



THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE.
The Corner Stone Was Laid April 28, 1849, and the Building Dedicated on
Easter Sunday, April 20, 1851.

THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

The Addresses Delivered in Connection
with the Observance of the
One Hundredth Anniversary,
November 8-15, 1914.



1915
Foster & Parkes Company
Nashville, Tenn.





REV. WILLIAM HUME,
Minister 1801-1833.

CHAPTER IV.

HISTORY OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

By WILLIAM E. BEARD.

The seeds of Presbyterianism were sown here first by Rev. Thomas Craighead, a North Carolinian, and a graduate of Nassau Hall, Princeton, in the class of 1775. One Saturday afternoon early in 1785, Mr. Craighead arrived at the settlement on the Cumberland. His labors as preacher began at once. The following day he mounted a stump and preached the first sermon. During the year he located himself at old Haysboro, in this county, an early town whose site is now marked only by a cemetery. The citizens there built him a neat stone church, and on September 25, 1786, the trustees of Davidson Academy ordered school taught there. He was the first teacher. This stone meeting house was "the cradle of the University of Nashville." Mr. Craighead preached there regularly for nearly thirty years, though after 1810 he was at war with his presbytery about his views, the conflict not being settled until near his death on September 11, 1824. The pioneer sleeps peacefully in the old churchyard by the side of his faithful helpmeet.

REV. WILLIAM HUME.

The next minister having a place in the history of this church to reach the Cumberland settlement was Dr. William Hume, who was born in Edinburgh, August 15, 1770. The young Scotchman was studiously pursuing his course at the University of Edinburgh and had almost completed it, when one day he was summoned by the faculty to hear the news that he had been appointed a missionary to Ten-

nessee. After prayerful consideration of the call, he accepted. Included in the modest amount of baggage with which he undertook the long voyage over seas was a Scotch cheese, a reminder of home from a friendly Scotchman to a settler in Kentucky. The young traveler's means were very limited, so limited that when the New York Custom-house officers demanded duty on the Scotch cheese the preacher could not meet it. The captain suggested that he might escape the duty by declaring the cheese was a part of his provisions, but Mr. Hume would not consent to this. Regretfully, he left the cheese with the officers.

On December 2, 1801, Mr. Hume became pastor of a small circle of Scotch Seceders here. This church building was one of Nashville's first houses of worship. The Presbyterians among the settlers, who were pastorless, often enjoyed the privilege of his preaching in that house. In 1818 he united with the Presbyterian Church and the remaining members of his flock of seceders followed him. In his new connection he labored devotedly some fifteen years, often filling the pulpit of the First Church when it was vacant. His name is frequently encountered in the annals of early Nashville. He died May 22, 1833, and Nashville citizens erected a monument to commemorate "his virtues and his active goodness."

CHURCH ORGANIZED.

What is known as the First Presbyterian Church was organized at the courthouse November 14, 1814. There is some question about the exact date, for the records were all destroyed when the original church was burned in 1832. The date given is that suggested nearly fifty years ago by one of the first members, Mrs. M. L. Bybee, of Memphis, formerly Mrs. Patton Anderson, of Nashville. At that time Mrs. Bybee's recollection was substantiated by other witnesses to the event.

The church was organized by Rev. Gideon Blackburn,