

THE
PRESBYTERY OF KANSAS CITY
AND ITS PREDECESSORS

1821-1901

HISTORICAL SKETCHES
AND
STATISTICAL MATTER

BY

JOHN B. HILL

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of the Osage. He was expecting to be licensed at their meeting in the spring of 1861; but they had so much to do to encourage rebellion, no time was found to look after their Candidate for the ministry. Thus, dropped by his spiritual fathers, he entered the Union Army, served his three years with honor, and now, on the return of peace, longs to preach the Gospel. Bro. Taylor, who has known him for years, and myself told him to go ahead. We also constituted ourselves a kind of provisional Presbytery, received him as a Candidate, directed him as to his studies, and expect to license him next spring, as one of the first acts of our reconstructed Presbytery." An interesting account of the meeting of Presbytery at which he was ordained is given by Synodical Missionary Norton, in the same volume, page 537.

ISAAC WILLIAM KER HANDY.

Nevin's Encyclopædia says: "Dr. Handy was a man of clear and strong convictions, and of great tenacity of purpose, yet kind, genial and gentle in his intercourse with all around him. He possessed excellent endowments, and they were well cultivated and wisely used. He was a warm-hearted friend. His manners were vivacious, genial and winning. Although decided in his own views, his sentiments and conduct were generous and liberal. . . . He had a wide and well-earned reputation for accurate research. As a Christian he was eminent, possessing genuine humility, strong faith, ardent hope. As a minister, he ever watched for souls. His own heart and soul were ever enlisted in the service of Christ."

In preparing this history the compiler has tried as far as possible to get contemporary matter as the basis at least of what is said about the various Ministers and churches. The letter given below is long and not as concise as we could desire, though full of matters of interest, even aside from its autobiographical character. It is inserted with some hesitation on account of a marginal postscript which reads: "I have scratched off all this in great haste, and do not wish it to appear as from me." However, the letter is given as originally written, inasmuch as it appears that the haste has not spoiled the story, and that those alluded to, including the writer, are all long since passed to a better world. There is nothing in it which the writer or anyone else need be ashamed of making known.

"Portsmouth, Va., Mar. 3, 1860.

"Rev. T. Hill:

"Dear Brother,—I am glad you are contemplating a History of the Presbyterian Churches of Missouri. There is much to be said, and much of great interest. Now is the time to gather up the material; and your long residence in the State, and other qualifications, fit you peculiarly for the work.

"* * * * I may say briefly, in answer to your several ques-

tions: That I was born in the City of Washington, D. C., on the 15th of December, 1815. My rudimental education was received in various schools in my native city; at 'Charlotte Hall Academy,' in St. Mary's county, Maryland; and at Cambridge, in Dorchester county, Md. In Washington I was a pupil of Mr. S. P. Chase, now the Hon. S. P. Chase, Governor of Ohio. Mr. C. was then a student of law, with the Hon. Wm. Wirt, and Principal of a 'Select Classical Seminary.' Among his pupils were the sons of Mr. Wirt; Hon. Sam. A. Southard, Secretary of the Navy; Hon. Henry Clay, then Secy. of State; Peter Lenox, Esq., Mayor of the City; and of Peter Hagner, Esq., Fifth Auditor of the Treasury.

"My collegiate studies were pursued at Jefferson College, Pa., where I graduated in 1834. I entered the Theological Seminary at Princeton, N. J., in 1835, being then just nineteen years of age, and the youngest man in the Seminary. The degree of A.M. was conferred at Jefferson in three years after my graduation. I was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of the District of Columbia, in the Bridge Street Church, Georgetown, now the Rev. Dr. Brocock's, on the . . . day of April, 1838, and was ordained by the Presbytery of Lewes, at Berlin, Md., on the 23d of November, 1838, and installed pastor of the united churches of Buckingham and Blackwater, the first of these churches being in Worcester county, on the east shore of Maryland, and the other eighteen miles distant, in Sussex county, Del. The sermon was preached by the Rev. John McKnight of Philadelphia, from Ps. 122:1-4.

