

Epher Whitaker

OF

Southold

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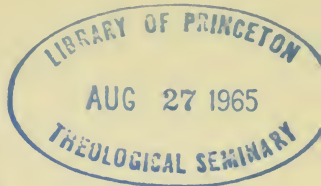
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Presbyterian Church in the
U.S.A. Presbytery of Long
Epher Whitaker of Southold



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Published as a Memorial by the
PRESBYTERY OF LONG ISLAND

FOREWORD.

This Memoir of the Rev. Ephraim Whitaker, D. D., is prepared by a committee appointed by the Presbytery of Long Island. Of this Presbytery Dr. Whitaker was a member from September 10, 1851, the day of his ordination to the gospel ministry, until his death at the great age of ninety-six years and five months, September 1st, 1916. He was its stated clerk from 1856 until 1903.

So many notices and eloquent tributes have appeared in various periodicals appreciative of his life and character that it would have been easy to expand this memoir into a bulky volume.

The following articles are contributed by friends, mostly co-presbyters of Dr. Whitaker, all of whom knew and loved him for many years and revered him as "The Patriarch of our Apostolic Circle."

William Huntley Lloyd	}	Committee
Charles E. Craven		

SKETCH OF DR. WHITAKER'S LIFE

Prepared in Dr. Whitaker's lifetime by a relative for publication in a periodical

The Rev. Dr. Ephraim Whitaker is one of the most eminent men of eastern Long Island, where he has been prominent since 1851. The story of his career is of great interest because of the fact that his life has always been closely interwoven with the newspaper, magazine and publishing business, as well as interests of great historical and religious importance. He has published several volumes and also written parts of a dozen other volumes. He began to write freely for periodicals of New York City and elsewhere in 1840 and continued to do so every year for seventy years, having contributed to more than fifty, including daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual publications.

He was born in Fairfield, Cumberland County, New Jersey, March 27, 1820. When he was fifteen years old he entered a newspaper office in Bridgeton, the county seat of Cumberland County. In that office he mastered all parts of a printing and newspaper business, as there conducted, and became the

managing editor of the paper. He remained in that office eight years with the exception of six months in 1841 when he was employed in the office of the Norfolk and Portsmouth Daily Herald in Virginia. These months spent in Virginia gave him the opportunity of seeing many phases of Southern life and of becoming acquainted with some choice people belonging to the best families of Norfolk and Portsmouth.

In 1843 he entered Delaware College and graduated at the head of his college class in 1847. He graduated from the Union Theological Seminary of New York in 1851 and in September of that year he was ordained and installed pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Southold. His pastoral service of this church continued until the beginning of 1892 and since that date he has been pastor emeritus of the same church. At the time of the Civil War he wrote a brief biography of Lieut. Edward F. Huntting, who fell in the battle of Olustee. This biographical pamphlet was entitled "Ready for Duty" and many thousand copies of it were printed and distributed among the soldiers in the army. In 1865 he published a volume of addresses and sermons on educational, patriotic and other themes of public interest. As the Southold church was formed October 21, 1640, it is one of the old-

est in the United States and Dr. Whitaker named his first volume "New Fruits from an Old Field." It was issued by Mr. A. D. F. Randolph of New York City.

In 1880 the people of Fairfield, New Jersey, celebrated the bicentennial anniversary of the formation of their church and the centennial of their stone house of public worship. The committee of arrangements invited Dr. Whitaker to deliver an elaborate historical address. He wrote a comprehensive history of the church and township. Under the direction of a committee it was handsomely printed in octavo form. In 1881 Dr. Whitaker published the "History of Southold: Its First Century from 1640-1740."

During the next subsequent years he superintended the printing and read the proofs of the Town Records of Southold made for a hundred and fifty years from 1651 onward. He compared the proofs word by word and letter by letter with the original manuscript record. This was done in order to present on the printed pages the original antique spelling. The first volume, 506 large pages, was published in 1882, and the second volume, 571 pages, in 1884. He wrote the introductions to these volumes; and by his comparisons of the print with the manuscript, by authority of the

Town Clerk, he made them of the same legal evidence as the original.

In 1883 he published a sketch of Suffolk County and proposed a public celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of its formation. He wrote the programme for it which was adopted by a joint meeting of the Board of Supervisors and a well chosen committee representing all the Towns. He delivered the first address in the volume that contains the report of the proceedings.

He proposed the celebration of the 250th anniversary of the formation of the Town and the Church of Southold. Both Town and Church adopted the proposal and each appointed a part of a joint committee for the purpose. Dr. Whitaker was the chairman of that committee and of its executive committee and bore the chief burden of correspondence and other preparations. He edited and wrote a part of the volume of 220 large octavo pages containing the proceedings at the celebration. It contains music and odes written for the celebration; the oration of the Rev. Dr. Richard S. Storrs; the historical address of Charles B. Moore, Esq.; addresses by Judge Wilmot M. Smith, the Hon. Henry P. Hedges, the Hon. Henry A. Reeves, the Rev. Dr. William Force Whitaker and others, as well as letters from Benjamin Harrison, then President of the

United States, the Rev. Joseph N. Hallock, D. D., editor and proprietor of *Christian Work*, and other eminent men. As a fitting ending to this celebration Dr. Whitaker collected the money to erect a granite monument on the site of the first meeting house to commemorate the founders of the town and church. The monument is of the rustic style and bears a proper inscription written by the pastor and approved by the committee. It is a substantial structure of the weight of twenty-eight tons, including the foundation below the surface of the ground.

In 1894 H. O. Houghton printed for Dr. Whitaker, a beautiful illustrated volume entitled, "Leaves of All Seasons; Hymns and Other Verses." It contains a selection of lyrics that he wrote at different times from 1851-1893 and also includes translations in English verse made by him from eminent French and German poets, Racine, Hugo, Goethe, Schiller and others. Many of the songs and hymns written by Dr. Whitaker and included in this book had been set to music and sung on various festive occasions or at religious services.

He has the honor of being one of the five honorary members of the New Haven Colony Historical Society, and papers written by him at its invitation and read by him at its meet-

ings are published in the printed volumes of that Society.

In 1886 he was prominent in the organization of the Suffolk County Historical Society. He wrote its constitution and delivered its first annual address on the subject, "The American Union of Church and State." This was printed in pamphlet form by the Society. Afterward he delivered two other annual addresses. This Society has elected him its First Vice President annually since its organization and has offered him its presidency.

Dr. Whitaker has made historical and biographical contributions to cyclopaedias of the highest character, including the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

Among the thousands of articles that he has written for different publications are dozens of biographical sketches of men and women whom he has known. Many of his sermons and addresses have been printed in pamphlet form, including sermons at the funerals of the Rev. Messrs. Daniel M. Lord of Shelter Island, William H. Cooper of Bellport and William B. Reeve, M. D., of Westhampton. Among the historical pamphlets are: "New Haven's Adventure on the Delaware Bay," "Presbyterianism on Long Island" and "Fifty Years of Suffolk County."

When the Long Island Historical Society

held its first annual meeting in 1863 Dr. Whitaker was elected one of its councilors, in company with William Cullen Bryant, Gov. John A. King, Judge Selah B. Strong and others; and he has held this honorable position by re-election each year ever since, being the only one now in office of the original councilors.

The New York Genealogical and Biographical Society made him a corresponding member soon after its organization, many years ago, and he has written for several numbers of its quarterly periodical.

