

# SKETCHES OF THE MINISTERS

Of the

## REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

OF NORTH AMERICA

From 1888 to 1930

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With supplemental sketches of ministers living in 1888 whose records were carried forward in Glasgow's History up to that date; together with sketches of the institutions, missions and organizations of the Church, and lists of missionaries who have served the Church during this period; containing also 42 portraits of Moderators of Synod besides the cuts of the institutions of the Church; also lists of Presbyteries and Congregations together with the dates of organization and disorganization of the same during the period covered by this volume.

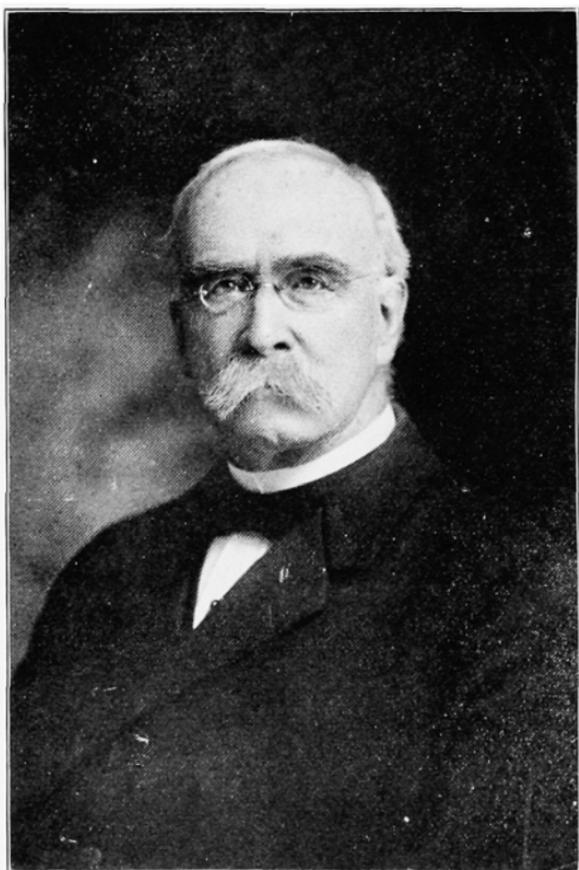


By

THE REV. OWEN F. THOMPSON

Pastor of the Blanchard Congregation

Blanchard, Iowa



THE REV. ROBERT M. SOMMERVILLE, D. D.  
Elected Moderator of Synod in the year 1889  
In the Belle Center R. P. Church  
Belle Center, Ohio

tinued his labors for the Lord for eleven years, or until the time of his death, which occurred at Cincinnati, Ohio, March 12, 1900. During his 37 years of service as a Minister of the Gospel he was not once absent from the meeting of Synod, and seldom absent from Presbytery. He was Moderator of Synod in 1896, which met in his own church in Cincinnati, Ohio. Under his ministry the Jewish Mission of Cincinnati, was established. Into this work went not only his strength and interest but his heart as well. It was here that the Rev. Louis Meyer, D. D., found his new Christian faith and took up his noted service, afterward marrying a daughter of the pastor. He was a descendent of Walter Smith, who suffered martyrdom in Edinburgh, July 27, 1681, and also of David Farie, who died as a martyr in Edinburgh, October 10, 1681. He himself was a Covenanter not only in his relation to the Covenant of Grace and the Covenants of the Church, but in his personal relation with the Lord, for he had made and signed his own personal covenant years before his death. On being informed of the near approach of death he said: "I am ready. I was ready long ago. A death bed is no place for preparation." He was twice married. While at Northwood, Ohio, he married Miss Sarah A. McCartney. To this union there were eleven children born. She died April 19, 1891. On June 22, 1898, while pastor in Cincinnati, he married Miss Elizabeth Patterson in Bellefontaine, Ohio.

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ROBERT MCGOWAN SOMMERVILLE, D. D.

R. M. SOMMERVILLE, whose biographical sketch appears in Glasgow's History, was, at the time of the publishing of

that volume in 1888, pastor of the Second New York City Reformed Presbyterian Church. He had been ordained to the Gospel Ministry October 16, 1861, and installed pastor of Second New York, December 14, 1875. In the year 1912 he resigned from this charge on account of physical weakness, and on September 17th the relationship between himself and his congregation was dissolved and he became Pastor Emeritus. He continued to fill this relationship with his old charge until the time of his death. This occurred February 3, 1920, after he had filled the relation of pastor and pastor emeritus for more than 44 years to this one congregation. Made ineffective for active service through being run down by an express team on the streets of New York, he retired, like Alexander Paden after imprisonment in the Bass Rock, to become an intercessor with God for the promotion of the Kingdom of our Blessed Lord. After his death, which occurred in his home in New York City, at the age of 82 years, his body was laid to rest in Bronx Cemetery to await the call of Him upon whom he had waited all his life long, and upon whom he is to wait through all eternity. He was Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions. He founded the missionary magazine, Olive Trees, and edited it for 29 years, putting large sums of money into it from his own resources and later turning it over to the Board as a gift. He was Moderator of Synod in the year 1889, at Belle Center, Ohio. About 1900 he and Mrs. Sommerville visited the Levant Missions. "Dr. Sommerville was one hundred per cent preacher; he had a magnified idea of what a sermon ought to be. . . . His messages were prepared with care and delivered with power. They were scholarly to perfection. . . . Dr. Sommerville was

pre-eminently a man who walked with God. His piety was not a mere profession, but a persuasive and abiding force." How can we grasp the meaning and measure the value of such a life and a service? Only the King Himself knows what such a life means to a congregation, to the Mission Cause, to the Church at large and to the Kingdom of Heaven. He served the Lord under his ordination vows for 59 years, on earth. How long are you preparing to serve Him in Eternity?

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#### JAMES ALEXANDER SPEER, D. D.

J. A. SPEER, whose biographical sketch appears in *Glasgows History* up until the year 1888, when that volume was published, was at that time pastor of the West Hebron, New York, Reformed Presbyterian congregation. He had been installed there July 28, 1875. He was released from this charge in the fall of 1888, and on April 26, 1889, was installed pastor of the Homewood, Kansas, congregation. In August of the year 1891 he left the communion of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and affiliated with the United Presbyterian Church. For many years following this he served in the Home Mission work of this denomination, much of the time superintending Indian Mission work in the Northwest. He served in Shedd, Oregon, from 1901 to 1904. In 1909 he was Moderator of the Synod of Columbia. In 1915 he was honored with the degree of Doctor of Divinity by Monmouth College. About the year 1920 he retired from active service, and was living with his son in Bremerton, Washington. He passed from this life May 18, 1926, after a long life of service in the Kingdom.