

From The Christian Observer, Louisville, Ky.

REV. FRANKLIN PATTON, D. D.

1820 A MEMORIAL 1895

Adopted by the Synod of Arkansas, November, 1895.



brother to  
her com Nelson  
Patton,  
my ancestor  
great grandfather

Paul

ancestors of Patton Lepp  
Ruth Patton Lepp  
4632 N. Lepp

FRANKLIN PATTON was born near Richards, in Washington county, Mo., on the 5th day of January, 1820. Died at Dardanelle, Arkansas, March 4, 1895. His family on his father's side, was of Scotch Irish, Presbyterian stock. His great-grandfather, John Patton, emigrated from near Belfast, Ireland, to Allegheny City, Pennsylvania, when his grandfather, John Patton Jr., was about fourteen years of age. The latter was carefully educated, and when quite young enlisted as a soldier in the Revolutionary army, and at the battle of Plattsburg was promoted for gallant conduct. After the war, he settled in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and married Nancy Gouverneur, a great niece of the great English commander, Lord Nelson, of Trafalgar fame. Eight children were the fruit of this union, of whom Charles, the father of the subject of this sketch, was the eldest.

Charles Patton was educated and graduated as mechanical engineer. About the beginning of the present century the family moved to Kaskaski, Illinois, and some years afterward to the vicinity of Richwoods, in Washington county, Missouri. In 1808 Charles Patton married Susanna Rogers of Bonhomme settlement, in St. Louis county. Of this lady nothing is known, save, that when her son, Franklin, was an infant, she professed religion and joined the Methodist church, his father at that time not being a professor of religion. Dr. Patton was the fifth of a family of seven children, of whom only one, Mrs. Rebecca, wife of Peyton Johnson, of Franklin county, Mo., survives.

Dr. Patton's first teacher was the Hon. Austin Clark of South Carolina, whom he always remembered as a most saintly man. To reach this school he crossed the Maremac river with his brothers and sisters in a canoe. When six years old, he was sent to board with an uncle living farther up the Maremac river. Here he was fortunate in his teacher and made good progress in his studies. The scenery around his uncle's home, which was picturesque and beautiful, seems also to have left an abiding impression on his nature, young as he was; and in after years he composed a poem in which he recalls and describes its beauties. Sometime after this his father removed to Franklin county, where he shortly afterwards died. When this sad bereavement occurred Franklin was still a mere child, being only in his tenth year. From this time until he was fifteen he helped on the farm, attending school occasionally as he had opportunity. Among his teachers during these five years, was Mrs. Gillam of Va., sister of Judge Bishop of St. Louis, and a most estimable lady. During this time he walked five miles to Sunday school, wading the Bourboise river on the way.

When fifteen years old, he was employed for a time as a clerk in his uncle's store in Union, the county seat of Franklin county. After this he alternately taught and went to school, pursuing his studies while he taught. At twenty he entered Marion College. This was in 1840. Among the professors at that time

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were David Nelson and Potts. It was here, during his second year in college, under the influence of these devoted men, and others associated with them, of like character and spirit, that he led to make a public profession of faith in Christ, and join the Presbyterian church. Whether this was the actual beginning of his Christian life, we will not undertake to determine. For we have testimony that his first serious religious impressions dated back to a much earlier period of his life. He completed the prescribed course of study at Marion in 1844.

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After graduating, he went south to Mississippi, and taught for several years, two or more, at Holly Springs, in Marshall county. During these years he studied theology privately, under Rev. A. W. Young. At the fall meeting of Chickasaw Presbytery, in 1846, he was taken under its care as a candidate for the Gospel ministry. The following year he went to the Western Theological Seminary, Allegheny, Penn., where he remained one session. Returning to Mississippi, he was licensed to preach in April, 1848, by Chickasaw Presbytery. In November, 1849, he was ordained and installed pastor of Hopewell church. From 1849 to 1857, he served for a time Hopewell and Lebanon churches, and afterwards Sarepta church was added to the group.