For over forty years Dr. Whitaker was invited each year by the town officers to open with prayer the Town Meeting of the township of Southold. This township is about twenty miles long (not including the little islands) and contains nine or ten villages. The first spring that Dr. Whitaker was in Southold, which was 1852, he was invited to open the Town Meeting with prayer and he continued to do so every year, with one exception, until the Town Meeting ceased to be held, a period of forty-two years. The first year that Town Meeting was not held was 1894; probably it had been held for two hundred and fifty years.

When Dr. Whitaker had been about five years in the ministry the Presbytery of Long Island elected him its Stated Clerk and con-

tinued him in that office until he resigned after a service of forty-seven years. It is doubtful if any other minister has been the Stated Clerk of a Presbytery for more than forty-seven consecutive years, in the whole history of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. During that time he filled four large folio volumes with the records of its proceedings, making fifteen hundred pages traced by his pen. Not a word of exception was ever made to his records by the reviewing Synods to whose superior jurisdiction the record was submitted year by year.

During the eight years of his special preparation for the ministry he had been accustomed to work from twelve to fourteen hours a day and when he became a pastor he determined to work ten hours a day six days a week in strictly pastoral service, including the making of sermons. The other hours he decided to give to more general work of the ministry. Accordingly he was active in many ways in promoting the welfare of his fellow men, especially on Long Island. He has spoken to the public on some theme of importance in about forty different churches of Suffolk County of various denominations, and in as many as twenty different halls and school houses. There has been no counting the number of schools he has visited and addressed. Besides

making addresses in dozens of churches and schools in Suffolk County he has preached in many prominent city churches.

He has been called upon to officiate at the funeral of eleven Presbyterian ministers.

In 1855 and in 1875 he delivered Commencement addresses at Delaware College, his subject on the former occasion being "The Attractions and Uses of History" and on the latter occasion "The Progress of Civil and Religious Liberty."

Among the marks of esteem in which he has always been held by his associates, his friends regard the fact that he was elected the Moderator of the Synod of New York and New Jersey in 1860 and of the Synod of Long Island in 1871 and that the Presbytery of Long Island seven times elected him to represent it in the national General Assembly. He received the honorary degree of A. M. from Yale College and the degrees of A. B., A. M. and D. D. from Delaware College. Such a recognition of his scholarship was eminently fitting, as during all the busy forty years of his Southold pastorate he never ceased his linguistic and scientific studies and his literary activities. He has always been a scholarly man. At the end of his college course he was at the head of his class and was graduated with the highest honor—the valedictory oration. At the end

of his three years' theological course in New York, in a class of thirty-six members, he was one of the six to each of whom an equal honor was assigned. Throughout all his long life he has continued the studious habits of his College and Seminary days and cultivated history, poetry and other forms of literature. Mathematics was, however, his forte and he was a born naturalist, having the habits of keen and patient observation that are necessary in this branch of study. As an illustration of his accurate observation of Nature and his excellent memory it may be said that after an interval of nearly seventy years he could name more than seventy species of birds that he knew in his early boyhood and his knowledge of them was so thorough that after the lapse of more than three score years he could minutely recall the majority of them and accurately describe, merely from his boyish memory of them, their plumage, nests, eggs, habits and notes.

These activities in the fields of literature, poetry, history, antiquarian research and along other lines were mainly his diversions. His chief care and toil were to increase the strength, spirituality and activity of the South-old church of which he was for more than forty years the diligent and hard-working pastor. During most of these years he preached four times each week, besides teaching a Bible

class and conducting the weekly devotional meeting of the congregation. He wrote one sermon a week without abbreviation, just as he would have it printed if given to the press. He did not abate this part of his regular work until he had one thousand manuscript sermons with every needful comma and period in place. If they were printed they would make fifty octavo volumes of good size. But most of his sermons he preached without writing them.

Dr. Whitaker was deeply interested in the cause of education and was himself a superior and experienced teacher. At one time he was offered a tempting professorship in a college, at another time he was urged to take the position of head of the mathematical department in one of New York's most celebrated private schools and on another occasion he was called to the head of one of the famous endowed academies of New England. He thought he ought not to leave his chosen profession of the ministry, but he did much work for the cause of education in Southold. In 1866 and 1867 he collected the funds with which to buy the grounds and erect the buildings of the Southold Academy. Many young people have prepared for college and various pursuits of life in this institution and it still continues its usefulness, having now a liberal permanent endowment.

After forty years diligent and successful service in the pastorate of the historic First Church of Southold, Dr. Whitaker became the pastor emeritus of this church—the oldest in the State of New York organized for English speaking people and the oldest Presbyterian church in the United States. He then bought a house and lot in Southold and as the main voyage of his life was over and he had entered a kind of harbor, but was not ready to land on the changeless and eternal shores, he called his home “The Anchorage.” There he has continued to work faithfully and wisely for the improvement of his fellow men especially in Suffolk county and so great has been his prominence and usefulness and the respect in which he is held that he is often called “Suffolk’s First Citizen” or “Suffolk’s Grand Old Man” or “The Bishop of Eastern Long Island.”

AN APPRECIATION OF DR. WHITAKER

By the Rev. William Huntley Lloyd.

“All excellence has a right to be recorded.” I shall therefore think it superfluous to apologize for writing these few reminiscences of a man who, by an uncommon assemblage of virtues, adorned the highest calling in life, whose very presence commanded respect, and whose word carried conviction.

So distinguished a character, and so brilliant a man can not be passed over lightly or dealt with sparingly, if the demands of his friends, and the large circle to whom he was known, are to be satisfied even to a small degree. His writings have passed into history to enrich the present and succeeding generations. With a realizing sense of what is due to his memory, and with a consciousness of my own want of ability to do justice to the subject, I bespeak the indulgent criticism of those who may read the following remarks—admittedly far short of what is due to the illustrious dead.

At a very early day Dr. Whitaker evidenced rare aptitude for acquiring knowledge, and made rapid progress in its attainment. His modest mien and thoughtful look soon won for

him the respect and friendship of his teachers, and the esteem and affection of his companions—a friendship and an esteem that deepened with the passing years. Like nearly all men who have attained greatness, he owed much to the early training and example of his godly mother—hence the deep affection he ever manifested towards her. After a lapse of many years, I found his heart still fresh and loving; pouring out to the memory of his mother all the wealth of his rich mind and the affection of his chaste heart.

Dr. Whitaker came to Southold in 1851, a young man fresh from his studies in the Union Theological Seminary, New York City, highly intelligent and cultured, versed in classical literature and deeply interested in Theology—which he termed the “queen of the sciences.” He served the Church of Southold as pastor for forty years, and was associated with it as Pastor Emeritus for twenty-five more years—making in all sixty-five years, a most remarkable record. He loved this historic church and its pulpit, that for so long a time had been the throne of his prophetic eloquence. Receiving many flattering inducements from other fields, he turned them all aside, feeling that his life work was to be in Southold where he had an unusually happy pastorate for forty years; and the sacred influence of his noble

ministry will continue to be a great spiritual asset to the church for many years to come. He was a man of clear theological belief; one who did not see the divine things in a mist or haze, but in calm sunlight. Courageous, bold, and ready to suffer all things for the sake of God, the love of Christ, and the purity of his own conscience.

His was an open, manly character, in which there was no dissimulation. His generous nature and warm heart were ever moved by kind impulses and influenced by charitable feelings. He shrank instinctively from all that was mean and sordid, his sympathies were as broad as humanity and as far reaching as its wants and miseries.

In the month of March, 1897, I came to Southold to supply, for a Sabbath, the pulpit of the Presbyterian Church of which later I became pastor. It was my privilege at that time to meet Dr. Whitaker, then a "young" man of seventy-seven years, and for nearly twenty years, up to the day of his death, I found in him a friend, loyal and true.

