

ANNALS

OF THE

AMERICAN PULPIT;

OR

COMMEMORATIVE NOTICES

OF

DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN CLERGYMEN

OF

VARIOUS DENOMINATIONS,

FROM THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE COUNTRY TO THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR  
EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FIVE.

WITH HISTORICAL INTRODUCTIONS

BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

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VOLUME II.

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temper was naturally ardent, but softened by Christianity, as was that of Paul, into ardent affection and tenderness. As a preacher, he always appeared in his public ministrations in a manner which was entirely his own. Equally peculiar to himself were his public prayers, and in my own view, they were peculiarly excellent." Panoplist, vol. XII. p. 488.

Dr. Ely was married to Hepsa, daughter of Elisha Mills of Huntington, and grand-daughter of his venerable predecessor and colleague. They had five children,—three sons and two daughters. All the sons were graduated at Yale College. Mrs. Ely died on the 26th of September, 1803, aged forty-nine years.

Affectionately yours,

THOMAS F. DAVIES.

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### DAVID McCLURE, D. D.\*

1771—1820.

DAVID McCLURE was the son of John and Rachel McClure, and was born at Newport, R. I., November 18, 1748. The stated residence of his parents was in Boston, but they happened to be residing temporarily at Newport, at the time of his birth. His father carried on a small trade at sea, and kept a retail grocery. He was a deacon in the church, and both he and his wife were considered as eminently pious. They were natives of the North of Ireland, their ancestors having been Scottish Highlanders, who settled near Londonderry and Newry, early in the seventeenth century. The mother of David McClure was the daughter of William McClintock, and sister of the Rev. Dr. Samuel McClintock, of Greenland, N. H.

The youthful days of the subject of this sketch were spent in Boston, chiefly in the school of the famous "Master Lovell;" though he was, for some time, occupied as a clerk in a store. At the age of fifteen, he went, at the instance of the Rev. John Moorhead, to Lebanon, Conn., where he became a member of Dr. Wheelock's school, with a view to engage as a missionary among the Indians. He was, about that time, received to the communion of the church.

He was admitted to the Freshman class in Yale College, in 1765, and was graduated in 1769. Shortly after, he took charge of Moor's school at Lebanon, where he continued till it was removed to Hanover, N. H., in 1770. He removed with the school, and still continued his connection with it as teacher, while, at the same time, he filled the office of Tutor in the new College. His license to preach he received from Dr. Wheelock alone, there being, at that time, no Presbytery or Association in that region. As long as he remained at Hanover, he preached, most of the time, in the new settlements in the immediate neighbourhood.

On the 20th of May, 1772, he and Levi Frisbie were ordained at Dartmouth College, with a view to a mission to the Delaware Indians, near Pittsburg, Penn. The ordination sermon was preached by President Wheelock.

\* MS. from the Rev. A. W. McClure, D. D.

This mission, which was sustained by the Society in Scotland for propagating the Gospel, was speedily broken up, in consequence of troubles growing out of the hostile relations between the Colonies and the mother country. The missionaries spent most of their time preaching in the new settlements in Western Pennsylvania; and, in the summer of 1773, returned, after an absence of sixteen months.

Mr. McClure spent the greater part of the next three years in preaching to vacant congregations in Boston and Portsmouth. He received two invitations to settle from the church in Portsmouth, made vacant by the removal of Dr. Langdon to the Presidency of Harvard College, but declined both. On the 13th of November, 1776, he was installed pastor of the church at North Hampton, N. H., the sermon on the occasion being preached by the Rev. Josiah Stearns of Epping.

In 1778, he was appointed a Trustee of Dartmouth College, and held the office twenty-three years. In 1800, he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the same institution.

Dr. McClure was dismissed from North Hampton, at his own request, August 30, 1785. About this time, he received a call from Hebron, Conn., which he declined. On the 11th of June, 1786, he was installed pastor of the church in East Windsor, (now South Windsor,) Conn.: the installation sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Williams of East Hartford.

In 1798, Dr. McClure began to experience great inconvenience from the failure of his voice, and, for many years, he preached but little, and with great difficulty. After he became quite disabled for preaching, he occupied himself in the business of instruction, and especially in preparing youth for College. Mr. (now the Rev. Dr.) Thomas Robbins was settled as his colleague, in March, 1809.

