

HISTORY
OF
Pittsburgh and Environs

BY
Special Contributors and Members of the Editorial Staff



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dency of this great organization, but declined the honor on the ground that he preferred independent interests rather than the direction of a dominating combination. He possessed the essentials of successful leadership, courage, initiative, and constructive imagination, and intertwined with his executive talents was a rugged honesty and uprightness that kept his reputation free from any taint of questionable practice. Mr. Snyder held the confidence and trust of his associates to a remarkable degree, and their unswerving loyalty accounted for a large part of his success. He was a just and loyal friend, independent in disposition, but responding readily to any call made in friendship's name.

Mr. Snyder was a member of the American Iron and Steel Institute, the Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, and the Duquesne and Pittsburgh clubs. In Duluth his club was the Kitchi Gammi; in Cleveland the Union, and in New York the Lawyers'. For many years Mr. Snyder served as a trustee of the University of Pittsburgh, and as a member of the board of governors of the Allegheny General Hospital.

William Penn Snyder married, in November, 1887, Mary C. Black, daughter of Dr. Alexander Wylie and Margaret (Watson) Black. Children: William Penn, Jr., a sketch of whom follows; and Mary Black.

William Penn Snyder died Feb. 3, 1921. His record will long stand in Pittsburgh annals as that of a man who realized the best possibilities of rich gifts, and who strove steadily with honest purpose and high ideals.

WILLIAM PENN SNYDER, JR.—The weighty responsibilities for which he was trained came to Mr. Snyder early in life, and he is now an official of organizations whose operations are widespread and of leading importance. Mr. Snyder bears a name that, through his own activities and those of his honored father, has been in a position of leadership in industrial affairs for many years.

William Penn Snyder, Jr., son of William Penn and Mary C. (Black) Snyder (q. v.), was born in Sewickley, Pa., Aug. 8, 1888. His educational advantages included a course in the Shadyside Academy of Pittsburgh, after which he entered Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University, being graduated in 1910 with the degree of Bachelor of Philosophy. When beginning business life he entered naturally into the field that had claimed the elder Snyder, and spent a year in each department of the Shenango Furnace Company, blast furnace, mining, and steamshipping, where he gained an experience in production that could have been obtained in no other manner. In 1913 he entered the executive offices of the company, where he supplemented his practical knowledge with study of executive problems. For two years he was assistant to the president, afterward serving as vice-president, where he came into added responsibility in the administration of the company's large interests. In 1918 he became president of the company and has filled that office to the present time. The Shenango Furnace Company, miners and shippers of coal and iron ore, and manufacturers of pig iron and coke, is one of the best known organizations in its field. The company is so organized that it is almost entirely independent of outside influ-

ences, with the possession of valuable mineral deposits, immense plants, and transportation lines the foundation of its unassailable position. Mr. Snyder has continued in the policy outlined by the founder of this successful enterprise, and has directed its operations in steady prosperity. He is also vice-president of the Shenango Steamship Company, vice-president of the Antoine Ore Company, vice-president of the Lake Erie Limestone Company, and director of the Pittsburgh Trust Company and the Lake Erie Carriers' Association. He is a member of the American Iron and Steel Institute, American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, the American Pig Iron Association, Yale Engineering Association, and the Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, taking especially great interest in the work of the last named institution. He is a trustee of the University of Pittsburgh, succeeding his father in 1920, and is secretary of the Associated Western Yale Clubs.