The kind and tender words he spoke to me at our first meeting I still cherish in my memory. From the time of my coming to Southold his kindness, thoughtfulness, his timely advice, and his generous-heartedness were continuous. It was a real pleasure to meet him in his study.

An hour was never spent there but that I came away conscious that I had been in the presence of a great and good man. His mind was a veritable storehouse of interesting incidents bearing on Southold and its people; he wrote a substantial volume entitled "The History of Southold," a standard work, and much sought for to-day; covering, however, only the years 1640-1740. He had sufficient data for another volume, and it is much regretted that it was not published.

An unkind critic, speaking of successive pastors, remarked: "Our first was a man, but he was not a minister; our second was a minister, but he was not a man; and the third was neither a man nor a minister!" In Dr. Whitaker, the man and the minister were harmoniously wedded—a man, and a man of God, filled with the divine fullness, and a minister of the New Testament determined to make men listen to him; resolved to preach the Gospel itself and not something about it, to urge it with all the earnestness of real conviction and the passion of true pity for lost souls.

He said that he became a Christian by the grace of God, a Puritan by force of inheritance and training, and Presbyterian by reading the New Testament. He was intensely jealous for his Lord, and this made him sometimes misunderstood. It was his tremendous

jealousy for God that made him at times seem severe; he could take any slight to himself, **that** never troubled him; and he once told the writer not to allow any unkind criticism or unjust opposition to sour his disposition—a remark that was heeded and proved beneficial—but touch his Lord's honor, speak disrespectfully of his Lord's book, then his blood boiled, then you saw the lion, then his roar was heard.

Dr. Whitaker was in an eminent degree furnished by nature and mental training with those qualities which render the ministry successful. He was gifted with a vigorous imagination, a quick poetic sensibility. The gospel trumpet on his lips uttered no uncertain sound. He was a standard bearer, not ashamed of his Confession of Faith and Church Catechism or of the Westminster Assembly of Divines; a bold and skillful defender, as well as an able and successful expounder, of the truth, especially zealous in the cause of Missions and a devoted friend of the Bible Society.

His preaching was of a very high order, addressed to the reason and conscience, rather than to the emotions, but delivered with warmth and animation. The Church was always to him the Lord's sanctuary. He never entered it, even on a week day, without un-

covering his head. He ascended the pulpit on the Sabbath with the gravity of a man who had just come from immediate communion with God. An essential element in all preaching is the preacher himself—the man behind the message. What he is largely determines the character of his preaching. How impotent even the most elaborate discourse of the unfit, and how powerful often the simplest preaching of one noted for his godly character and life!

As a preacher, it can be truly said, Dr. Whitaker was full of the unction of the Spirit. It was his close and vital communion with God that made him a power in the pulpit, a power that knew no deterioration during a ministry of sixty-five years; he never neglected the careful culture of the soul, which is indispensable to a high degree of spiritual living. His people loved and trusted him, knowing he always spoke of the great salvation out of a full heart and a clear head.

Another conspicuous phase of his life was his unceasing diligence. He was always a busy man, and his sermons showed evidence of careful work and thoughtful preparation. I recall a remark made by a prominent minister after listening to an able paper delivered by Dr. Whitaker's son before the Synod of New York, in session at Syracuse—"What-

ever Dr. Wm. Force Whitaker undertakes is always done well." This disposition to make careful and painstaking preparation that the son possessed, was inherited from his father, for the many sermons left by Dr. Whitaker can now be read to one's edification; the thought not only being correctly and beautifully expressed, but the manuscript a model of neatness and correctness, and so carefully written that it could be printed without the changing of a single sentence or the erasing of a comma.

He was always a useful member of ecclesiastical bodies, possessing an extensive knowledge of the law and practice of the Church. As Clerk of the Presbytery of Long Island, he was unexcelled in the discharge of all official duties. As a pastor he was a model—he knew all his people, and was loved by young and old alike, and could relate the history of their families for generations back.

Dr. Whitaker was highly gifted in prayer—for appropriateness in trying occasions and circumstances, and for freshness and unction, his approaches to the mercy seat were rarely equalled. No one could know him intimately without noticing that one of his chief characteristics was his marvellous gift of prayer. Thousands have heard him in public prayer

but only a limited number heard him pray in the family circle at the "Anchorage." There he seemed to be lifted up to the very presence of the Father, and no higher compliment was ever given man than the one uttered by Mrs. Whitaker when she said after he had gone: "How we shall miss his prayers." We, in Southold, well recall his ministrations at the communion table; his favorite title for his Saviour was the "Well Beloved." Here, in his prayer, he would linger around Calvary and dwell on his Saviour's vicarious sufferings. I have listened to him with awe and wonder, mixed with reverence, and marked the tear furrowing his cheek, as he appeared to be almost transfigured when blessing the sacramental elements; and I consider it one of the great blessings of my ministry that it was my privilege to hear his soliloquies at the Lord's table.

In Dr. Whitaker's death one of the fathers, aye! one of the prophets passed away, for in truth he was God's speaker to his fellows. He was born in 1820 and died on the first day of September, 1916, making him probably one of the oldest Presbyterian ministers in the world. The brevity of life has always been a common theme with moralists and prophets, with preachers and poets. They have scoured the universe for illustrations

thereof, they tell us that life is a dream, a fleeting shadow, a vanishing cloud, a feeble blade of grass, alive in the morning, dead at eventide. But here we are recording a life not merely of three score years and ten but one that almost rounded an entire century. Our venerable friend lived through three generations and his long and active life covered one of the most important eras of the world's history and progress. Political events of the first magnitude occurred. Napoleons, Kaisers and Czars flared and flamed and went their way to dusty death. Slavery has been abolished—the temporal power of the pope is gone. As a boy he knew nothing of railroads, he never purchased a penny paper, or directed a telegram. The scientific inventions and discoveries made during the ninety-seven years covering his life are some of the most glorious events in the intellectual history of man. In the religious world what grand and glorious events have taken place. Our present missionary enterprises were hardly out of their swaddling clothes when he was rocked in his cradle, but to-day the whole world is open to the Gospel; surely "God is marching on."

Another feature of this life to be emphasized was his steadfast religious belief. His conversion took place in his early youth and

it was a distinct and personal yielding of himself to God; it was an act of faith in God, conscientiously done, and the result was "peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Dr. Whitaker saw the modern battle of unbelief arise. He heard and read deeply what the "new lights" had to say about the "Old Gospel" but he made no surrender, holding steadfastly to his first religious beliefs.

As a poet his chief merit would seem to be the simple sublimity of his verses; the rare and chaste beauty of his conceptions, and their easy and natural flow. He is the author of many hymns that are worthy of a prominent place in Christian hymnology. Rev. Charles E. Craven, D.D., has given us in another article in this Memoir, an estimate of Dr. Whitaker as "A Man of Letters." My only purpose here is to call attention to the vigor and conciseness of his mind in this difficult field, after having reached that time of life when, surely, he could be styled an old man. Following are two poems, one written in his eighty-seventh year, and the other in his ninety-third year.

"He Careth for You"

Know you how many motes
Float in the passing breeze?
Know you how many birds
Sing in the shady trees?

Know you how many leaves
Whirl in the winds that blow?
Know you how many flakes
Fall in the downy snow?

Know you how many drops
The heavens downward pour?
Know you how many waves
Beat on the ocean shore?

Know you how many stars
Roll in the boundless sky?
Know you how many souls
Aspiring soar on high?