"I remained with the church at Berlin (Buckingham), the church at Blackwater having been dropped a year after I took charge of it, for about six years; and becoming deeply interested in the loud calls for Ministers at the West, I left my field in Maryland, and removed my family to Paducah, Ky., where I arrived August the 18th, 1844. At this place application was made to the American Home Missionary Society for aid, which was *refused* without assigning a reason; but which, I presume, was done on account of my wife's being the nominal holder of some two or three young servants given her by her father. The conduct of the Society in New York aroused the feeling of the brethren in Kentucky, and a severe newspaper war like to have been consequent. It was only prevented by certain good brethren at the North, who begged that the matter might be winked at, because of peculiar circumstances in connection with the condition of the Board, *i. e.*, so much of the support coming from abolition quarters.

"The Board of New York having thus refused aid, the Home Missionary Society of Kentucky came to my relief; and for about six months I was engaged in missionary services in the southwestern part of the State, residing first at Paducah, and then at Blandville, in Ballard county.

"Experiencing great difficulty as it regards support, I wrote to Bro. Bullard about the destitutions in Missouri and received a pressing invitation to go to that state. And on the 7th of March, 1845,

through the influence of my dear Bro. Bullard, I received an appointment from the Missouri Home Missionary Society to act as General Missionary Agent for the State, with the privilege of locating whenever I should find a field more important than the agency itself. I entered upon my work immediately and traveled over about fifty counties of the State.

"I removed my family to Warsaw, Mo., about the middle of June, 1845, and located there, the population being at that time not quite 1,000. Rev. James Gallaher had been there some time before me, and had organized a little church which had been left to die. I had an acquaintance there who had been settled in the place a few years, and was in successful business as a merchant. This person was Mr. William Ayres, of the firm of White & Ayres. He with his partner were very anxious for my settlement in the place, and it was mainly through the influence manifested by them that I was induced to locate there.

"At the time of my first visit to Warsaw, it was very rarely that a Minister of any denomination passed through the place; and then it was a rare thing with that people to hear a Gospel sermon. I was informed also that there were not thirty professors of religion of all denominations in the city, for it was even then an incorporated city. I preached to a crowd in the court house, and after sermon I passed out of the house confidently expecting someone to knock me beside the head—such was the mixed multitude to whom I had preached. My apprehensions were greatly aroused in consequence of the mob spirit that had long been prevailing in that community. In three years eleven murders had been committed in the county, and not one of the guilty persons had been brought to justice. One of them was then at large in the community and came to hear that first sermon. I was afterwards informed that he was greatly pleased; and this statement was corroborated by a subscription of \$5 toward my support.

"When I first went to Warsaw, I had a letter of introduction to Mr. John Dunn, a member of the Presbyterian Church, who was keeping hotel in that place. I was put in a room the first night with some half a dozen or more persons, and in the night was disturbed by one groaning as if in great distress. After awhile he called my name, and earnestly inquired if I would not come and preach stately in Warsaw. At that time I did not think seriously of making my residence there, but the appeals of the man were so urgent and the picture which he presented of the moral destitution of the community so appalling, that I told him if God should make the way clear I would be willing to relinquish my agency and become a settled Pastor in Warsaw.

"The next morning the man who had spoken to me and myself were the last persons to leave the room. After dressing he went to the bedside, and turning over his pillow, took therefrom a *pistol and a dirk*, saying as he did so: 'You may be surprised at this after what has passed between us; but the truth is, sir, if I were without these weapons, I could not pass down these streets without being a dead man before night.' The amount of the whole matter was that this person

had been an officer of police during the confusion among the 'Slickers and Anti-Slickers,' and being active in the discharge of his duties, had brought upon himself an unusual amount of odium among the disorderly.

"The day after I preached my first sermon, a paper was circulated among the citizens to see what could be done toward getting up a salary. White & Ayres headed the subscription with \$50, and in a few hours some \$250 were pledged. This was enough to assure me of what could be done. Bro. Jones of Henry county (formerly a Missionary among the Osages) happened to be in Warsaw about the time of my visit; and at once he joined me in a petition for aid from the Missouri Home Missionary Society, as a Missionary at Warsaw; which, being presented, was responded to with equal promptness and cordiality.

