History of the Pequea Church*: "I have heard that an early Governor of this state was among the number. After his nomination, the story goes, a certain farmer in this neighborhood said: 'I can't vote for that man. When he was here at school he stole my bee'" [colloquial for *bee-hive*].

mendations by Cotton Mather.<sup>22</sup> In 1740 George Whitefield, from the forks of a tree still standing, preached to a multitude too great to be contained by the church, from the text, "Watchman, what of the night."<sup>23</sup> The Pequea church is about six miles from Gap Station on the Pennsylvania Railroad. The original Scotch-Irish families of the valley have almost entirely disappeared, and the church contains a large number of the descendants of the Germans who throughout Lancaster County early began to replace the original settlers. The church at present (June, 1915) is without a regular pastor.

Robert Smith was born in Londonderry, Ireland, in 1723, and with his parents came to America in 1730, settling near the headwaters of the Brandywine. At the age of fifteen or sixteen he was converted under the preaching of Whitefield, at the time of the latter's first visit to America. Having decided to enter the ministry, he began his education—and, as far as we know, completed it, too—at the Academy at Fagg's Manor under charge of the Reverend Samuel Blair, whose sister (Elizabeth) he married May 22, 1750. He was licensed to preach December 27, 1749, and was called to be Pastor at Pequea October 1, 1750. He did not accept immediately, but made a preaching tour in Virginia. Here he had some trouble with the civil authorities.<sup>24</sup> This was about the time that Samuel Davies and John Rogers had similar

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<sup>22</sup> Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

<sup>23</sup> Mr. J. Watson Ellmaker, of Lancaster, Pa., told me he heard about the date of Whitefield's preaching and his text from his Aunt Kitty, who died in 1880 at the age of 97, who had it from her father Anthony Ellmaker (b. 1729), who, at the age of 11, riding with his mother on horseback to church, when at Richardson's corner (nearly a mile and a half from the church) heard Whitefield announce this text. For the fact of the wonderful carrying power of Whitefield's voice see John Bigelow, *Life of Benjamin Franklin*, Philadelphia, 1900, Vol. I, p. 271 (Autobiography): "I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his having preached to twenty-five thousand people in the fields."

<sup>24</sup> Mitchell, *Funeral Sermon*.

difficulties in that colony, and it is not unlikely that these three fellow-students of Samuel Blair's school worked together in Virginia part of the time.<sup>25</sup> He returned to Pequea and was installed as pastor there March 25, 1751.

He soon became well known as a preacher and a theologian. In less than two years after his ordination he had students of theology under his charge and instruction. Along with Samuel Finley he was appointed by his Presbytery to answer the charges of the two Seceder ministers, Alexander Gellatly and Andrew Arnot, sent out by the Associate Synod of Scotland to Pennsylvania and looked upon by the ministers there as intruders. His answer to them was printed at Franklin's press in Lancaster in 1757.<sup>26</sup> This controversy<sup>27</sup> has perhaps less of interest to us now after the lapse of a century and a half, than the personal touches and the side glances we derive from the author's introduction. The French and Indian War raging on the frontiers is mentioned as a reason why some of the members of the Presbytery better qualified for the task assigned to the author could not take it up. Though the author was "so much engaged by a great variety of ordinary labours and avocations that he could never write more than half a page at a time without considerable interruption," though being in "a weakly State of Health" and though interrupted "by many affecting Alarms from our suffering Brethren on the Frontiers," still he felt he could not shirk a duty thus laid upon him, the more so since he heard that some gloried in the *Detection* as unanswerable. He congratulated himself that he had "avoided railing language and had not used as much Tartness as the Occasion justified," and denied the reported slander of his opponents

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<sup>25</sup> Foote, *Sketches of Virginia*, Philadelphia, 1850-55, First Series, pp. 159ff.

<sup>26</sup> Robert Smith, *Detection Detected, or A Vindication of the Rev'd Mr. Delap and New Castle Presbytery from the Charges of Injurious Reasoning and False Representations Exhibited Against Them by the Rev. Messieurs Gellatly and Arnot; to Which Is Affixed a Letter by the Rev. Samuel Finley.*

<sup>27</sup> See R. E. Thompson, *op. cit.*, pp. 42, 43.

that his party had bribed the printers to detain the Seceders' piece till the answer was almost prepared. In closing the Preface he voiced the great unhappiness, which many felt, to be engaged in such a controversy just then, and looked on it as a judgment of God not only to be wasted from without by barbarous deceitful enemies, but to be consumed by intestine broils and division.