God knows them all, and marks
The course of every one,
The path of each man's thought
As of the stars and sun.

Then can you doubt the care
Of Him who reigns above?
He numbers every hair
Of those who trust His love.

He never turns away
His eye from world or soul.
However vast his works,
He careth for the whole.
Autumn 1906.

Life Everlasting

In the boundless field of Being,
Far outspreading thought and seeing,
 Ever rules Eternal Love;
In that realm beyond all measure,
Countless saints, with holy pleasure,
 Worship Him who reigns above.

There, in grateful adoration,
Men redeemed of every nation,
 Homage pay to Christ the King;
Thither would my soul be winging,
And with rapture join the singing
 Where their Hallelujahs ring.

In the fellowship of giving
Joy and gladness, life is living,
 Living worthy of the race;
And the ever growing glory
Of the old redemption story
 Shows our Father's wondrous grace.

Rise, my soul and hail the breaking
Of the day of bright awaking
 From the slumber of the earth;
When thy Lord, no more delaying,
Shall, His heart of love displaying,
 Freely give thee heavenly birth.

Christmas 1912.

As a friend and companion Dr. Whitaker was one of the most interesting and agreeable of men. I congratulate myself in having been honored with his friendship for so many years. He had a charm of personality that was irresistibly attractive, his noble countenance, his luminous eye, his genial temperament, his fine social qualities and conversational powers made him a most welcome addition to any gathering, and how we enjoyed the *obiter dicta* that fell from his lips and always revealed the insight of genius. He was democratic in spirit while aristocratic in sentiment, and always a mirror of academic propriety.

Active almost to the last, he could be seen walking daily on the main street of our village; an elderly man, ninety-six years of age, with silvery hair and of princely bearing, alert in his movements, always immaculately dressed. No stranger saw him but would inquire who he was; his very appearance impressed the passer-by that here was an unusual man. The people of Southold ever regarded him with deep reverence; he having long ago become the most valuable asset of our village; and when he was called home we felt that Dr. Whitaker taken out of Southold was as if the Alps had been taken out of Switzerland.

When one who has been eminently conspicuous in a community for two-thirds of a century passes away, it is natural and proper to desire a public funeral, and the historic Church was the only fitting place to conduct the services over the remains of this loyal minister of Jesus Christ. Many members of the Long Island Presbytery came to pay their tribute of respect and to look once again upon the face of one who had for years been so dear to them. It was an unusual service in honor of an unusual man. A sacred solemnity brooded over the assembly and all felt that a "great and good man in Israel had fallen."

A large granite monument marks his resting place, on which is inscribed the following appropriate epitaph:—

Epher Whitaker, D. D.

1820-1916

Pastor 1851-1892

Pastor Emeritus 1892-1916

Southold Presbyterian Church

Moderator 1860

Synod of New York and New Jersey

Stated Clerk 1856-1903

Presbytery of Long Island

Scholar, Historian, Poet

Faithful Shepherd of his Flock

Loyal Follower of his Lord.

I feel that this contribution is a very imperfect tribute to a truly great character. I have tried to present him clothed with some of the attributes which marked him during his life. He still lives to those who knew him best. We can hear the sound of his voice, listen to his rounded sentences, see his intelligent face, and feel the grip of his friendly hand. "HE BEING DEAD YET SPEAKETH."

"Servant of God well done,
"Rest from thy loved employ:
"The battle fought, the victory won,
"Enter thy Master's joy."

DR. WHITAKER AS A FRIEND.

By the Rev. Clarence Hall Wilson, D.D.

One of the priceless compensations of the Christian ministry is its "fellowship of kindred minds." By his calling and position the minister is inducted into the counsels and friendship of unselfish and delightful men. The sacredness and tenderness of the interests which they have in common invite an intimacy in the friendships of ministers such as is rarely found in other professions or occupations. Where else will one find so large a proportion of men responsive in their sympathies, pure of purpose, forgetful of themselves? With all our failings as men or as ministers, our professional fraternity is the finest in the world. I remember with gratitude the ministerial friendships I have enjoyed, and prize those that remain.

Among my many friendships of my own ministry, there is one that is unique. It has often excited my wonder that I should have enjoyed the intimate friendship of a minister who was more than forty years my senior. It began when I was a mere boy, and when he was already a venerable man. It seems

strange to me that I cannot recall with distinctness the first time I saw Dr. Whitaker and that I do not remember at all when I saw him last in the flesh. The former event must have occurred in the spring of 1887, when I was ordained and installed in the church at Sag Harbor; the latter, in the winter of 1901-2. We early became fast friends, and so continued. After I left Long Island there was a frequent exchange of letters.

Notwithstanding the disparity in our ages, our relation was that of comradeship. He never assumed the parental air with me, but treated me as an equal. Alas for me! I fear that he was more often gracious in deferring to me than I to him. For we had differences of opinion; our friendship was enlivened by the spice of discussion. When I think now of those delightful hours of companionship I am greatly humbled and deeply grateful,—grateful that I enjoyed the distinction of his friendship and had the benefit of his ripened wisdom; humbled by the recollection of my youthful audacity in thrusting forward my immature opinions. However, we had much in common. It was the period of the bitter controversy between the conservative and the liberal wings of the Presbyterian Church. We were both of the liberal wing, wholeheartedly and without reservation. That was

a real bond in days when questions were burning fiercely that now are happily only ashes.

Dr. Whitaker passed up into old age without visible alteration. When I saw him first he looked as he did when I saw him last, and as I see him now,—for I can see him now as distinctly as ever I did in life. When I think of him, as I often do, there flashes before my mind the picture of that beautiful Emersonian face,—I think Dr. Whitaker could not have been so beautiful in youth as he was in age. Those twinkling eyes,—I wonder if his last years subdued the cheery laughter of his eyes! I was going to remark upon his smiling face, but that did not seem to fit. It was not a smile that he wore, but something more ethereal. His face was a picture of benignity,—that is precisely the word. The erect dignity of his carriage was softened by the gentle benignity of his face. A gentleman and a minister of what we call “the old school,” yet his deep human-kindness dismantled him of any forbidding austerity. Children did not shrink in awe before him. I well remember the pleasure my own children had in his company when he visited my home. I fancy that the children of his parish loved him while they revered him, and that, as with Goldsmith’s village preacher—

“E’en children followed with endearing wile,
“And plucked his gown to share the good
man’s smile.”

Dr. Whitaker’s mind was prevailingly of the serious turn. He rejoiced in high themes. He was the very opposite of Falstaff who could say—

“I am not only witty myself, but the cause that wit should be in other men.”

He rarely indulged in the facetiae of small conversation, and he would have been a bold man who made a jest at his expense. But like all men of simple and kindly heart he had a keen enjoyment of innocent humor. I recall times when his utterance was choked by his enjoyment of some pleasantry. It must have been in September of 1900 that Presbytery met on Shelter Island, and Dr. Richard S. Storrs, who was to pass away in a few weeks, was a visitor. He invited Dr. Whitaker to his house on “Divinity Hill” for dinner, and to bring a friend along. I was honored by being the friend. What a delightful two hours we had! In the course of conversation something was said in criticism of the religious press. “Well,” said Dr. Storrs, “I regard it as a cause for humble gratitude to God that although I have been a diligent reader of the religious press all my life, I be-

lieve I am still a Christian." I think perhaps I should not remember the remark after so many years but for my recollection of Dr. Whitaker's huge enjoyment of the joke.