Dr. McClure died at East Windsor, June 25, 1820, in the seventy-second year of his age, having been a pastor of that church thirty-four years. The disease of which he died was dropsy in the chest, which confined him to his chamber, and subjected him, much of the time, to intense suffering, for about five months. His last days were marked by great peace.

In December, 1780, he was married to Hannah, youngest daughter of the Rev. Benjamin Pomeroy, D. D., of Hebron, Conn. Her mother was a sister of the first President Wheelock. Mrs. McClure died in April, 1814, aged sixty-two. In 1816, he was married to Mrs. Betsey Martin of Providence, R. I., who survived him a few years. He had five children,—all of them daughters.

The following is a list of Dr. McClure's publications:—An Oration at the opening of Exeter Phillips Academy, 1783. A Sermon on the death of the Rev. Dr. Pomeroy, 1784. A Sermon at the ordination of Stanley Griswold, 1790. A Sermon at the interment of the Rev. John Ellsworth,\* 1791. A Sermon on the death of Simeon Birge, 1792. A Sermon on the death of Deacon Amasa Loomis, 1793. A Sermon on the death of Judge Erastus Wolcott, 1793. A Sermon at the installation of the Morning Star Lodge, 1794. Sermons on the Moral Law: one volume, octavo, 1795.

\* JOHN ELLSWORTH was a son of Daniel and Mary (McInstry) Ellsworth of Ellington; was graduated at Yale College in 1785; was ordained at East Windsor in September, 1789, with a view to a settlement over the Presbyterian church in Saba in the West Indies; laboured for a short time among that people to great acceptance, but was obliged to give up his charge on account of the failure of his health; returned to his native country, and died at his father's house in Ellington, November 22, 1791, aged twenty-nine.

[Reprinted, 1818.] A New Year's Sermon, 1799. An Oration on the death of General Washington, 1800. A Sermon on the death of the Rev. Thomas Potwine,\* 1802. A Sermon on the death of the Rev. Dr. Eliphalet Williams, 1803. A Sermon on the death of Mrs. Abigail Potwine, 1804. Memoirs of the Rev. Eleazer Wheelock, D. D., 1810. [Of this he was joint author with the Rev. Dr. Parish.] In addition to the above, he furnished several articles for the Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and was a contributor to the Panoplist and the Connecticut Evangelical Magazine.

FROM THE REV. THOMAS ROBBINS, D. D.

HARTFORD, November 12, 1852.

My dear Sir: I had not much acquaintance with Dr. McClure until 1809, when I became associated with him as pastor of the church in which he had, for some years, exercised his ministry; but, from that time till his death, I knew him intimately, and it devolved on me to preach his funeral sermon. I had a good opportunity of knowing him also from my long continued habit of intimacy with those who had constituted his pastoral charge.

Dr. McClure, though rather small in person, was well formed, had an agreeable countenance, and was altogether a good-looking man. His manners were uncommonly graceful and attractive, and indicated what was really the case,—that he had been much in the world, and had been familiar with cultivated society. He was amiable and obliging in his disposition, and always ready to confer a favour when it was in his power. In short, he was a man little likely to give offence, and well fitted to be popular in any community.

His preaching was characterized by neatness, perspicuity, and accuracy, rather than by great force or point. He was a good scholar; and, though he made no display of scholarship in his sermons, it was manifest to all competent judges who heard or read them, that they were the productions of a well disciplined and well furnished mind. His voice was smooth and pleasant, but not very powerful; and his general manner, though on the whole agreeable, was perhaps somewhat lacking in energy. The subjects of his discourses were chiefly moral and practical; and, though a Calvinist, he probably preached less upon the peculiarities of the Calvinistic system than most of his contemporaries of the same school. As a pastor, he was discreet and affectionate, but had less intercourse with his people in the way of visiting than they desired. He was, however, esteemed for many excellent qualities, and there are some I doubt not still living, who hold him in grateful remembrance.

I am, my dear Sir, truly yours,

THOMAS ROBBINS.

\* THOMAS POTWINE, the son of John Potwine, was a native of Boston; was graduated at Yale College in 1751; was ordained minister of the North church in East Windsor, Conn., May 1, 1754; and died in November, 1802.