

ANNALS

OF THE

AMERICAN PULPIT;

OR

COMMEMORATIVE NOTICES

OF

DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN CLERGYMEN

OF

VARIOUS DENOMINATIONS,

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

WITH HISTORICAL INTRODUCTIONS.

BY WILLIAM B. SPRAGUE, D. D.

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VOLUME III.

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In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern  
District of New York.

to generations to come. That monument was dedicated, by appropriate ceremonies, on the 24th of November, 1845,—the sixty-fourth anniversary of Mr. Caldwell's death. An appropriate and impressive Address was delivered on the occasion by the Rev. Samuel Miller, D. D., which has since been published.

Hoping that these brief notices,—the best that I have been able to gather,—of one of the most honoured martyrs to American liberty, may avail to your purpose,

I am, dear Sir,

Truly and affectionately yours,

NICHOLAS MURRAY.



## JOHN CARMICHAEL.\*

1760—1785.

JOHN CARMICHAEL was born in the town of Tarbert in Argyleshire, Scotland, October 17, 1728. His parents, Donald and Elizabeth (Alexander) Carmichael, were both exemplary members of the Presbyterian Church. Circumstances of a personal nature induced them to migrate to this country in the year 1737. As they drew near the American coast, after a long voyage, a sudden gust well nigh overturned the vessel; and their son *John*, then a little boy eight years old, was precipitated overboard; but, happily, the waves bore him within reach of the Captain, and his life was saved. After remaining a short time at New York, they removed to Hackensack, a Dutch settlement in New Jersey, where they experienced much kindness from the people; but the irreligion, especially the profanation of the Lord's day, that prevailed there, led the pious father to seek, particularly on account of his children, a more congenial residence. Such a place he found in what was then called Ward Session, a few miles from Newark, N. J. Here the family attended the ministry of the Rev. Aaron Burr,—whose preaching made a deep impression on the mind of this son, and whose addresses at the Communion table he always remembered as having been characterized by great pathos and power.

In the year 1745, when he was between sixteen and seventeen years of age, death deprived him of his father; and his mother, being left with five or six children, of whom he seems to have been the eldest, (at least the eldest son,) she urged upon him, as the head of the family, the duty of maintaining domestic worship. It does not appear that he declined the service, though his mind had not yet been brought fully into harmony with the requisitions and spirit of the Gospel; but, shortly after this, in consequence of reading some excellent books which were put into his hands, his mind became fixed in evangelical views, his heart bowed in humble submission to the Divine requirements, and ultimately he not only cherished the desire, but formed the purpose, of devoting himself to the Christian ministry.

\* MS. from his granddaughter, Mrs. Reigart.

He entered the College of New Jersey in the year 1755. In a letter dated February 23, 1758, he writes thus:—"Doubtless you have heard that Mr. Edwards has taken the Presidentship of our College. A dear gentleman, greatly loved of all the students,—one whose piety and learning is too well known to need my commendation. I will only say this much,—that my highest expectations have been more than answered in every thing. He delivers the clear and awful truths of our holy religion with a solemnity becoming their importance, and as one who is really entrusted with the souls of his fellow mortals. I hope he will be to this Society as the cherishing rays of the sun, which will expel the heavy gloom and nocturnal darkness which seemed impending over Nassau Hall, on the hiding from view that bright luminary, by the death of our President Burr." In November of the same year,—in reviewing some of the events of the year, he writes as follows:—"I have seen another very dear President" (Edwards himself) "breathing out his last expiring breath in the agonies of death. Oh, my soul, forget not the holy fortitude, the Christian magnanimity, with which he grappled with the tyrant, and his unshaken faith in the Great Mediator."

Mr. Carmichael finished his collegiate course, and was admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts, in August, 1759. In November following, he was summoned to the death bed of his mother, where he witnessed a scene of remarkable Christian triumph.

After studying Theology at Princeton, under the direction of the Rev. Samuel Davies, who had succeeded to the Presidency of the College the year he was graduated, he was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, on the 8th of May, 1760. The next Sabbath, he preached both at Elizabethtown and at Newark, and during the week or two that he remained in that neighbourhood, his public services averaged about one each day. Towards the close of the month, he went to Philadelphia, to wait on the Synod for orders to supply vacancies, as they might judge proper. Speaking with reference to this journey, he says—"Dear, dear Mr. William Tennent gave me a refreshing, seasonable, but very humbling, lecture, by the way, in private, as we rode together, about my too frequent preaching."