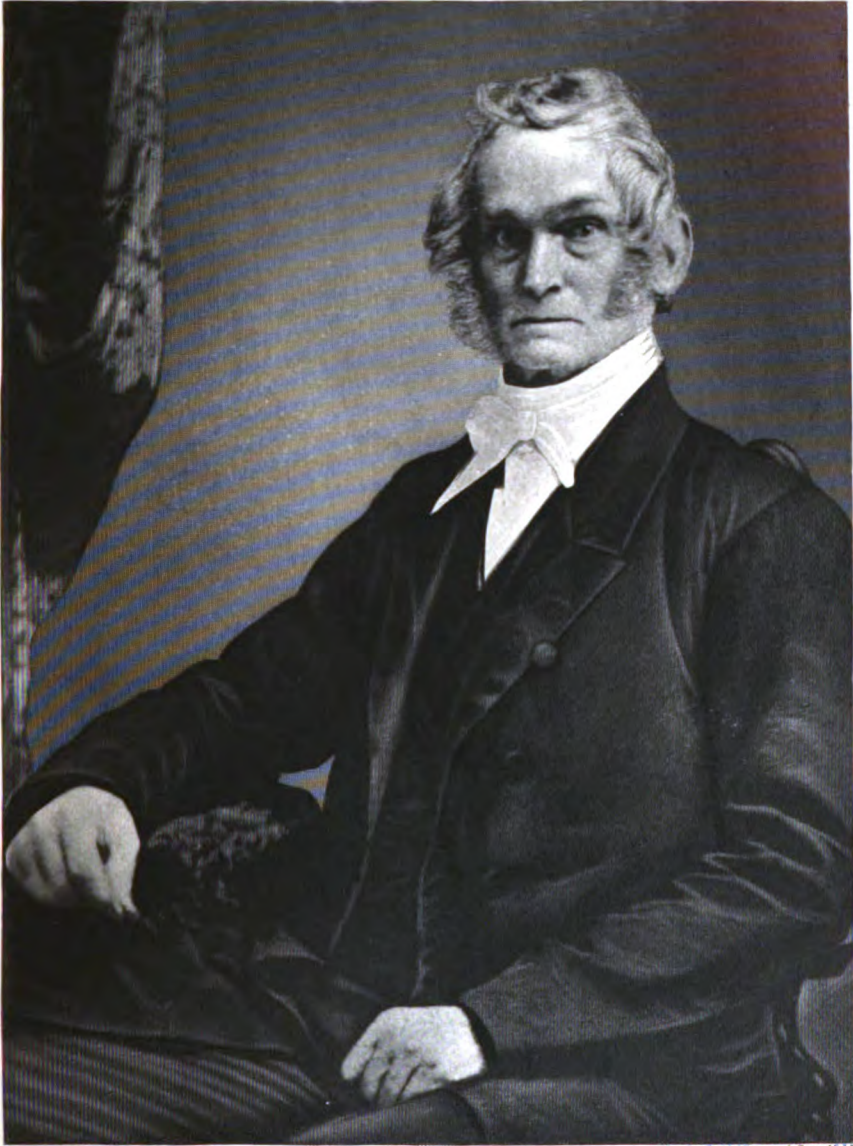
Mr. Snyder is a member of the Duquesne, Pittsburgh, University, and Allegheny Country clubs, the Kitchi Gammi Club, of Duluth, Minn., the Pittsburgh Athletic Association, and the Yale Club, of New York City.

Mr. Snyder married, in New Orleans, La., Feb. 19, 1917, Marie Elsie Whitney, of that city, and they have one son, William Penn (3rd).

REV. JOHN TAYLOR PRESSLY—"He left a memorial in his work and a fragrance in his name through which his memory has been made dear to countless hearts." These words were spoken of Rev. John Taylor Pressly, D. D., for thirty-eight years the loved and honored pastor of the First United Presbyterian Church of Allegheny, Pa. There are many in that community who remember Dr. Pressly, and there are many throughout the land, filling hundreds of pulpits, whose hearts burn with affectionate and grateful remembrance of him as their theological instructor.

John Taylor Pressly was born March 22, 1795, in Abbeville District, S. C., a son of David and Jane (Patterson) Pressly, both of Abbeville District, and descended from Scottish ancestors, who were among the early and influential settlers of that State. It has been truly said of Dr. Pressly that "he was an honored member of an honored family." He received his early education in a local academy, afterward entering Transylvania University, Kentucky, and graduating with the class of 1812. Having resolved to devote himself to the ministry of the gospel, he entered the Associate Reformed Theological Seminary, New York, where he was under the instructions of the eminent Dr. John Mitchell Mason. Having completed there a full three years' course of study, he was licensed in the spring of 1815 by the Second Associate Reformed Presbytery of South Carolina, and for a year devoted himself to missionary work, traveling on horseback through several of the Southern States and as far north as Pennsylvania and New York.

On his return home Mr. Pressly was called to the pastorate of the church, in which he had been baptized, the Cedar Springs Congregational, and there he ministered for fifteen peaceful, pleasant and profitable years, dating from ordination, July 3, 1816. Gladly would he



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John T. Pressly

have spent his life there, but he was known not only as a great preacher, but as one eminently qualified to educate preachers, and in 1825 he was appointed Professor of Theology by the Associate Reformed Synod of the South. The duties of this position he discharged acceptably until October 10, 1831, when he was elected professor of theology by the Associate Reformed Synod of the West, and on Jan. 5, 1832, entered upon his duties in Allegheny Theological Seminary, Allegheny, Pa. His singular fitness for the work was soon recognized and added a new attraction to the Seminary.

In October, 1832, Dr. Pressly was called to the First Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church of Allegheny, and on Aug. 27, 1833, was installed as the first pastor of that congregation, having previously served the church while reserving his decision. The history of this congregation is an interesting one. It was organized in the third story of what was known as "Semple's Long Room," a building which is still standing on the west side of West Diamond street, four doors below South Diamond street. In this room the congregation worshipped for some time after Dr. Pressly took charge, but the purchase of a lot, one hundred and twenty feet square, on the corner of what are known as South Diamond and East Diamond streets gave it an abiding place. In 1838, the congregation having become too large to be accommodated in this building, it was decided to erect a more spacious structure on the same site. This was done, but at the close of 1853 additional room was again found necessary and a lot was procured on Ridge street on which the Ridge Street Church was built to take care of the overflow, as the congregation was too large for one church. Once more, in 1867, it was decided to build a new house of worship and the result was the erection of the present structure on Union avenue. It is Gothic in its general style of architecture, and the front is rendered imposing by two massive square towers about one hundred feet in height. In 1834 a charter for the congregation was granted by the Supreme Court of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and in 1872 a new charter was granted by the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny county.

