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# HISTORY

OF THE

## Presbyterian Church in America,

FROM ITS ORIGIN UNTIL THE YEAR 1760.

WITH

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF ITS EARLY MINISTERS.

BY THE

REV. RICHARD WEBSTER,

LATE PASTOR OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MAUCH CHUNK, PA.

WITH

*A Memoir of the Author,*

BY THE REV. C. VAN RENSSELAER, D.D.

AND

*An Historical Introduction,*

BY THE REV. WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, D.D.

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PHILADELPHIA:

JOSEPH M. WILSON,

No. 27 SOUTH TENTH STREET, BELOW CHESTNUT ST.

1857.

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were sundered rudely, even this unbrotherly act may have been committed.

Sturgeon was present, in 1745, at the first meeting of the Synod of New York, as a member of New York Presbytery. His name is not mentioned after 1750.

William Sturgeon, who graduated at Yale in 1745, was probably his son. Being recommended\* by the Rev. Henry Barclay, of Trinity Church, New York, he was sent out at the expense of Christ Church, Philadelphia, in December, 1746, to receive deacons' and priests' orders in England. He returned in October, and was inducted as assistant minister of Christ Church, and catechist of the negroes. He was agreeable to the people; and, "considering his youth and the stinted education given in the American colleges, he discharges extremely well" his official duties. He resigned the charge in 1766.

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## JAMES McCREA

WAS probably from Ireland, and may have been a son of William McCrea, a prominent elder from White Clay during all the exciting scenes in the synod which ended in the rupture. He studied at the Log College, and was taken on trials by New Brunswick Presbytery, October 4, 1739, and was licensed, November 6. At that time Muscinneunk (Musconetcong) asked for supplies, and he was called, April 1, 1740, to Lamington, Lebanon, Pepack, Readington, and Bethlehem. This call he accepted, but was not ordained till August 4, 1741.

Pepack and Lebanon supplicated in 1738, and Lammintunck in the fall of 1739: the presbytery wrote to Mr. Edwards to send some young men into their bounds.

Among other separations which were especially cared for by the conjunct presbyteries, in August, 1741, were Pigeon Run and Christine Bridge, in Delaware. Campbell and Rowland were sent to them. In the next August, Pigeon Run and Newcastle presented a call for McCrea, but without success. Pigeon Run was nearly midway on the stage-road from St. George's to Newcastle. One stone in the graveyard indicates a burial there as early as 1730. It was probably united with the New-Side portion of Drawers in forming St. George's. †

McCrea was the father and founder of the congregation of Lamington, or Bedminster. A portion of the people procured his dismission, November 11, 1755; but the greatest part of the congre- X

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\* Dorr's History of Christ Church.

gation united in a new call to him, and the synod, believing that his removal could be of no service, directed the call to be placed in his hands,—adding, expressly, that his acceptance of it would not entitle the minority to supplies, or to be refunded their contribution to the meeting-house. Bedminster, Lebanon, and Readington, (the White House,) presented their call, and he accepted it, October 26, 1756, and was installed, May 1. Charges were then alleged against him, which on investigation appeared baseless; and he was fully cleared. When he resigned, October 21, 1766, his people engaged to provide for him, being near the end of his days. He died, May 10, 1769.

His son, Colonel John McCrea, resided in Albany, and married the daughter of Mr. Beekman, who built the Vanderheyden House, which, with its galloping horse for a weathercock, is placed safe from the tooth of time in the pages of Washington Irving. The site was sold by Colonel McCrea's heirs, and on it now stands the Pearl Street Baptist Church.

Jane McCrea, the second daughter of the minister, perished by the hands of savages, near Fort Edward, while accompanying them to meet, within the British lines, an American gentleman to whom she was soon to be married. The Indians quarrelled as to which should receive the reward for conveying her to the place of the wedding, and ended her life and the dispute with the tomahawk.

It is said that Captain Jones, the suitor, entered the British service with the design of seizing General Burgoyne, and delivering him to the Americans, as had been successfully done in the case of Colonel Prescott and General Lee.

## DAVID YOUNGS,

A GRANDSON of the Rev. John Youngs, the first minister of Southold, Long Island, was born in that town in 1719, and graduated at Yale in 1741. Davenport was his pastor; and he warmly espoused the views with which that good man prosecuted his ministry. In his class-mates Buel and Brainerd he found congenial spirits.

In the closing year of his college-course, Tennent visited New Haven. The college had been so much moved by Whitefield's preaching, that the enemies of "the stir" represented it as being broken up, and the students scattered to their homes. Tennent preached seventeen times. Among those who were savingly awakened were Dr. Hopkins, of Newport, and Dr. Sproat, of