From a letter of Mr. Carmichael's still extant, it appears that, even before his licensure, proposals were made to him to settle, at a suitable time, at a place called Salsborough; but, though he seems to have been not a little exercised in regard to it as a question of duty, he finally decided against the application. Sometime in the year 1760, he received a call from the church of the Forks of Brandywine, Chester County, Pa., to become their pastor. This call he accepted: and the Presbytery of Newcastle, then lately constituted from a part of the Donegal Presbytery, met at the Forks of Brandywine, April 21, 1761, and ordained him to the work of the ministry, and installed him pastor of that congregation. This connection continued until it was terminated by his death.

When the war of the Revolution came on, Mr. Carmichael showed himself an earnest and uncompromising friend to the liberties of his country. In the summer of 1775, the militia of the town of Lancaster requested him to preach a military sermon. In complying with their request, he gave them a discourse in which he endeavoured to establish the lawfulness of self defence; and so acceptable was it, that a copy was requested for the press, and it very soon passed to a second edition. In referring to it in his diary, he says,—“I desire to give God all the glory, if he enables me to

throw even a mite into the offering to aid the great American cause against tyranny and wicked usurpation." So effectually did he succeed in instilling into the minds of his people his own patriotic spirit, that, whenever they were called into the service, it is said that not a man of them hesitated or faltered; and as it devolved on the females, in the absence of their husbands, and fathers, and brothers, to superintend the out-door concerns, he was accustomed to go around and render them needed advice and assistance; and, with such wise and efficient co-operation, they succeeded in securing at least the usual crops. A report was at one time current through the region in which he lived, that a premium had been offered to any one who would bring him to New York. This put his people upon the alert; and though there is no evidence that any attempts to carry out such a purpose were ever made, yet the rumour occasioned great anxiety to his family, and several times they were actually taken off in haste, under the influence of a false alarm. While the British still had possession of New York, he received a letter from there, stating that his uncle in Scotland had left him a legacy, which, if he would come on, he should receive, provided he would recant his treasonable oath of allegiance to a rebellious Congress; but, in case of his refusal, it should be confiscated. It is hardly necessary to say that he chose to sacrifice the legacy rather than his principles. He had also claims to a considerable amount of property in Albany; but, unfortunately, the attorney to whom he committed his papers, turned out to be a Tory, and passed over to the British, carrying the papers with him. His patriotic spirit comes out, perhaps in nothing more than in the following record of the birth of a son, which was made in his Family Bible:—"On the 18th of October, 1777, was born to me a son. Since it pleased the Great God of Providence to ordain he should be born the very day and hour that General Burgoyne and his whole army had to come forth, and ground their arms, and resign themselves prisoners of war to these United States of America; as General Gates was the instrument, in the hands of a kind and Divine Providence, to effect this deliverance; and as our great, judicious Commander-in-chief, General Washington, still continues to persevere amidst many difficulties, to head the American army, I thought it my duty, as a memorial of these events, to call my son *Washington Gates*."

Mr. Carmichael was indefatigable in his labours as a Christian minister; not only discharging his various duties among his own flock with great punctuality and fidelity, but often assisting his brethren in extraordinary exercises, and sometimes performing short tours of missionary service. His health was feeble for many years previous to his death, but his active labours were scarcely ever intermitted. A few months only before he died, he preached a course of sermons on Haggai i. 10,—the design of which was to show that there are times when the servants of God should be more than ordinarily engaged for the promotion of religion. The disease of which he died (pneumonia) was induced by the fatigue which he underwent in assisting the Rev. Robert Smith of Pequea, at the Communion in his church, and by his exposure to the rain on his return home. Two Sabbaths before his death, he administered the ordinance to his own people, and, in serving the last table, expressed to them the belief that he should no more drink wine with them until he drank it new in his Father's Kingdom. He called upon all the communicants who were present, to join with him in devout thanksgiving for the great peace and consolation which he had enjoyed during his

illness His death was a scene of uncommon triumph; and the last expression that fell from his lips was—"Oh that I had a thousand tongues that I might employ them all in inviting sinners to Christ." He died on the 15th of November, 1785, in his fifty-eighth year.

Mr. Carmichael was married on the 8th of May, 1761, to Phebe Cram of Newark, N. J. Her mother was the second wife of the Rev. Jonathan Dickinson, first President of the College of New Jersey. By this marriage he had three children, the eldest of which, a son, died in infancy. The second, *John Flavel*, studied medicine under Dr. Scott of New Brunswick, N. J.; practised for a time with acceptance in his native place, entered the army, as a surgeon, in 1788; and, after holding the office several years, settled in the State of Mississippi, where he died in 1807. A third child, by this marriage,—a daughter, still survives (1854) in her eighty-ninth year. Mrs. Carmichael died on the 21st of October, 1772, in her forty-second year.

