

# BIOGRAPHICAL RECORD

OF THE

OFFICERS AND GRADUATES

OF THE

**Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute,**

1824-1886.

---

EDITED BY

**HENRY B. NASON,**

SECRETARY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATES, 1872-1886.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

**BENJAMIN H. HALL.**

---

TROY, N. Y.:

**WILLIAM H. YOUNG.**

1887.

## PRESIDENTS.

---

THE REV. SAMUEL BLATCHFORD, D. D., the first president of the Institute, was born in Devonshire County, England, in 1767. He was educated for the ministry at the Dissenting College of Theology, at Homerton, near London; married in 1788; ordained in 1789 pastor over the Presbyterian Church in Kingston, Devonshire. In 1791 he became pastor of the church at Topoham, near Exeter, in Devonshire, where he remained until in answer to a call from the church at Redford, Westchester County, N. Y., he, in 1795, came to America. For eleven years he lived at Redford and at Bridgeport, Conn., and in 1804 he was called to take charge of the church at Lansingburgh and Waterford. Here an acquaintance with the Hon. Stephen Van Rensselaer grew into a friendship, and he was named in 1824, by the founder, as one of the trustees and first president of the Institute. This position he held for four years. He died at Lansingburgh on the 27th of March, 1828. He was the father of Dr. Thomas W. Blatchford, of Troy; of Richard M. Blatchford, of New York, and the grandfather of the Hon. Samuel Blatchford, U. S. District Judge for the Southern District of New York.

THE REV. JOHN CHESTER, D. D., second president of the Institute, was for twelve years pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in the city of Albany, from 1815 to 1828. He was born at Weathersfield, Conn., in August, 1785—the son of Col. John Chester, of the Revolutionary Army. He entered Yale College in 1801 and graduated in 1804. He pursued his theological studies under the direction of Dr. Joseph Lyman, of Hatfield, Mass., and was licensed to preach by the Hartford Association College in 1807, at the age of 22. His first efforts to publish the gospel were made in Marblehead, Mass. He also preached a short time in Springfield, Mass., and also in Middletown, Conn., and then removed to this State and was stationed at Cooperstown, and from 1810 to 1815 was pastor at Hudson, from which latter place he was called to Albany, where his relations