Dr. Whitaker wrote the most distinctive hand of any man I ever knew. I am far from expert in the recognition of handwriting, but I never mistook his. I never saw another at all like it. He must have written slowly and with care to produce so methodical an irregularity of letter and always so legible a page. The curves did not flow, but were composed of minute straight lines joined at angles. I have often hoped, as I looked at my own rude scrawl, that the handwriting is not an index of character, and after one humbling experience have not submitted my writing to those who claim to read character by that medium. But I have more than once indulged the fancy that Dr. Whitaker's writing was very like the man. There was a certain precise angularity about him. He thought in straight lines, and when it was time to change direction he did it promptly. He knew what he believed, and could state his beliefs clearly. He did not, like many of us, have to resort to generalities to cover the indefiniteness of his thought. His public speech was not smooth. Exactness was not sacrificed to rhetoric.

He was a delightful correspondent, as he

was always agreeable in conversation, and partly at least because he always manifested an interest in the affairs of his correspondent rather than in his own. A packet of his letters is before me, bringing back vivid memories. My friend, who always rejoiced in my joys, and never disclosed his own sorrows!

There was an apocalyptic touch to Dr. Whitaker's faith. His prayers reached their goal and conclusion with the innumerable throng gathered out of all ages and races before the Great White Throne. I wonder if that was not peculiar to the men of his generation. I remember it in the exalting prayers of Dr. Prentiss, in the august solemnity of the prayers of Dr. Shedd, and in the resplendent petitions which Dr. Storrs laid before the Mercy Seat. One rarely hears it now. The thronging affairs of this present world have obscured the far vision.

I often think with something akin to envy of my friends and neighbors in the Long Island Presbytery whose happy lot it has been to spend their entire lives in one pastorate. And so far from their being left stranded by the un-natural selection of the times, they were distinctly the ablest and most scholarly men among us. What careers they have had as ministers! And one of them continues his faithful, splendid work.

"And they, perhaps, err least,
Who follow reason's least ambitious course."

Such men have been the bulwark of the Church in all ages. Chaucer knew the type in his day.

"A good man was ther of religioun,
And was a povre Persoun of a toun;
But riche he was of holy thoght and werk.
He was also a lerned man, a clerk,
That Christes gospel trewly wolde preche;
His parissheis devoutly wolde he teche,
Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,
And in adversitee ful pacient."

That will pass for a portrait of Dr. Whitaker, scholarly, of fine literary tastes, familiar with the movement of the times in which he lived, and all his ability and learning consecrated to the service of a country parish. Not that there was any real hardship in his lot,—not at all. It was rather his happiness to spend his whole ministerial life amid the most agreeable surroundings in the world, if men would think wisely. It was his happiness to toil where results are most evident and to be traced through the longest period as the virtues of the fathers reappear in their descendants. Dr. Whitaker adorned his posi-

tion as a village pastor with more than the traditional excellence of that office. In his literary and scholarly pursuits he made more than is commonly made of such opportunity, and enjoyed to an unusual degree the pleasures of the simple life.

"A soul serene, and equally retir'd
From objects too much dreaded or desir'd."

I have a picture of Dr. Whitaker standing in the churchyard at Southold, surrounded by the tombs of the Puritan fathers of the town, and also of those whom he

"had loved long since, and lost awhile."

The picture suggests memories of Gray's great Elegy.

"Hark how the sacred calm that broods
around

Bids every fierce, tumultuous passion cease,
In still, small accents whispering from the
ground,

A grateful earnest of eternal peace."

A long, beautiful life, lived in a beautiful service, flanked by the traditions of a noble past and by the glorious hope of the life ever-

lasting; familiar with what is best in this world, and with what is most precious in the world to come! To spend the long evening of his days amid loved scenes and with the tried friends whose joys he had shared and whose sorrows he had comforted! And then at the end to be laid lovingly to rest by the children's children of those whom he had led into the fold of Christ!

DR. WHITAKER AS A CO-PRESBYTER.

By the Rev. Arthur Newman.

With diffidence one of the oldest ministers of the Presbytery of Long Island essays to sketch Dr. Whitaker as a Co-Presbyter. To us all he was a father in Israel, revered for what he was, and because of the experience which seemed to us so long in the service of the Master.

As to questions of Presbyterian rule and order we sought his opinion, and, when given, we accepted and acted upon it as a matter of course and confidence. Nobody thought of challenging or criticizing his record of Presbyterian proceedings. It was sure to be accurate and complete. When we were called upon to deliberate and decide as to the ministerial qualifications of those who presented themselves for licensure, ordination or settlement as pastors, we learned to rely upon Dr. Whitaker's scholarship, discrimination, keen sense of fitness, gracious and genial charity combined with firm fidelity to plain duty.

Urbane, dignified, scrupulous in manner and garb, he was ever in these respects a

model for younger men. A lover and promoter of peace, no division of sentiment or heat of discussion caused him to forget the decorum of Presbytery or the right and self-respect of his brethren.

He was a pattern to us in the broad, deep and unfailing interest he manifested in the unity, welfare and prosperity of each church under presbyterial care, and in the spirit of apostolic succession as he understood it he ever sought to make presbyterial oversight of the churches real, vital, wise and helpful.

Tolerant and broad in sympathies he had no patience with ministers indolent, unprogressive and narrow in mind, assertive of anything like priestly prerogatives, negligent as to accuracy and responsibility in speech, careless whether they won and held the love and trust of children, lacking tenderness toward the weak and erring, evasive or unclear as to the great doctrines of the Gospel and, above all, unfaithful in any degree to the supreme claim and power of the cross of Jesus Christ.

His brethren recall the earnest addresses in which he urged the churches to keep before qualified young men the glorious privileges of the Gospel ministry. To him it was the grandest service that man could engage in. A country pastor all his days, moving in what some might imagine a narrow and treadmill

round: knowing the cares and peculiar trials of the ministry, his mind moved among the stars, his heart was ever open to the voice of the ages and he knew that his handiwork was for the eternities as he brought everlasting truth to immortal souls.

No presbyterial service he rendered awakened his interest and enlisted his fluent pen more than discharging the designated duty of preparing for our records a character sketch of a departed pastor or elder of one of our churches. Lovingly, tenderly, with fairness and fulness he was wont to picture the one who had gone to his rest and reward.

And so, emulating his example and mindful of his spirit, at the call and in the name of my brethren, I make this brief tribute to his memory as a Co-Presbyter.

DR. WHITAKER AS A NEIGHBORING PASTOR.

By the Rev. Frederick Griswold Beebe.

As a neighboring pastor Dr. Whitaker came in contact with two groups of men in particular, the one serving the Presbyterian Church to the east—at Greenport; the other, six in number, serving to the west of him at Cutchogue.

There were other Presbyterian pastors more remote geographically, yet some of them personally quite as near the good Doctor. Then again there were men of other creeds who came near and felt his touch and passed on but so far as I know have left no testimony. Most of these men have gone over to their reward. Of his immediate Presbyterian neighbors in the pastorate not one is left within the bounds of Presbytery.

All of that small remnant still alive have gone back to the main land, and in parts remote are journeying on toward their home land. Their feelings of gratitude and thoughts of appreciation they left unpenned, so it has fallen to the lot of a late comer, as to one nearest of kin to these men, to write some word of appraisal concerning the Doctor as near-by pastor and friend.

Coming into an adjoining parish the year after he quit the active pastorate I have lived near him for over twenty years. I found him a man possessed of a surprisingly comprehensive knowledge of the genealogy and family history within the parish. This had been a matter of growing familiarity from the start.

At approximately the same time Dr. Whitaker came to Southold, a young minister came to Cutchogue. An intimacy soon sprang up between the two young ministers which brought them often into each other's parishes and so Dr. Whitaker early found his way into the affectionate regard of the leading families of the parish.