"I remained at Warsaw until May, 1848, my wife having deceased on the 29th of February. During the period of my residence there, great changes were effected. The church considerably increased in numbers, and secured the confidence of the community. Many of the wild and desperate characters whom I found in the place upon my arrival moved away. The city became an orderly and quiet place. A new house of worship, the first that had ever been erected in the place, was put up; and at the time of my leaving, the congregation was in a prosperous and thriving condition.

"It may interest you to know something about the manner in which we secured the erection of our fine brick building, as we, at that time, considered it. It was thought by many that no effort to build a house could possibly succeed. Nothing daunted, however, I went around among the people with a paper; and, calling upon all the citizens, whether members of the congregation or not, I requested them to give me what they could, in money, materials for building, produce, or any article whatever that could be spared. The success was beyond my expectations. Some gave money, some paper, some carpenter work, some cabinet work, one a lot, but not suitable for the building, one leather, one tailor's work, etc. After we had secured the largest subscription possible, we advertised for proposals. Several builders put in their bids; but that which seemed most satisfactory to the committee was a proposal from a Mr. Davis, the very man who had so anxiously entreated me to locate at Warsaw, and whose case I have mentioned. He consented to take the paper for just what the face of it presented, and afterwards in paying his hands, he turned the tailoring, furniture, leather, etc., etc., just as circumstances needed. We received \$666 from the Church Extension Fund, and I got some further assistance from abroad. There was a small debt on the church, I think, when I left.

"When I commenced this, I only intended to say that at a future time I would send you some particulars; but my mind and pen have run on unconsciously. None of this is intended for publication as I send it to you. Take what you please of it; and if anything more is

needed in this style, let me know. I would refer you to the *Christian Observer* for July or August, 1847, for a full and interesting letter of Bro. Bullard, in which he gives some items that will be of value to you in your work. He there gives an account of my relation to the church at Warsaw and of my success with other matters of moment. If you can have access to old files of the *Observer* for 1845-6-7, you will find other letters of value from myself and other brethren, giving some account of missionary tours, and presenting the condition of the several fields in Missouri at those dates.*

"Bro. Bullard wrote an article about the indifference of the Board in New York to the destitutions in Missouri, which was published in the *Observer*, and which you ought to see.*

"Your friend and brother,
"Isaac W. K. Handy."

GEORGE WILLIAM HARLAN.

A short account of the good work done by this brother at Osceola is given in the sketch of that church. He is one of the few men now living who can speak from personal knowledge of the original Osage Presbytery, by which he was ordained in 1856. The following letter in reply to a request for reminiscences modestly omits mention of his own work, but gives interesting information concerning some of whom we have not been able to obtain so full an account elsewhere.

"Farmington, Mo., Nov. 19, 1900.

"I have deferred this reply in order that I might find data to refresh my memory, and thus give you the information you desire. In this respect I am somewhat disappointed, yet will report such items as I have. [Here follows a list of the members of Presbytery and of the churches at the time of his ordination, taken from the M. G. A., 1859.] Of these brethren the Morrisons, McMillan, Taylor and Ricketts were from Tennessee; and all, I think, students of theology under Dr. Anderson of Maryville, whom they greatly admired. W. H. Smith was an eastern man, and at the secession of the Presbytery in 1857 adhered to the New School Assembly. A. Jones and William C. Requa were originally connected with the Harmony Mission among the Osage Indians. J. V. Barks and I became connected with the Lafayette Presbytery of the Old School Assembly, U. S. A. It is my impression that A. Jones and W. C. Requa also joined the same Presbytery. The others were received under the care of the United Synod of the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., which was constituted in 1857 by certain synods in the Southern States, who, being aggrieved by the action of the New School Assembly of May 1857 on the subject of slavery, seceded.

"Of these brethren, the Rev. Joseph V. Barks and Levi R. Mor-

*The Committee regrets not having access to the files mentioned.