

THE COLLEGE OF HAMPDEN-SIDNEY

CALENDAR OF BOARD MINUTES 1776-1876

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ander of Princeton was unanimously elected President of the College in the room of Doct. Hoge, deceased.

1820. July 22. Colo. Venable.

Committee to communicate to Doctr. Alexander his appointment as president &c, authorised to offer him the same salary and emoluments appropriated to the President under the order of February 5th, 1819.

The trustees to take a copy of the subscription paper to erect a new college edifice, and by themselves or their friends to endeavor to obtain donations.

Richard N. Venable, Thomas A. Morton, and Rev. Matthew Lyle a committee to draw up and cause to be published a statement of the condition—wants—designs—prospects and public utility of this institution.

Mr. William S. Archer of Amelia elected a Trustee. Mr. Samuel Branch of Buckingham was elected a trustee—it appearing from an examination of the College Charter that the institution is entitled to twenty six trustees, and Mr. Branch's election is intended to complete that number.

[*Richmond Enquirer*, Tuesday, Sept. 12, 1820

FOR THE ENQUIRER

TO THE PUBLIC

At a time when the feelings of our citizens are so laudably excited towards the promotion of knowledge, it has been thought to be the duty of the guardians of one of the oldest seminaries in the state, by a brief relation of facts relative to that institution, to present to the public view, its origin, its funds, the source from whence they have been drawn, the application which has been made of them, some of the principal difficulties which the trustees have had to encounter, and also their present plans and designs for the enlargement of the seminary, so as to keep pace with the growing population of this district, and the wants of the country.

Hampden Sidney College is situated in Prince Edward county, near the middle ground, between James River and the southern boundary of Virginia—between tide water and the mountains. It was founded in the year 1776, and was then called Hampden Sidney Academy. The only funds which it possessed for many years arose from private donations, made by the people of the district before mentioned. With these donations, a small brick building was erected for the students, a President's, professor's and steward's house,—a house for a library, for the philosophical

and chemical apparatus—a dining room, &c. The only funds which came to the hands of the trustees for the support of the president and teachers, was the money arising from tuition.

In the year 1783, this seminary was erected into a college, by an act of the General Assembly of Virginia. And in the years 1784 and 1794, donations were made to the College by the state, of two small tracts of land that had escheated to the commonwealth in the county of Prince Edward. These lands produced an annual rent, which did not much exceed the sum requisite to keep the college house, and the appurtenant buildings in repair. The college lands except a small tract, have been sold, and recently vested in bank stock, principally of the United States. About the year 1805, a voluntary contribution was made by the people residing in the adjacent counties, for the establishment of a permanent fund for the College, the proceeds only of which were to be annually expended. This contribution was vested in bank stock, and has enabled the trustees to give to the President of the College, a salary of one hundred pounds in addition to the funds arising from tuition, which have been divided between the president and teachers.

The funds of the College have been gradually improving. The principal of such donations as have been made since the buildings were erected, has been retained, and the annual proceeds only have been expended. And the trustees now think themselves justified in contracting to pay to the president and professors \$500 p. annum, in addition to the sum arising from tuition. This sum, small as it is, is the highest the trustees have ever been able to give to the president and professors.

Without undertaking to assign the ruling motive, we find in the poverty of the institution, sufficient reason, why some of the most distinguished men who have ever presided at this College, should remove and take charge of other seminaries to the north, where they might have a better prospect of support, for a rising family. The same difficulty has ever presented itself to the trustees, in their attempts to procure or retain able professors and teachers. If we have a president or professor, who rises to any degree of eminence, and promises usefulness to the institution, he has generally considered it his interest to leave us, and go to some part of the United States, where talents and learning are more in demand, and better rewarded. What *we* are able to offer is below the market price. How humiliating is this fact to those who are labouring to improve the state of literature in our country! How different from that laudable national pride which they would rejoice to feel, on seeing their efforts crowned with success! But there are other difficulties arising from the want of funds, that forbid the progress of this institution to eminence, and limit its usefulness. The entire building is very

small, entirely insufficient for the public demands. The rooms of college, together with all the rooms that can be obtained in the buildings appurtenant thereto, are insufficient for the accommodation of students now at college. Four or five students occupy one room, when perhaps, there should not be more than two to a room, were the college buildings sufficiently extensive. Crowding them together in this manner, tends greatly to interrupt their studies, and promote disorder.

Again, should the professors and teachers be willing to rely for their support on the tuition money alone, and calculate on their own talents and exertions, to secure the public patronage and give celebrity to the institution; yet the future prospects of public usefulness, and private advancement must be very limited, until additional buildings shall be erected for the accommodation of the students.

Influenced by these considerations, the trustees have thought it expedient to propose to the friends of the institution, the erection of a new college building; and in order to effect it, they will address themselves to the liberality of those who feel an interest in the college, who have supported it thus far, and calculate on this as the most convenient place to educate their sons.

The public are apprised of the loss we have recently sustained in the death of our much lamented president the Rev. Dr. Moses Hoge. The efforts we may make to improve the condition of the college funds, may have much influence in procuring some one to fill this vacancy, who may equal the wants and expectations of the public.