Fifty years later I found again and again he knew more about my people than I did. To the end he was the interested friend of my parishioners and their minister, but he was never a meddler in parish matters. In the earlier years of his Pastor Emeritus life the Doctor and his good wife were no strangers at the Cutchogue manse.

I remember the Doctor as a typical "gentleman of the old school." Particularly at presbytery meetings do I recall how his genial courtesy put the humblest laymen at their ease while gathering about him his ministerial friends.

For long years he was the champion of the trained mind, using his opportunities to advocate extensive reading and advance in educational facilities, and he was privileged to live to see "the little red school house" grow into the big brick high school—a local type of a change that is taking place broadcast over the land. Seed of his sowing has borne fruit in adjoining parishes and our standards are the better for his pen and tongue.

His message from the pulpit was a message that honored the Word of God. He believed in an inspired Bible and inspired others to a truer faith. To him the Bible was the standard for faith and the rule for living. I am confident his preaching in this parish from time to time helped men and women the better to live by the Book, helped them the more firmly to grip the "things unseen," helped them to hold the more steadfastly to that faith once delivered unto the saints.

The memory of his kindly heart, of his genial way and his robust faith will linger with us to cheer and comfort and strengthen us for many a day. God grant us more such men.

His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world "This was a man."

DR. WHITAKER AS A HISTORIAN.

By the Rev. J. E. Mallmann.

On the 20th and 21st of September, 1910, the Presbytery of Long Island held its regular fall meeting in the Southold Presbyterian Church. That meeting remains a memorable one with me for two reasons: first, because for the second time Presbytery honored me with the moderatorship, and secondly, and more so, because every session of that stated meeting was graced by the benign presence of the Rev. Dr. Ephraim Whitaker, who, long before, yes, for many years before, had come to be considered by his co-presbyters as the Nestor of their ecclesiastical body; in other words the most distinguished and honored of their number.

Dr. Whitaker had for some years prior to that time ceased to attend the meetings of Presbytery, on account of his great age; he was then in his ninetieth year—hence many of the brethren present that day had not seen him for a long time and these were especially delighted to greet him again.

During the afternoon session Dr. Whitaker was given the privilege of addressing the

Presbytery, a privilege which he gladly embraced. He spoke for about half an hour with a vigor that for a man of his great age was surprising and with a fund of historical information that was truly amazing to all present.

That address called forth many an expression of wonder and delight from those who heard it. I remember particularly how one or two brethren who had been received into our membership that afternoon, at the close of the session commenting upon what had taken place, expressed to me their amazement over that address, and not only over the substance of it but over the force and impressive method of its delivery. I am sure that no one who heard Dr. Whitaker that afternoon will ever forget that speech. To me it is as fresh as if I had heard it but yesterday.

During that address he reviewed, in wonderful detail as to facts and faces, the records of Presbytery as he had known it during the sixty years he had been a member of it. For forty-seven of the sixty years he had been our honored Stated Clerk, that is to say, the recorder and historian of Presbytery; a position which he graced with exceptional ability, dignity and success; and which, naturally, favored him in acquiring the large fund of information and historical data that he pos-

sessed and which, when occasion required it, he could marshal and set forth in a way that perhaps no one else could.

Dr. Whitaker was blessed with a remarkable memory, which he used to great advantage in the abundant fruitage of his facile pen. The brethren of the Presbytery for instance will remember with what a fullness of detail his necrological articles were written. They were something more than the usual minutes of recognition, called forth by the departure of one of our number; they were laborious treatises concerning the dead and displayed his special adaptation for historical research. In a word Nature had greatly endowed him with rare gifts, especially helpful in such a pursuit.

Early in his ministry, as pastor of the historic Southold Church, he determined to write a history of the Town of Southold, covering the period of its first one hundred years, namely, from 1640 to 1740. To this work he gave himself with painstaking diligence for more than twenty years, publishing it in 1881. Because of its thoroughness and reliability it was early accepted as an authority on the subject. It undoubtedly is the monument, more than anything else he has done of a literary nature, that will perpetuate his memory to future generations, since it is destined to

be quoted and passed on from generation to generation for centuries to come.

Besides the above, which may rightly be considered his chief historical work, Dr. Whitaker delivered from time to time a number of important historical addresses that have appeared in print; notably the one which he delivered at the bicentennial of the church in Fairfield, N. J., another before the New Haven Colony Historical Society, and a third before the Suffolk County Historical Society, the latter being published in the Society's Year Book of 1899.

The subject of that address is "Suffolk County's Last Half Century" and it is one of his very best efforts. It is full of solid and reliable information about men and matters, of supreme interest to the life, development and progress of the County. It covers eleven closely printed octavo pages in the Year Book just mentioned.

From the organization of the Suffolk County Historical Society to the time of his death he was the Vic-President of the Society. Another notable work of Dr. Whitaker's was his superintending the printing of the records of Southold Town. This work consumed much of his time through several years, as he not only did the necessary proofreading but compared the same letter for letter with the

original manuscript. These records were published in two large volumes during the decade of 1880 and each volume contains an instructive introduction from his pen.

That work is but another monument to the untiring diligence and skill of this noted historian. All these, together with other similar efforts, brought Dr. Whitaker conspicuously before the public and made him in time to be looked upon as Southold's leading citizen. He was indeed a grand old man. It was he who proposed the notable celebration of the 250th anniversary of the settlement of the town, which was held in 1890, a celebration of unusual success. He was then in his seventieth year, yet for all that was the moving spirit in that notable celebration. When the record of the same was put into permanent form he both edited the work and wrote the historical article that appears in the memorial volume, "Southold's Celebration 1640-1890."

Twenty-five years later, in 1915, when the town again celebrated its settlement in its 275th anniversary, he again, at the great age of 95 years, had a leading part in the same and not only he but his son, a Southold boy, the Rev. Dr. William Force Whitaker, likewise rendered a conspicuous part, being the historian of the day; no doubt greatly to the

delight and legitimate pride of the aged father.

As one of the results of the first celebration, held in 1890, an imposing granite monument has been erected in the old churchyard to perpetuate the memory of the founders of the town.

Dr. Whitaker was also the author of numerous historical and biographical articles, as well as sermons, poems and memorial addresses, which were in due time printed in the secular and religious press and in various periodicals of his day.

His principal biographical articles, one on Charles B. Moore, the author and compiler of what is known as "Moore's Index of Southold Town," and another on the "Founders of Southold," were printed in various issues of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Record.

Of the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society he was a corresponding member, also a member of the Long Island and Suffolk County Historical Societies, and an honorary member of the New Haven Colony Historical Society.

Personally, I have been more than pleased with the privilege of writing this sketch of my honored brother's historical ability;

though I am sure it could have been done much better by some one else.

I remember with deep appreciation his un-failing kindness toward me and the valuable assistance he rendered to me during the preparation of my own historical and genealogical work on "Shelter Island and Its Presbyterian Church," which I published in 1898.

Many and many a time, through personal interview and correspondence, did I turn to him for information and help; all of which he freely imparted so far as it was possible for him to do. And when the work was published he did me the honor of reviewing it for the secular press in a way that was most pleasing to me.

So I owe the memory of this beloved Co-Presbyter and distinguished scholar all the respect and praise that I can render.

Indeed he is worthy of a far better tribute than the above, but this is the best the writer can do, and as such it is laid in abiding love at his feet.

DR. WHITAKER AS A MAN OF LETTERS.

By the Rev. Charles E. Craven, D.D.

