



HISTORY

OF THE

Reformed Presbyterian Church

IN

AMERICA:

WITH SKETCHES OF ALL HER MINISTRY, CONGREGATIONS,  
MISSIONS, INSTITUTIONS, PUBLICATIONS, Etc.,  
AND EMBELLISHED WITH OVER  
FIFTY PORTRAITS AND  
ENGRAVINGS.

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BY

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## DAVID HACKSTON COULTER :

Son of James and Mahala (Skeggs) Coulter, was born in Coultersville, Randolph County, Illinois, March 15, 1833. He received his early education in the school of his native village, and also in Sparta Academy, and graduated from Geneva College in 1857. He taught in Geneva College before and after his graduation for some time. He studied theology in the Allegheny Seminary, and was licensed by the Illinois Presbytery, June 28, 1864. He was ordained by the Iowa Presbytery, and installed pastor of the congregation of Hopkinton, Delaware County, Iowa, April 18, 1867, and resigned this charge, October 14, 1874. He was installed pastor of the congregation of Newark, New Jersey, December 10, 1874, and resigned October 30, 1875, and accepted the chair of Natural Science in Lenox College, Iowa. He was installed pastor of the congregation of Winchester, Jefferson County, Kansas, August 17, 1877, where he is in charge. He married Miss Martha A. Forsythe, of Northwood, Ohio, July 10, 1856.

## ALEXANDER CRAIGHEAD :

Son of Rev. Thomas and Margaret Craighead, was born near Donegal, Ireland, March 18, 1707.\* His father was a Presbyterian minister, came to America in 1715, and settled in Freetown, Massachusetts. In 1721, he, with his parents, removed to New Jersey, thence, in 1724, to White Clay Creek, Delaware, and finally, in 1733, to Octorara, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He received his classical education under the direction of

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\* Craighead Genealogy. Dr. Foote's Sketches of North Carolina.

his father, under whom, also, he studied theology, and was licensed by the Donegal Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church, October 16, 1734. He supplied "the first congregation over the river," at Meeting House Springs, two miles north of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and was the first minister to preach west of the Susquehanna river. He was ordained by the Donegal Presbytery, and installed pastor of the Middle Octorara congregation, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, November 20, 1735. He was an earnest fervid preacher, and a zealous promoter of revivals. He was a great admirer of Whitefield, and accompanied him upon some of his tours. His zeal, however, was not always tempered with prudence, and he contended that his ministerial brethren were too liberal in their views and lax in the application of discipline. He insisted upon new terms of communion, which required parents, when they presented their children for baptism, to adopt the Solemn League and Covenant, as the Church across the Atlantic had always done. He frequently absented himself from Church courts because of the failure of his brethren to adhere to the practices of the Church of his fathers, and for this cause a complaint was lodged against him in 1740, and the Presbytery met by appointment in his church to investigate the charges. When the members of the court came to the church, they found him preaching from the text, "Let them alone, they be blind leaders of the blind." In the report to Synod, the Presbytery spoke of the sermon as a "continued invective against Pharisee preachers, and the Presbytery as given over to judicial blindness and hardness." At

its close, the people and Presbytery were invited to repair to "the tent" to hear his defence read. The Presbytery declined to attend, and were proceeding to business in the church when such a tumult was raised that they were compelled to withdraw. At the meeting the next day he appeared and read his protest, in which he declined the jurisdiction of the Presbytery, whereupon he was suspended for contumacy, "directing, however, that if he should signify his sorrow for his conduct to any member, that member should notify the Moderator, who was to call the court together and take off the suspension." With an ardent love of personal liberty and freedom of opinion, he was far in advance of his brethren; also, in his views on civil government. These "advanced views" he gave to the public in pamphlet form, and attracted so much attention that Thomas Cookston, one of his majesty's justices in Lancaster County, had him arraigned for treason, and laid the pamphlet, in the name of the Governor, before the Synod of Philadelphia. Though the publication was anonymous, its authorship was very generally attributed to Mr. Craighead. The Synod unanimously agreed that the pamphlet was "full of treason and sedition," and made haste to declare their abhorrence of the paper, and with it all principles and practices that tend to destroy the civil and religious rights of mankind, or to foment and encourage sedition or dissatisfaction with the British government, or encourage anything that is disloyal." At the meeting of Synod in May, 1741, the Church was divided, and he went with the New Brunswick party, but did not remain long with them.

because they refused to acknowledge the validity of the Solemn League and Covenant sworn by the Church in Scotland. In 1742, he published his reasons for withdrawing from the American Presbyterian Church; the chief of which was, that "neither the Synod nor the Presbyteries had adopted the Westminster Standards as a public act," and, in the fall of 1742, he joined the languishing cause of the Covenanters. They formed a General Meeting, over which he presided, and he was instrumental in building them a church in Octorara. In the fall of 1743, he gathered all the Covenanters of Eastern Pennsylvania together and they renewed the Covenants. He also opened up a correspondence with the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland, and solicited "helpers who might come and assist him to maintain the principles of the Scottish Reformation." He, however, lacked stability. Before any Covenanter minister could be induced to join him from Scotland, and having labored with great acceptance among the scattered societies for seven years, he returned to the Presbyterian Church, and, in 1749, removed to the Cowpasture river, in Augusta County, Virginia, where he enjoyed more freedom in proclaiming his views of independence from the British government. Here he remained among some families who had removed from Octorara, and he ministered to their spiritual wants for six years. In 1755, on account of the disturbed state of the country by Indians, he crossed the Blue Ridge mountains with a colony of his people, and settled on' the Catawba river, in what is now Mecklenberg County, North Carolina. He was installed pastor of the congregation

of Rocky River and Sugar Creek, Mecklenberg County, North Carolina, September 19, 1758. In this beautiful and peaceful valley, the solitary minister between the Yadkin and the Catawba, he passed the remainder of his days. Here he freely imbued the minds of his people with the idea of independence, whose hands and hearts were in the trying scenes of the Revolution. The members who formed the Convention at Charlotte, North Carolina, and framed the First Declaration of Independence (Mecklenberg, May, 1775), were all members of the Churches which he had founded and instructed, and incorporated the principles which he so uncompromisingly advocated. He died at his home within three miles of Charlotte, Mecklenberg County, North Carolina, March 12, 1766, and was buried in the old graveyard adjoining the church where he preached. Tradition says the two sassafras trees at the head and foot of the grave, sprung from the two sticks upon which the coffin was borne.

#### JOHN CRAWFORD:

Son of James and Jane (McAuley) Crawford, was born in Carncullough, County Antrim, Ireland, May 27, 1828. In early life he evinced decided evidence of a literary taste, and he was sent to the school in Dervock, where he received his preparatory training. In 1839, he began the study of the languages in Derry Keva, and continued them in Ballymoney. In 1845, he entered Belfast College, where he took several prizes for proficiency, and engaged in teaching. In 1849, he entered the College of Edinburgh, Scotland, where he attended some classes and waited on the lectures of Dr. Cun-