In 1857, at his request, his relation to these churches was dissolved, and he was dismissed to the Presbytery of Potosi, and took charge of the church at Cape Girardeau, Mo. Here, however, he remained only two years, and then returned to his old charge in Mississippi, where he continued twelve years, with the exception of one year, during which he supplied the church at Oxford, Miss. After his return from Cape Girardeau, he resided at Woodson's Ridge, where he maintained a school during all, or nearly all, the years of the war. Here three of his nieces, and one nephew, children of one of his sisters, who died young, were in part educated.

In 1871, he moved to Tupelo, Miss., where he resided and preached with great acceptableness and usefulness for ten years.

In 1881 he accepted an invitation to come to Helena, Arkansas, and take charge of the church there. Here he remained one year, and then removed to Clarendon in Monroe county, Arkansas, and took charge of the Clarendon and Holly Grove churches. His ministry in this field lasted three years; during which he greatly endeared himself to the people, and the churches were strengthened and build up. While here he was called to pass through one of the sorest trials of his life, in the death of two of his children, and one of his grandchildren, within a short time of each other.

In 1885 he removed from Clarendon to Dardanelle in Yell county, and Morrilton church, in Conway county. This arrangement continued for about a year, when Morrilton church, becoming strong enough, and desiring to secure a minister for the whole of his time, withdrew, and Dr. Patton gave the whole of his time to the Dardanelle and Russellville, Ark., churches.

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Dr. Patton was now becoming an old man. But his bow abode in strength. Though his health was feebler, and his physical strength declining, his ministry grew in attractiveness and power to the end. The last ten years of his ministry were among the most useful of his life. His life and ministry have left a profound impression upon the communities in which he labored; and the fruits of his work there are still being reaped and will continue to appear for a long time to come. He was a constant and faithful attendant upon the courts of the Church, and no minister in all our bounds was more profoundly interested in all the missionary operations, both of the whole Church, and of his own Synod and Presbytery. He was ever ready to do what he could to help struggling young churches, and to carry the Gospel into the unoccupied regions beyond. The towns and communities in the vicinity of his home field will bear testimony to his zeal and faithfulness in these respects.

In 1852, Dr. Patton was married to Miss Martha McCord, of Mississippi, who survives him. Seven children were born to them, only three of who still live; who are Mrs. Bettie Ervin, wife of Rev. S. B. Ervin, of Mexico, Mo., Dr. Joseph A. Patton, of Evansville, Ark., and John W. Patton, who remains with his mother. \* \* \*

Dr. Patton was a man of quiet, even humble, deportment, conspicuously modest, yet capable of brave and vigorous self-assertion when principle or the interests of the Master's cause demanded it. His piety was deep and earnest, and he was constant and diligent in his efforts to do good to others. He was a diligent student all his life; and his reading was wide and varied. His naturally fine powers thus improved by study and sanctified by grace, made him a most attractive and edifying preacher. His sermons were uniformly of a high order; and, without a suspicion of sensationalism, were, in the truest and highest sense, popular. His ministrations grew upon those who heard him, and were attended, wherever he preached, by rich and precious spiritual results.

He had filled up the measure of his days, and was like a shock ripe unto the reaping, but his taking away will leave a gap in the ranks of our ministry that will be difficult to fill, and long and sadly felt by his brethren who are left behind.

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\* \* \* Other children of the family were: Charles, an infant, buried at Cape Girardeau, Mo.; Sue, wife of Dr. J. H. Wiley, died at Dardanelle, Ark.; Frank, died at Clarendon, Ark., aged 23 years; Idlette, died at Clarendon, Ark., aged 10 years.

Mrs. Ervin died at Sallisaw, Okla., February 20, 1911. Her mother, widow of Dr. F. Patton, followed her to their heavenly home in March 4, 1911. Their interment is at Stilwell, Okla. Dr. J. A. Patton died at Stilwell, Okla., in November, 1931.

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Printed at Wilson, Okla., November, 1935, by  
J. W. Patton, only surviving member of the family.