In 1759 at the reunion of the Old and New Side churches—the ending of the Great Schism which began in 1741—of the Newcastle Presbytery, he preached the commemorative sermon.<sup>28</sup> The events of the wars in Europe and America are given large prominence in the sermon. England's Protestant ally—Frederick the Great—in the war against the Catholic countries, is praised and glorified. The preacher sketches the rise of Prussia to her prominence in Europe; the early vicissitudes of her heroic king which gave him the opportunity, when participation in public affairs was denied him, for the pursuit of just those studies and that learning which best fitted him for his later responsibilities; he tells how this “quick-sighted Prince early discovered, by some remarkable turns of Providence, the hellish Designs of the Courts of Vienna, Petersburg, Dresden and Versailles to ruin the Protestant interest and spoil him of his dominion; to prevent which he speedily entered into wise measures, which through the smiles of Heaven he has hitherto successfully executed.” He mentions the early reverses and discouragements of the war in America and the glorious successes of the last two years—Rossbach, Louisburg and Fort Duquesne!

In 1760 the honorary degree of Master of Arts was conferred on Robert Smith by the College of New Jersey, and in 1786 the same institution gave him the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He was several times appointed by the Synod to draw up letters<sup>29</sup> to the churches abroad. He was one of a committee appointed to meet the members of the Congre-

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<sup>28</sup> *A Wheel in the Middle of a Wheel, or The Harmony and Connexion of the Various Acts of Divine Providence.*

<sup>29</sup> *Records of the Presbyterian Church*, pp. 397, 416.

gational Churches in a convention at New Haven in 1767, and to endeavor to form a union of the Presbyterians with that body.<sup>30</sup> As preacher he was well liked by his congregation, so much so, that, says Mitchell, "they regretted his occasional absences and thought themselves so well supplied that they could scarce have a relish for change of spiritual fare." Quite a number of his sermons were published. Of the most important were: *The Bruised Reed Bound Up, and the Smoking Flax Inflamed; or, The Weak Oppressed Believer Victorious Through the Tender Care and Grace of Christ*, Wilmington, 1772; *Two Sermons on the Principles of Sin and Holiness and the Conflict Between Them in the Hearts of Believers*, Lancaster, 1793; and *Three Sermons on the Nature and Excellence of Saving Faith*, Lancaster, 1791. These latter three were reprinted in Scotland in the *Evangelical Preacher*<sup>31</sup> and also by John Brown, of Whitburn.<sup>32</sup> After the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, he commemorated the event by two sermons: *Obligations of the Confederate States of North America to Praise God: Two Sermons Preached at Pequea, December 13, 1781*, Philadelphia, 1782. He could, when occasion demanded, preach very acceptably *ex tempore*. Mr. Alexander, in his *History of the Pequea Church*, narrates an interesting story of how Dr. Smith proved to a Quaker neighbor that he, as well as any of the Friends, could preach "by the Spirit." Being challenged to do so he preached an excellent sermon on the text, handed to him by the sexton after the "long prayer," "Nine and Twenty Knives" (Ezra 1 : 9).

Dr. Smith was a very faithful attendant on the church courts. From 1753, when his name first appears on the records, until his death he was absent only four times from the highest court of his church. He was on most of the important committees of the Synod, most of the time one of its Com-

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<sup>30</sup> *Records of the Presbyterian Church*, pp. 373, 381.

<sup>31</sup> Webster, *History of the Presbyterian Church*, Philadelphia, 1857, p. 613.

<sup>32</sup> Alexander, *History of the Pequea Church*.

missioners, and in 1785, along with his son Samuel and John Witherspoon and others, was on a committee appointed to take into consideration the constitution of the Church of Scotland and to compile a system of rules for the government of the Synod and its constituent presbyteries. In 1774 he was chosen Moderator of the Synod, and in 1790 Moderator of the second General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. This high office was held in this same decade by his two sons: John Blair in 1798 and Samuel Stanhope in 1799. In 1792, along with two others, he was appointed on a committee of the General Assembly whose duty it was to issue a new edition of the Confession of Faith, Form of Government and Discipline, with scripture proofs attached.<sup>23</sup> This extremely important task was, in a certain sense, to be a completion and supplement of the work of the Westminster Assembly of 1643-1648. Dr. Smith died, however, before the work was finished.

In 1752 the Trustees of the College of New Jersey made a request to the Synod of New York for a public collection for the benefit of the College. The collection was ordered and in 1754 report was made that the sum of nine pounds, sixteen shillings and nine pence had been collected by Messrs. Burr, Finley, Rodgers, Robert Smith and others. Again in the next year Mr. Smith was among those who reported a small amount collected for the same purpose. In 1769 he and Mr. George Duffield were appointed by the Synod to canvass the counties of York, Cumberland, and part of Lancaster, and report their success to the Trustees of the said College at next Commencement. The minutes of the Trustees would probably show how much was collected. He was appointed a Trustee of the College of New Jersey in 1772, and remained on the board till his death. At the Commencement meeting of the Board, held September 27, 1780, "Rev. Robert Smith reported that himself and some others had taken some pains in Pennsylvania to make collections of money for the College, and he delivered to the board two hundred and thirty-