Dr. Whitaker held the pen of a ready writer, and besides many pamphlets and contributions to periodicals he published three notable books, his *History of Southold*, *New Fruits from an Old Field*, and *Leaves of All Seasons*, a small volume of hymns and other verses. These books were privately published in small editions, without advertisement and mercenary exploitation. He wrote no best sellers, his work was not superficial and showy, but it was solid and honest and beautiful. He seems to have had no ambition to gain widespread fame, if he had it he repressed it and wisely chose to make a deep and lasting impression in a restricted circle of influence. He was not a man who could be hid and his worth and ability were widely recognized but through all his long and laborious life he chose to devote his strength to the intensive cultivation of his own field. Undoubtedly therefore the sum of his influence was greater far than if he had scattered his efforts more broadly. To few men is it given to do so much good in the world and

so greatly to perpetuate their influence for good. Successive generations in Southold were better and wiser and richer and more enlightened because this man turned from all else to give the best that was in him to them. Such a man's record is written in heaven and he needs no earthly memorial but it is a pleasure to remind the people who were familiar with him, and to tell their children, how uncommon was the man whom God gave to Southold for so many years.

Naturally endowed with superior literary gifts Dr. Whitaker improved them by assiduous study. His range of reading was wide. Beyond his strictly professional reading, in which he had studied more philosophical and theological works than most clergymen know the names of, he was familiar with the treasures of English literature and the ancient classics, while some of the happiest examples of his ability in poetic expression are in his felicitous translations from the French and German.

In an essay in *New Fruits* from an Old Field upon "The Power and Worth of Biblical Knowledge" he writes, "I have learned the noblest languages, studied the chief sciences, pondered the best books and read thousands of volumes. But all the knowledge I have gained from every source except the

Bible is not worth that which this Holy Book has given me." That he had indeed "pondered the best books," and to good purpose, was evident to any intelligent person who enjoyed intercourse with him. His mind was richly stored with gleanings from the wisdom of the centuries, and in casual conversation as well as in careful writing he showed that he had read widely and wisely. Few men are so well acquainted with the world's best books; from such a man the tribute to the superior value of the Bible is more than empty words.

As might be expected of one who consecrated his life to the gospel ministry his literary productions were chiefly religious. Even his History of Southold was undertaken because the early history of the town was largely the history of the town church. He was keenly interested in the early settlers of Southold because he knew his people better when he knew their ancestors. His New Fruits from an Old Field is a book of sermons and moral and religious essays, every one worth reading, not one without literary charm. Every sermon that he wrote was in good degree a finished literary production, written carefully and elegantly; rich in apt quotation and in historical and classical allusion. Few of these were published; hun-

dreds were delivered once and then laid away, and perhaps one hearer in fifty sensed their literary excellence.

Whether it was a sermon or essay that he wrote, or an introduction to Southold's printed records, or a poem, or a newspaper article, it was the production of a man of letters. Whatever he wrote was expressed with the clearness and precision of a skilled rhetorician and with the beauty and distinction of a gifted scholar. He drew water not from shallow pools but from deep, cool, unfailing wells.

Many quotations might be made from his published works to illustrate the excellence of his thought and the beauty of his style. Let one suffice, the dedicatory sonnet in his *Leaves of All Seasons*, a selection that brings beautifully before us the companion of his literary pursuits as of all his tasks and joys,

TO MY WIFE

As billows heave when tempests move the
 sea,

So throbbed my heart when first I called
 thee mine;

Thy presence filled me with a hope divine.
And made the heavens a bridal canopy.
The years have flown. That hope has come
 to be

Far more than holy faith and purest bliss--
The rapture felt when trustful lovers kiss--
That hope has grown to life's reality.
Thou art my sun, whose beams refulgently
 Illume my day. More beautiful than stars,
 That deck the sky when night her gate un-
 bars,
Thine eyes direct my path. There dwell in
 thee
The virtues, graces, joys, all full and free,
Than earth more wide and deeper than the
 sea.

THE DEATH AND FUNERAL OF DR. WHITAKER.

By Ella B. Hallock.

From the Long Island Traveler of September 8, 1916.

Dr. Whitaker's last public appearances were in June, when he stood at the window of his study, that he might review as usual the Children's Annual Parade, and on July 4th, when he appeared at the window for the last time, and received the salute from the Chatauqua Parade. Five days later he was seized with an illness from which he did not recover his wonted vigor. People realized that the end of the beloved pastor and honored citizen was approaching. Gradually, the staunch and goodly ship slipped from its moorings at "The Anchorage" and sailed out without fear to breast the unknown sea.

The funeral services were held in the Presbyterian church Sunday afternoon, the pastor, Rev. William H. Lloyd, officiating, assisted by several members of the Long Island Presbytery. The church was filled with people from all parts of Southold Town and other

places. The members of Edward Hunting Post, G. A. R., who esteemed Dr. Whitaker as one of their very best friends, attended in a body and occupied front seats. Three hymns were sung by the Mattituck Male Quartette, William V. Duryee, Terry W. Tut-hill, Rev. Geo. R. Garrettsen and Dr. Chas. E. Craven. A solo, "The Day of Death," written by Dr. Whitaker, was sung by Mrs. Anna Prince Hedges of Caldwell, N. J. Prayers were offered by Rev. A. L. Shear of Mattituck, Rev. F. G. Beebe of Cutchogue, and Rev. Dr. A. W. Fismer of Bloomfield, N. J. The Scriptures were read by Rev. Geo. R. Garrettsen of Laurel, Rev. William Striker of Greenport, and the pastor. The following ministers spoke: Rev. Arthur Newman, for the past 34 years pastor of the Bridgehampton Presbyterian Church, Rev. Dr. Charles E. Craven of Mattituck, Rev. Frank E. Allen of South Haven, Rev. William H. Lloyd, and Rev. Dr. Webster of Remsenburg, who read several of Dr. Whitaker's poems.

The interment was in the family plot, where the talented and beloved son, Rev. Dr. William Force Whitaker, was laid to rest a few weeks ago. As Mr. Newman said, "father and son would sleep that night side by side, beneath the same stars. In death they were not divided."

Such, in brief, is the biography of the man who has dwelt among us for sixty-five years. The mere reading of the preceding facts makes us appreciate the force of Dr. Craven's words spoken at the funeral of Dr. Whitaker: "People of Southold, you never will know fully the debt you owe this man."

Is it not well for us now at the time of his passing, to pause in our busy, and possibly trivial, round of duties and consider thoughtfully and gratefully the achievements and influence of the person whom Southold has regarded long as her foremost citizen? If it is true, what is so often reported, that Southold is different from many other towns, is it not owing to the people who have lived among us, and by their force of character and power of leadership have left the stamp of their aspirations and refinement upon the spirit of the town? What part, then, must Dr. Whitaker and his family have played in this formative work!

As we sat in the old First Church last Sunday afternoon, quietly waiting for the funeral service to begin, the shadows lengthening and the birds calling softly in the churchyard, as if to their old friend, the veil between the past and the present lifted frequently in many a mind. He saw not the white-haired man "lying low," his labors ended, but the young

pastor, active, in vigorous health, scholarly, studious, consecrated, zealous in good works for his church, his parish, and his town. He saw the youthful preacher stand in the beautiful old pulpit as of yore, preaching with clearness and firmness the truths that to him were indisputable, or as he went from house to house giving help to his people with a sympathy as delicate and tender as his firmness in matters of faith was strong. Then the young pastor is joined by his wife. She too is equally consecrated to the work and is highly educated. The children come—would we could see that family as it sat in the pastor's pew a half century ago! What did it mean socially to the First Church, and therefore to the Town, to have had this family with its refined tastes and scholarly training, the heart and center of its life for forty years? A moment's thought and we know this influence is one of our immortal assets in good living, immaterial in quality, but not immaterial in value.