On the 2d of June, 1773, he was married a second time, to Catharine Mustard. She died on the 5th of August, 1774, leaving an infant daughter, who afterwards became the wife of the Hon. Robert Jenkins, and still lives, a widow, on the paternal estate in Lancaster County, Pa.

On the 24th of April, 1775, he was married, a third time, to Sally, daughter of the Rev. Samuel Blair of Fagg's Manor. By this marriage he had three children,—a daughter who married the Rev. Samuel Donnel,\* and migrated to Tennessee, but died shortly after she arrived there; a son,—*Washington Gates*, who entered the army with promising prospects, but soon died of yellow fever, at the mouth of the Mississippi, and another daughter who still survives as the widow of a Captain Allen. The mother died on the 11th of May, 1810.

The Rev. Dr. J. N. C. Grier, in a Discourse which he preached in 1849, containing the History of the Church of the Forks of Brandywine, pays the following tribute to Mr. Carr:—

"The Rev. John Carmichael was an eloquent man, in his day, and 'mighty in the Scriptures.' He was a man of ardent feelings, and what he did, he did with his might. He was the pastor of this congregation during the whole of the great American Revolution; and, like most of the Presbyterian clergymen of that day, he espoused the cause of his country, like one who would rather perish, battling for freedom, than live a slave. He was long spared to the affections and the prayers of his people, going in and out before them, as a burning and a shining light, breaking to them the bread of life; and being an example to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made him an overseer, ever calling upon them 'to be followers of him, even as he also was of Christ.'

"The Congregation increased under his ministry, which lasted about twenty-four years. He died greatly respected, and deeply lamented, by his people,—and having in all the churches of his Presbytery the reputation of a man thoroughly furnished for his work—one who needed not to be ashamed, because he rightly divided the word of truth."

In addition to the above testimony, I may say that, through the kindness of Mr. Carmichael's granddaughter, Mrs. Reigart, of Windsor, Pa., I have been put in possession of large portions of his diary, which make it manifest, beyond all question, that he was an eminently devout and earnest Christian, as well as an uncommonly laborious and faithful minister. He seems to have been in the habit of acknowledging God in every thing, even in the most inconsiderable events of his life; and though his great constitutional ardour rendered him more than ordinarily sensitive to bereavement, or affliction of any kind, yet such was the depth and strength of his religious feel-

\* Mr. Donnel joined the Cumberland Presbyterians.

ings, that his submission and confidence in God seem never to have failed him. I have had the opportunity of reading a few of his manuscripts, as well as the only Sermon of his which was ever printed, and they all bear the impress of a mind of much more than ordinary comprehensiveness and energy.

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### AZEL ROE, D. D.\*

1760—1815.

AZEL ROE, son of John Roe, was born at Setauket, on the East end of Long Island, on the 20th of February, 1738. His father was a man of considerable property, and of highly respectable standing in society. He was graduated at the College of New Jersey in 1756; and studied Theology under the direction of the Rev. Caleb Smith of Newark Mountains, (now Orange). He was licensed to preach the Gospel, by the New York Presbytery, in the latter part of the year 1759, or early in 1760; and, about two years after, was ordained to the work of the ministry, *sine titulo*, by the same Presbytery. After preaching, for some time, as a candidate, at Woodbridge, the congregation united in presenting him a call; and, having accepted it, he was installed in the autumn of 1763.

A few years after his settlement, a proposal was made to form a union between the congregation of which he was pastor and the upper congregation, (a branch or colony at Metuchin, called Second Woodbridge,) by which these churches were to be considered as one ecclesiastically,—that is, to have one Session, and to share equally in the services of the minister. A little before the year 1790, this united Church was visited by an extensive revival, which, in the course of two or three years, added to its numbers upwards of one hundred. The Congregation of the First Church became dissatisfied that the people of Metuchin should share equally with themselves the labours of their minister, and began to express the wish that the union to which they had consented, a few years before, might be dissolved; and this was finally effected, though not without strong opposition from the Congregation of Metuchin, nor until after repeated applications to the Presbytery. The dissolution of this union arose from an unbounded attachment to the pastor by both congregations. They both claimed him, and each desired to possess him wholly.

As his ministry included the period of the Revolutionary war, he showed himself, in various ways, an earnest friend to the liberties of his country. The part of New Jersey in which he resided, was much annoyed by marauding parties, sent out from the British troops encamped on Staten Island. On one occasion, a brave Continental Captain, who had done great execution in driving off or annoying these predatory bands, was very anxious to attack a party which had encamped near the Blazing Star Ferry, but could not induce his men to follow him. As many of them belonged to Mr.

\* Records of the Church at Woodbridge.—MSS. from his grandson, Mr. A. S. Roe, and Rev W. M. Martin.