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<sup>23</sup> Samuel T. Lowrie, *Presbyterian Review*, July, 1888.

eight pounds and ten shillings which were collected in the Forks of the Brandywine and paid to Dr. Wither-  
spoon."<sup>34</sup>

He was one of the advisers in the foundation of Hampden Sidney College in Virginia, of which his two sons, Samuel Stanhope and John Blair, were respectively first and second presidents. He visited the College in 1788 and preached during a revival of religion which was going on at that time.<sup>35</sup> Dr. Smith's last public act was his attendance at a meeting of the Trustees of the College of New Jersey, held at Princeton, April 9, 1793. Returning home on horseback he had reached Rockwell, Chester County, about twenty miles from Pequea, when he fell from the saddle and was found lying by the roadside, his faithful horse standing beside him. He was taken to a house nearby—Mr. William Hunter's—where he died April 15.<sup>36</sup>

He was a friend of American liberty and sided with his Church in the Revolution. Many of his congregation took an active part in the struggle. Dr. Smith was present at the Battle of Long Island, August 26, 1776, whither he had gone with the Rev. John Carmichael to take provisions to the American army.<sup>37</sup> Along with the same man he took provisions to Washington's army at Valley Forge,<sup>38</sup> for which help Washington wrote a letter of thanks to Carmichael.<sup>39</sup> He and Mr. Carmichael also attended the sessions of the Continental Congress when it met at Lancaster, September 27-30, 1777. Carmichael preached a sermon at that time before the members of Congress and the officers of the army.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Maclean, *History of the College of New Jersey*, Vol. I, p. 326.

<sup>35</sup> Foote, *Sketches of Virginia*, First Series, p. 422.

<sup>36</sup> Leaman, *History of the Cedar Grove Church*.

<sup>37</sup> McClune, *History of the Brandywine Manor Church*.

<sup>38</sup> J. Smith Futhey, *History of Chester County, Pa.*, Philadelphia, 1881, p. 493.

<sup>39</sup> John Leaman, *A Tribute to the Memory of Mrs. Catherine M. Jenkins, of Windsor Forge, Pa.*, Philadelphia, 1857.

<sup>40</sup> I have seen this stated in the *Lancaster Daily Intelligencer* between January, 1898, and April, 1901, but am not now able to give the exact date of the reference.

In stature Dr. Smith was under the average, with black hair and gray eyes, typically Irish. He was never robust in health and with hard labor, little sleep and much travel he so wore himself out that he was long known as the "venerable Dr. Smith," though only seventy years of age when he died. Archibald Alexander, who visited Pequea in 1791 and accompanied Dr. Smith to Philadelphia to attend the meeting of the General Assembly, at which the latter as retiring Moderator preached the opening sermon, described him as a man of great earnestness and uncommon ardor of piety. He was also noted for affable manners and entertaining conversation. On the occasion, which Dr. Alexander describes, he wore a white wig which came down to his shoulders and gave him a grotesque appearance. By reason of the loss of his teeth his enunciation was impaired and he could not be heard by many.<sup>41</sup>

Many of his descendants attained prominence. Samuel Stanhope Smith married the daughter of John Witherspoon some time prior to 1774. One of their five children was John Witherspoon Smith, who was graduated at Princeton in 1795 and later became a Judge in St. Louis. He died in 1829. A daughter, Mary, married Joseph Cabell Breckinridge, and was the mother of John C. Breckinridge, Vice President of the United States. Gen. A. A. Woodhull, of Princeton, N. J., is a grandson of President Smith's daughter, Susan Frances, married to Dr. D. G. Salomons, whose daughter was married to a grandson of Dr. John Woodhull.

Of John Blair Smith's sons, one, Robert F. (Princeton, 1800), was pastor of the church at Snow Hill, Maryland. Charles F., a grandson of John Blair Smith, was a General in the United States Army, served with distinction in the Mexican and Civil Wars, and died in the field in 1862. William Richmond Smith, second son of the subject of this sketch, was minister of the Dutch Reformed Church at Harlingen, New Jersey, near Princeton, and died 1820. Ebenezer, fourth son of Robert Smith, practiced medicine in Wilmington, Dela-

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<sup>41</sup> J. W. Alexander, *Life of Archibald Alexander*, pp. 91ff.



ware. A son of Ebenezer, William R., entered the ministry and died at Sunbury, Pa., in 1849. Of the fifth son, Robert, born in 1761, who became a physician, and of the daughter, Elizabeth Sarah, born 1780, of Dr. Smith's second wife,<sup>42</sup> nothing further is known.

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<sup>42</sup>Robert Smith married a second time (December 13, 1779), Mrs. Sarah Ramsay, *née* Sealy, of Cohansey, N. J. She was the widow of the Rev. William Ramsay, a brother of David Ramsay, the historian.