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THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY FOR THE YEAR ENDING JANUARY 12, 1922.

BY HENRY S. BORNEMAN, CHAIRMAN.

The Executive Council has held stated meetings and carried on the work of the Society throughout the year as required by the By-Laws. The work of the Council was distributed among the Standing Committees, which attended to the work in detail and reported from time to time at the stated meetings of the Council.

The Library Committee reports the total number of accessions of books and manuscripts for the year 1921, to be eight hundred and forty-three (843). A complete list of the manuscripts which have been received is published in this March issue of the JOURNAL. A few of the items of outstanding interest are the following :

Minutes of East Florida Presbytery, from June, 1870, to April, 1907.

Minutes of South Florida Presbytery, from April, 1886, to April, 1907.

Subscription List for salary of the Rev. James Boyd, 1769-1804 (Bensalem, Pennsylvania, congregation).

Original manuscript sermons preached in various parts of Pennsylvania, by Rev. James Clarkson of the Associate Reformed Church, dated 1774, 1776, etc.

History of Dutch Reformed Church of North and Southampton Townships, Pa.

Minutes of Presbytery of Donegal, Pennsylvania, 1778-1786.

NOTES

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

(From the *Democratic Press* of November 8, 1821.)

The interior of the spacious and elegant church built by the First Presbyterian Church in this city, on the Washington Square, is now so far complete that the congregation will assemble in it on Sunday next. The building is 120 feet by 75. It contains on one floor a church about 82 by 77 feet, a vestibule or entrance and two rooms, each 15 feet square, where the session and the trustees will hold their meetings, and where fires will be made on the Sabbath for the health and comfort of the members in inclement weather. The floor of the church is an inclined plane, like the pit of a theatre, rising 40 inches in 64 feet. The whole building is probably not surpassed by any edifice for public worship in the United States. Its great beauty, harmonious symmetry of parts and their happy adaptation to their various purposes do great credit to Mr. Haviland, the architect. The whole expense thus far will probably be about \$42,000 for the building and \$18,000 for the ground. Nearly two-thirds of this will be defrayed by the sale of the ground floor under the old church and the additional pews, which are to be auctioned off on Monday next, the 12th inst.

[From the *Evening Bulletin*, Philadelphia, November 8, 1921.]

GRAVES OF GILBERT TENNENT AND SAMUEL FINLEY.

BY HARRY PRINGLE FORD.

The question is frequently asked by visitors to the ancient graveyard of the Abington, Pa., church, organized in 1714, why the bodies of Rev. Gilbert Tennent and Dr. Samuel Finley are buried therein, as neither had any direct connection with that church.

Dr. Robert Steel, who was pastor of the Abington church from 1819 to the time of his death, in 1862, a period of forty-three years, gives this interesting explanation in *The Presbyterian Magazine* of March, 1856:

“In 1853, a lady of Philadelphia, a granddaughter of Rev. Gilbert Tennent, asked me if we would consent to have the remains of her grandfather interred at Abington. I answered, ‘Certainly, madam; we shall esteem it an honor to have the dust of such an eminent servant of God among us!’

“When the old Second Church, at the northwest corner of Third and Arch Streets, was sold and torn down, the remains of Gilbert Tennent and Dr. Samuel Finley, president of Princeton College [now Princeton University], were taken up and put in a strong box and placed in the

family vault of the late Charles Chauncey, Esq. There they remained until the time specified above, when they were transferred to our graveyard, and a handsome marble monument placed to mark the spot."

Mr. Tennent was the first pastor of the Second Church, Philadelphia, from 1743, till his death, 1764. Webster says of him: "His feet were blistered by traversing the streets and visiting such numbers of distressed souls." The first General Assembly met in the Second church in 1789, while it was still at Third and Arch Streets. The Assembly consisted of twenty-one ministers and ten elders. Of the twenty-one ministers, eight subsequently became moderators of the Assembly: Drs. Witherspoon, Rodgers, Robert Smith, Latta, McWhorter, Samuel Stanhope Smith, Roe and Armstrong. In this connection, it may be of interest to state that Dr. Robert Smith, who was moderator in 1790, had two sons who succeeded to the office: Dr. John Blair Smith, in 1798, and Dr. Samuel Stanhope Smith, in 1799. A third son, William R., also entered the ministry, and two others became physicians.