From the very beginning of Dr. Pressly's pastorate, the young congregation entered upon an era of prosperity. Large attendance became the rule, attracted by the earnest and eloquent preaching of the pastor, and there were many applications for admission to membership. The record of the passing years was one of rapid but permanent growth. The forces of the congregation were organized and these organizations flourished. As a preacher, Dr. Pressly was remarkable for clearness of conception and expression, and his fine personal appearance, his strong and sonorous voice, and his dignified and solemn action, gave to his delivery power approaching the magisterial. As a pastor he was watchful, tender and faithful, visiting, counselling and praying with his people in their homes and at their beds of sickness.

In a high degree, Dr. Pressly embodied the Roman ideal of perfect manhood, "a sound mind in a sound body." Throughout his life he apparently did the work of two or three ordinary men. In addition to the cares and burdens of a great congregation, he carried on for sixteen years the entire work of the Theological Seminary,

while during the remaining twenty-two years of his pastorate he served continuously as a professor in that institution. In 1842 he founded "The Preacher," a semi-monthly religious paper, now "The United Presbyterian," and for two years was its editor, proprietor and business manager, also contributing on a wide range of subjects to other periodical literature. Meanwhile he found time to publish several volumes on controverted points of theology, and at the meetings of the various courts of the church he was a familiar figure. He was one of the most prominent factors in the negotiations which resulted in the happy union of the Associate Reformed and Associate churches, and at its consummation no one rejoiced more heartily than he. He was faithful in the discharge of the duties of citizenship, taking a deep interest in all that pertained to the welfare of Pittsburgh, so long the scene of his labors and the home of his heart.

To be the right man in the right place was the happy lot of Dr. Pressly. He was one of the few men to whom it is given to minister to a great congregation and a great community in the formative period of their history, and upon that congregation and community he left an indelible impression. Throughout the entire United Presbyterian church his influence was felt, and it was in recognition of his invaluable services in helping to adjust the differences that separated the Associate and Associate Reformed churches that he was unanimously accorded the high honor of presiding as moderator over the first General Assembly of the united body, which was held in Zenia, Ohio. His fine executive talent gave him great influence in church courts, and in ecclesiastical matters generally, but undoubtedly his greatest service to the denomination was the signal influence he exerted as a professor in the Theological Seminary. His power as an instructor resulted in part from his personality and the reverence it excited, and in part from the fullness of his knowledge, the clearness of his statements, and his exceptional power of analysis. The personal appearance of Dr. Pressly was strikingly impressive. Six feet in height, with clear-cut, strong, sensitive and refined features, iron gray hair and keen dark eyes, he looked at once the clergyman and patrician. He was a fine horseman, and when mounted suggested a resemblance to his cavalier ancestors. In manner he may have seemed to some somewhat austere, as he never lost the dignity of his profession or the demeanor of a cultured, Christian gentleman, but no one could be near him and not feel that he had a great, loving heart. In character, in life, and in all the work of his life, he was a good man.

Another institution with which Dr. Pressly was identified was the Jefferson College, of Canonsburg. In 1832 he became a member of its board of directors, retaining the office until the college was merged with Washington College as the Washington and Jefferson College. For many years he was a member of the Board of Education of Allegheny City.

Dr. Pressly married, July 4, 1816, Jane Hearst, daughter of Joseph and Jane (Pressly) Hearst, of Abbeville District, S. C., and their children were: Joseph H., now deceased, formerly a clergyman of Erie, Pa.; Louisa Jane, married John Steele, of Kentucky, and is now deceased; Mary Matilda, also deceased; Sarah, died

young; David A. P., died Feb. 22, 1845; Elizabeth Caroline, died young; Samuel, also died young; and Margaret Malinda, now living on the North Side, a woman of wide culture, greatly beloved by a large circle of friends. Mary Matilda Pressly, now deceased, became the wife of Thomas McCance. Their children are: Jane Hearst, married Dr. John Mabon, of Pittsburgh; Joseph K., a physician of Pittsburgh; Pressly T., also of Pittsburgh; Mary Louise; Margaret M.; and William J., of New Haven, Conn., married Anna Hodge.