What does it mean to us to have had a man living among us who was identified actively with the local and national councils of the church, of historical and genealogical societies; to have had a writer with us whose pen has been busy for seventy years, whose thousands of articles—models all in accuracy and Eng-

lish—have found their way to the leading papers from Boston to New Orleans; to have had a man in our midst who has been known and honored near and far, whose name has carried weight as an authority outrivaled by none in his special fields? Has all this meant nothing to Southold? Has not our village shared more largely in the honors of this pastor and citizen than it ever can realize? Has it not entered more fully into the high things that were so interesting and vital to the scholar and pastor, imbibed more deeply of the ideals that actuated him as a citizen, than we are, or ever will be, aware of?

And then the tangible things that we can lay our hands on—would any price tempt us to part with that little volume, the product of so much painstaking research, bearing the title, "History of Southold, 1640-1740," or with our valuable "Town Records" made for one hundred and fifty years from 1651, the proofs of which Dr. Whitaker compared word for word, letter for letter, with the original, faded antique manuscripts? Every child in the town should be made familiar at some period in its school course with the historic facts that Dr. Whitaker has bequeathed to us. We point with pride to the Founders' Monument, so enduring, so fittingly designed—it is owing to Dr. Whitaker that we have

it. The Southold Academy in which many pupils have prepared for college and various pursuits in life, over which a highly educated man or woman has always presided—what a refining influence it has been in the life of Southold! There isn't a student who does not look back with pride to the fact that he spent some part of his life within its walls. Dr. Whitaker, aided by Henry Huntting and other generous persons, gave Southold this institution.

Great though our townsman was, as pastor, preacher, historian, and genealogist, he had the tastes and heart of a poet and of a child. He doubtless loved his songs and hymns, so perfect again in their diction, as well as his sermons, and the sight even of children transformed his face with sunny smiles. He was perfectly familiar with birds and trees and flowers long before the awakening of the fad for Nature Study. We can recall him peering like a pleased boy among the foliage at some songster, or carrying water across the street to the cemetery, where he filled for a bird-bath a depression in one of the horizontal slabs.

Yes, Dr. Whitaker has left us an inheritance that the years cannot remove. It was our privilege to have with us not only a strong guiding hand but also a fine, courtly gentle-

man of the old school. We cannot as townspeople dwell with such as he without partaking somewhat of his qualities—the purity of his ideals, the sincerity of his motives, the scholarliness and refinement of his tastes, the courtesy and gentleness of his manners. He tarried long, but every year he gave us evidence of the worth of his character, even when the thoughtless might have said his days of usefulness were past. It was in those last years that he showed us in a marvelous manner the grace and sweetness with which old age can be met, that growing old may be the “best,” may be “the last for which the first was made.” Southold is indeed rich in her legacy from Dr. Ephraim Whitaker both in things seen and unseen.

UNVEILING OF THE WHITAKER TABLETS.

By the Rev. William Huntley Lloyd.

From the Long Island Traveler of July 20,
1917.

That was an unique service at the Presbyterian church last Sabbath morning and a large and deeply interested congregation was present. The unveiling of two memorial tablets, one for the father and the other for the son, on the same day, at the same church, was something so unusual that the writer doubts it ever happened before in the history of the Presbyterian Church. The pastor had chosen two scholars from the Sabbath school, Jennie Wells Albertson and Eugene Landon Lehr, to unveil the tablets at the appointed hour, and they performed the pleasing task perfectly. Selections from the hymns of Dr. Whitaker were employed by Mrs. May Hummel, and the pastor had the assistance of Dr. Charles E. Craven of Mattituck and Dr. A. W. Fismer of Bloomfield, N. J., in this unusual service. Dr. Craven spoke from a full heart of his long and helpful friendship with

Dr. Epher Whitaker, of the splendid service he rendered the church. His association with Dr. Whitaker on many important committees, qualified him to speak authoritatively of his work as an ecclesiastic, scholar, poet, patriot and preacher. He emphasized that his preaching power emanated from his thorough belief in the truths he proclaimed and the deep conviction of the importance of his message.

Dr. Fismer had known Dr. William Force Whitaker as far back as his St. Cloud ministry, and told facts relative to his generosity, the numberless deeds of kindness done by this good man that were never heralded from the housetops. Dr. Fismer spoke of his readiness to help in all good work, of his numerous visits to Bloomfield Seminary, his excellent addresses before that student body, so full of intense interest in their welfare, and marked by that literary touch that gave him a place among the most cultured preachers of his day.

Rev. Wm. H. Lloyd spoke of Dr. Epher Whitaker as a friend, loyal and true, helpful in advice, who never embarrassed his successor by uncomfortable intrusion. He was a **true man**, "every inch a king," loyal to his convictions. He'd do right, "though the heavens came tumbling down upon his head."

Utterly devoid of duplicity, he hated all shams with a perfect hatred. This is why we honor him. This is why he has been called Southold's "Grand Old Man."

To-day we honor him because he was a Christian minister. As a preacher, his style was vigorous, polished, exact; a student all his life, his vocabulary was rich and his English classic. In person Dr. Epher Whitaker was above medium height, rather slender, with an erect, manly gait; searching eyes, firm mouth, intellectual countenance, and a fine forehead crowned with hair that was "beautifully white."

In appearance, it may be stated that William Force Whitaker was a striking contrast to his father. Heavy set, agile, flexible, lacking the sternness of the older Doctor, but more versatile, he could be a child among children and a young man with young men, as well as a leader among the learned. It was well said by Dr. Fismar that Dr. William F. Whitaker was the ablest man that Eastern Long Island has yet produced.

The writer heard Dr. William Force Whitaker on four different occasions, and dealing with entirely different subjects, and can readily understand why he took his place among the leading orators of the day. A man of commanding presence, voice full and sonor-

ous, gestures unstudied and free, diction fluent yet forcible, sentences clear in enunciation and an intensity of conviction and fervor of appeal, combined to make him a born preacher. He was a courteous, urbane, unassuming gentleman, good, kind and generous. He bore the gracious and distinctive marks of "a vessel fitted unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use." Blessed, thrice blessed, is the church that has such men to honor.

Dr. Epher Whitaker—"a faithful and earnest minister of Jesus Christ."

Dr. William Force Whitaker—"he devoted all his rare gifts to the service of his Master."

Happy the son who had such a father, and happy the father who had such a son.

Dr. Epher Whitaker's tablet is placed on the west side of the pulpit and near the pew he occupied for twenty-five years.

In Grateful Memory of the
Reverend Epher Whitaker, D.D.

1820

1916

For Sixty-five Years Pastor and
Pastor Emeritus of this Church.

1851

1916

A Faithful and Earnest Minister
of Jesus Christ

In Testimony of His Worth and
Christian Character This
Memorial Is Erected by This
Congregation.

That of Dr. William Force Whitaker is
placed on the west side of the entrance door
inside the church.

William Force Whitaker, D.D.

1853

1916.

In This Church
Baptized, Admitted to Communion
and Licensed to Preach the Gospel.
Noble, Forceful, Eloquent,
Richly Endowed in Mind and Heart
He Devoted All His Rare Gifts
To the Service of His Lord.

The finish of the tablets is light antique,
the face of the lettering and leafage border
showing bright against a dark field. The tab-
lets are held to the walls by four large orna-
mental bolts.

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