In connection with Gilbert Tennent, it will be of interest to note that his nephew, Rev. William Mackay Tennent, D.D., moderator of the General Assembly of 1797, was pastor of the Abington church from 1781 until his death, in 1810. The first five pastors of this church died during their official connection with it. Their pastorates subtended a period of one hundred and forty-six years, an average of twenty-nine years each.

Dr. Samuel Finley, whose remains were removed to Abington at the same time as those of Gilbert Tennent, was the second Presbyterian minister in America to receive the honorary degree of doctor of divinity from a Scottish university, Dr. Francis Alison being the first, both being from the University of Glasgow—Dr. Alison's in 1758, and Dr. Finley's in 1763. Once, when preaching by invitation in New Haven, Conn., Dr. Finley "was seized by a constable and fined. A few days later he was presented by the grand jury, and judgment was given that he be carried out of the Colony as a vagrant. The sentence was executed." He died in Philadelphia, in July, 1766, and was buried in the Second Presbyterian church, by the side of Gilbert Tennent, the extreme heat making it impossible to take his body to Princeton for interment.

[From *The Presbyterian*, Philadelphia, December 1, 1921.]

THE TENNENT AND FINLEY MONUMENT.

Ashbourne Presbyterian Church, Ashbourne, Pa.

December 15, 1921.

To the Editor of the *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society*:

I was greatly interested in an article by Mr. H. P. Ford in a recent number of *The Presbyterian*, on "The Graves of Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Finley." It has long been a matter of curious interest to me why

the remains of these two students of the Log College and so prominent in the beginnings of our Church, should be buried so far from the scenes of their labors, especially when it is known that they were both buried under the aisle of the Second Church of Philadelphia. None of the former pastors of Abington could tell me, and there is nothing on the records of Abington.

This is an illustration of an unfortunate condition. All our churches are making history in the celebrations they observe, improvements in property, or memorials received; oftentimes no record is made of these dates, and in a few years it is impossible to fix the date accurately.

Mr. Ford settles the question by a quotation from an article in *The Presbyterian Magazine* of March, 1856, by Dr. Robert Steel, pastor of Abington, 1819-1862:

“In 1853, a lady of Philadelphia, a granddaughter of Rev. Gilbert Tennent, asked me if we would consent to have the remains of her grandfather interred at Abington. I answered: ‘Certainly, madam; we shall esteem it an honor to have the dust of such an eminent servant of God among us!’

“When the old Second Church, at the northwest corner of Third and Arch Streets, was sold and torn down, the remains of Gilbert Tennent and Dr. Samuel Finley, president of Princeton College, were taken up and put in a strong box, and placed in the family vault of the late Charles Chauncey, Esq. There they remained until the time specified above, when they were transferred to our graveyard, and a handsome marble monument placed to mark the spot.”

In this connection I am able to add a matter of interest. For almost seventy years the Gilbert-Finley monument has stood in Abington's graveyard near to the graves of the first five pastors—Malachi Jones, Richard Treat, William M. Tennent, D.D., (nephew of Gilbert Tennent), William Dunlap, and Robert Steel, D.D. On the monument is also the name and date of death of Gilbert Tennent's granddaughter, with the statement that she was the last of her family. Last May Captain Nicholas Baggs, an Elder in Abington, wrote me that the Tennent monument was in danger of toppling over because the foundation had disintegrated, and asked if there was any way in which this could be brought to the attention of the Second Church of Philadelphia. I wrote to the pastor, Dr. MacColl, and received an immediate reply that he had sent my letter to the Board of Trustees. In a few days the secretary of the Board of Trustees wrote to me that the matter would be laid before the Board, and later that the president of the Board desired an estimate as to the cost of rebuilding the foundation. I sent the letters to Captain Baggs, who secured the information. During the summer the work was done, and the monument now stands securely and bids fair to endure for another century.

I am yours, etc.,

RICHARD MONTGOMERY.