In his wife, who died April 4, 1873, Dr. Pressly found a helpmate worthy of his high calling, and he ever delighted to acknowledge that it was to her unfailing aid that he owed much of his success. Mrs. Pressly possessed in a high degree the beautiful, womanly traits of Christian character which, modest and unassuming as she was, shone out of her life with radiant beauty in the sweet sunlight of a perpetual cheerfulness. She seemed to be gifted with a power to secure the confidence, win the affections, and touch the better chords in every heart by her simple presence and by a single word. No one could bind up a broken heart with a tenderer hand or a kindlier sympathy. Her presence was the light and joy of her own home, and her visits a bright summer day in the homes of the congregation, but it was in the abode of sickness and sorrow that she was most frequently found, and her coming constantly brightened the dwellings of the lowly. Dr. Pressly was a man who regarded the ties of family and friendship as sacred obligations. What he was to those nearest and dearest to him, they alone could tell. His life as a husband and father was one of rare beauty, and his home was the central spot in the congregation where the poorest and humblest were as welcome as the richest and most honorable.

In the early summer of 1870 Dr. Pressly's health became seriously impaired. A trip to the Great Lakes brought no relief, and on August 13, a few days after his return home, he ceased from his labors. He died in the harness, in the seventy-sixth year of his age, the fifty-fifth of his ministry, and the thirty-eighth of his pastorate in Pittsburgh. He was mourned with a sorrow unfeigned, not only by his people but by many who had never been members of his congregation, and the largest assembly of mourners that had ever gathered in the city came together in the church in which he had ministered for so many years to pay tribute to his memory. People of all denominations felt that a great man had fallen in Israel. While he lived he spoke, and being dead he still speaks by the lives and lips of the great multitude who have never ceased to manifest the impress of his teachings.

In November, 1881, the First United Presbyterian Church of Allegheny celebrated its semi-centennial anniversary, and on that occasion was unveiled a tablet to the memory of Dr. Pressly. It was placed upon the wall at the right of the pulpit, and is of white marble, having in the center a shield of black marble on which, in gold letters, is the following inscription:

In Memory of
Rev. Jno. T. Pressly, D. D.,
for 38 years
The beloved and honored pastor
of this church.

A good and great man
Whose pure life, tender affection,
Wise counsel, unflinching fidelity,
And abundant labors
Are enshrined in the hearts
of a grateful people.
Born March 22d, 1795,
Died August 13, 1870.
The Righteous Shall Be In Everlasting
Remembrance.

A noble and enduring tribute, but truly has it been said: "Dr. John T. Pressly needs no other memorial, among the living who knew him, than the tablets of their own hearts." Many of those to whom his stately and benignant presence was familiar have now passed away, but his influence abides, and his works do follow him.

SAMUEL P. HARBISON—The outstanding fact of Samuel P. Harbison's useful, ideally-consecrated life was his constant increase of power and accomplishment through the years—his progress to a position of leadership in his line of industry, his ever-enlarging service to his denomination, and a steadily-developing sphere of helpfulness toward his fellowmen. The record of his life is the story of a man of commanding abilities in practical lines, abilities transcended by an inspired sense of stewardship. He was a man who never lost sight of his responsibility to the Donor of all his gifts, and who so lived that the thought of him is a fragrant, blessed memory, with many to bear witness to the strength, purity, and beauty of his life.

Samuel P. Harbison was of Scotch-Irish ancestry, and took from his progenitors a physical wiriness and strongly-marked religious convictions. His paternal and maternal lines date to about the middle of the eighteenth century in Pennsylvania, when both the Harbisons and Pollocks came to America. Bakerstown, Butler county, finally became the family home, and there Samuel P. Harbison was born Sept. 26, 1840, son of James and Martha (Pollock) Harbison. He was reared on the home farm, attended the Bakerstown school, and displayed such an aptitude in his studies that at the extremely early age of sixteen years he became an instructor in the local schools. After one year in Bakerstown school, he went to Allegheny and continued teaching work, first in a school at Minersville, and later in a school situated on Marshall avenue, Allegheny. By this time he was able to indulge his desires for greater educational advantages, and he attended Jefferson College, Canonsburg, Pa., and Eldersridge Academy, Indiana county, Pa., obtaining a thorough theoretical business training. He entered business life as a bookkeeper in the employ of Col. William A. Herron, then clerk of the courts, and used his time in the evening during this period of several years in keeping the books of the Star Fire Brick Company. This company was organized in 1865, and Mr. Harbison's association began in May, 1866. He gradually grew into a position of responsibility in the organization, and on Aug. 29, 1870, when the original organizer and manager, J. K. Lemon, resigned, Mr. Harbison was appointed manager by the board of directors. In August, 1874, the old firm was dissolved and was succeeded by the firm of Reed & Harbison. In January, 1875, Mr. Hay Walker purchased for his son the interest of Mr. Reed, and the firm of Harbison & Walker resulted. This part-