Thus have we, acting in obedience to an order of the board of trustees, given a brief history of the institution. We have endeavored to give a general view of the buildings and funds of college, their origin, their application, and present condition. We have also pointed out some of the principal difficulties which this institution has had to contend with, and lastly, we have shown the present views and designs of the trustees to enlarge the college buildings, so as to afford the students better and more extensive accommodations.

To this we shall add some reflections which the occasion has suggested. And in the first place we would address ourselves to those who are in middle life, and whose children are at the proper age to receive an education. When an application for aid to enlarge the college buildings shall be made, will any who profess to be the advocates of learning, be content to say, "These are difficult times to embark in such an undertaking, and that we had better postpone it for the present?" If this is not a favorable time, when will one more favorable occur?—We *live* but in the present time.—Our children are now on our hands, and our obligations to them as parents, demand of us, that we instruct

them in the best manner we can. Before what may be called a favorable time shall arrive, the period of instruction will be past, and we shall have fulfilled or omitted, the duty of parents, and they will have obtained or lost the opportunity of education. Are times as difficult now as when our fathers erected the present college building? It was then the commencement of the revolutionary war. There was something in the manly character of those days, that made practicable, whatever was desired. This spirit is well worthy of our imitation.

Whether the influence of this institution has compensated this district of country, for the donations that have been made to it—what has been the influence on the morals, manners, and intelligence of the people, is a question which every one must decide according to his own observations. But its effects are not confined to this limited district of country.—The sons of Hampden Sidney may be found scattered through the remotest parts of the Union, occupying some of the most important stations in their country.

Of the original benefactors of this institution scarcely one remains. And time has considerably thinned the ranks of those who were first educated there. Yet some of these remain scattered throughout the country to bear it honorable testimony. Permit us to address ourselves to such and ask, what were the expenses and sacrifices which your fathers made, under the pressure of those times, to erect this seminary and procure your education? Do you disapprove of the course they took? Or do you not rather consider it the most valuable part of your paternal estate? Has it not greatly contributed to enable you to take that rank in society which you have maintained? Is not the taste for literature which you there acquired, one of the greatest amusements and comforts in your retirement and decline of life? We are persuaded there are but few, very few, who will not answer these questions in the affirmative. It is not long since you heard of the death of that polite and amiable man, that zealous friend of science, who so greatly contributed to establish, and first presided at Hampden Sidney. When the death of Samuel Stanhope Smith was announced, many of you in private, wiped from your cheek the tear of love and gratitude and lamented that an opportunity had never offered to manifest your obligations to him. Here is the early object of his affections—the child of his youth—assist her, she stands in need of your aid—now bereaved, she looks to you, and calls you her eldest sons—will you deny it?

The erection of this seminary was a favorite object of our fathers. "We will," said they, "begin it, our children will carry it on. It will be in vain to purchase at the price of our blood, the blessings of freedom for our descendants, if we do not give with it, that mental improvement which will enable them to estimate

its value, and preserve the inheritance." Shall we fulfil these just expectations, or have such reflections lost their influence on the community?

MATTHEW LYLE,
THOS. A. MORTON,
RICH'D N. VENABLE.

THE ANNIVERSARY OF HAMPDEN SIDNEY COLLEGE.

The public examination of the Academy and of the College, will commence on the last Monday in September. The trustees who may attend, and the faculty of College, form the board of examination.

The examination of the candidates for diplomas of the Bachelor's degree will be on Wednesday A. M.

The annual meeting of the board of trustees will be on Wednesday.

The public exercises of the Commencement will begin at 11 o'clock on Thursday.

As business of unusual importance will come before the board, the presence of every member is important.

The counsel and influence of the members from distant countries are solicited on this occasion; and their attendance as early as on Tuesday will be gratifying to the trustees in the vicinity of the College, and serviceable in preparing the business for the annual meeting.]

1820. Sept. 28. Mr. Lyle.

Th. Miller, the Rev. Dr. Rice, W. S. Archer, and Henry E. Watkins a committee to make application to the next Legislature for aid to the funds of this institution.

Degrees conferred:¹ John B. Clauselle, Josiah Harris, Thomas Davis.—Rev. A. W. Kilpatrick, Rev. Edward Baptist, Henry Carrington, and John Dabney, admitted to the second degree in the arts.

¹In this Calendar, the times for conferring degrees, the number of degree men &c, have been carefully noted thus far. Hence forward such items will be omitted, making the era of the Old College terminate with the year of Dr. Hoge's death. The publication of Catalogues began in 1822, (for the session 1821-22) about the time when the Yale catalogues begin, and several years before the University of Pennsylvania began to issue catalogues.

Sixty seven A. B. degrees were conferred in course between 1786 and 1820. Of these, twenty four seem to have been ministers, fourteen what might be called public men, four educators, and four physicians. This is not a strict classification and the records are meagre. No doubt most of the unaccounted for were masters of plantations.

In the circumstances a preponderance of ministers during this period is to be expected. The General Catalogue [1776-1906] shows that of