

INDIANA UNIVERSITY,

ITS HISTORY FROM 1820, WHEN FOUNDED, TO 1890,

WITH

Biographical Sketches of Its Presidents, Professors
and Graduates, and a List of Its Students
from 1820 to 1887.

BY

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SKETCHES OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY.

DR. ANDREW WYLIE, FIRST PRESIDENT OF INDIANA UNIVERSITY.

Andrew Wylie was born April 12, 1789, in Western Pennsylvania. He was the son of Adam Wylie, a native of County Antrim, in the north of Ireland, who emigrated to this country about the year 1776, and settled in Fayette County, Pa., then a new country and far west. His father was a hard-working farmer, and his son Andrew was in his youth accustomed to hard work. His early education was such as he received at the common school during the times he could be best spared from the labors of the farm. The early development of his mind was, in a great degree, due to his mother, who took special pains to imbue the minds of her children with the spirit of piety and the love of truth. The late Dr. William Wylie, of Newark, O., was one of these children. For a number of years Andrew Wylie was engaged in farming. After a hard day's work, he would spend the evening in storing his mind with some useful knowledge. It is to this vigorous exercise which he was compelled to undergo that his sound and healthy constitution is to be ascribed. Till his very last days he every day performed some manual labor out of doors. His favorite exercise was with the ax, in wielding which he had few superiors. From his childhood he was a great reader, reading whatever books he had access to—the Bible, some histories and a few religious works comprised such as he had to use. The writer has seen a manuscript geography, indicating that it had been well used, which he had copied, and probably modified, when a boy, either on account of the difficulty of procuring a copy, or to impress the subject better on his mind. When about fifteen he entered Jefferson

College, Canonsburg, then under the Presidency of Dr. Dunlap, through which he passed with great honor to himself, defraying his expenses by teaching or some other honest labor. In October, 1810, Mr. Wylie graduated with the first honor. Immediately after his graduation he was appointed tutor, and Dr. Dunlap resigning about a year after, he was unanimously elected by the Board of Trustees—the Faculty approving the act—President of the College; thus the youngest and lowest of the Faculty was made its head. In the year 1817 Dr. Wylie resigned the Presidency of Jefferson College and accepted that of Washington College, in a town by the same name about seven miles from Canonsburg, in the hope that the two institutions would be united. In this he was disappointed; the attempted union produced a series of troubles and difficulties, and was, no doubt, the cause of his resignation and removal. It was some time in the fall of 1829 that he, having been elected President of Indiana College, which had been chartered the year before, removed to Bloomington and took charge of the institution, which had been organized in 1820 and put in operation in 1824, under the name of the State Seminary, and had, just previous to the election of Dr. Wylie, been raised to the dignity of a college. The Seminary had been in active operation since 1824, under the superintendency of Professors Baynard R. Hall and John H. Harney.

Very different estimates have been put on the character of Dr. Wylie. He had many strong friends, and there were also some bitterly opposed to him. Those intimately acquainted with him will not find it difficult to account for this trait of character. He was tolerant, and patient to a fault, of everything but meanness and duplicity. A person in whom he had no confidence he would keep at arms' length, and although policy might dictate an opposite course, he would hardly treat one thus regarded with common courtesy. "He would never," to use his own expression, "throw a sop to Cerberus." On the other hand, to those in whom he had confidence no one was more affable. There was sometimes, however, an apparent want of civility, a brusque manner, which doubtless was the cause of some bad feeling toward him on the part of students and others. This arose from a trait of character often found with deep thinkers, when they have some subject of study constantly before their minds. Dr. Wylie, when in this mood,

hardly noticed any one; he would brush past his nearest friends, even his wife and daughters, without recognizing them. Persons not knowing this peculiarity, when thus apparently slighted, with feelings hurt and pride wounded, would be deeply and often implacably offended.

Two characteristics of a good teacher Dr. Wylie had almost to perfection. He had learning and the faculty of communicating what he knew. No one understood better how to draw out the mind of the student. Under his training the pupil felt that he was really making progress and not blindly following a guide almost as blind as himself. Dr. W. H. McGuffey, of the University of Virginia, and the venerable nonagenarian, Dr. John W. Scott, now ('89) of Washington, D. C., and Gov. Henry A. Wise, of Virginia, were among his pupils before coming to Indiana, and General McKee Dunn and Judge Andrew Wylie, of Washington City, are among the earliest graduates of Indiana University.

As a writer, Dr. Wylie was clear and terse. His Baccalaureates and published writings are evidences of this. They are always interesting and instructive. Dr. Parvin, Professor in Jefferson Medical College, Philadelphia, and a pupil of Dr. W., thus speaks of the address of Dr. Wylie: "Of those published by him probably that which was delivered before the Philomathean Society, of Wabash College, July, '38, the subject of which was: 'The propriety of retaining the Greek and Roman classics in their place as a part of study necessary in the course of a liberal education,' was most widely known, and won for the author the highest praise. Asher Robins, of Rhode Island, one of the finest classical scholars ever a member of our National Senate, wrote to him soliciting a copy of the address. Daniel Webster wrote to him for the same purpose. Dr. Wylie's 'Eulogy on Lafayette,' delivered in Bloomington, elicited a letter from Webster, in which he spoke of the production in terms of the highest praise. Surely the students of Dr. Wylie are guilty of no blind idolatry, or no idolatry at all, when they declare that in ability he was one of the first men in all our country."

In addition to his Baccalaureate and other addresses, Dr. Wylie published, in 1839, a small treatise entitled "Sectarianism is Heresy." When President of Washington College, he published an "English Grammar." These and several sermons

and some translations from Plato, published in a short-lived periodical, the *Equator*, are the principal writings of Dr. Wylie that have been printed. He left two works ready for the press, "A Treatise on Rhetoric," and one on "The Training of Youth."

Dr. Wylie was brought up a Presbyterian, and for many years was a pastor in that denomination, and much esteemed by his congregation in Western Pennsylvania. In 1841 he connected himself with the Episcopalians. We are at a loss to say what led him to select this denomination when we consider the liberality of his views and his opposition to sectarianism. Had he been influenced either by fear or by favor, or by any selfish motive, a more popular and influential body of Christians than the Episcopalians were, at that time in the State, would certainly have been his choice. However much some of his friends regretted the step he had taken, none of those intimately acquainted with him lost their confidence in his integrity or suspected him of any sinister motive in making this change.

His death took place November 11th, 1851, a full notice of which is given in the History of the University (page 57.)

REV. ALFRED RYORS, D. D., SECOND PRESIDENT, INDIANA UNIVERSITY.

Alfred Ryors was born in the city of Philadelphia, June 23, 1812. He was left an orphan at so early an age that he scarcely remembered his parents. After their death he found a home with his father's friends in Montgomery County, Pa., with whom he lived till 1823. In the summer of this year, he united with the Presbyterian Church, under the pastoral care of Rev. Robert Steel, D. D., with whom he began a course of classical study in preparation for the Gospel ministry. Assisted by the kindness and liberality of friends, and especially of Dr. Steel, he entered the Freshman Class of Jefferson College in 1831. Here he remained two years, when he left college and engaged as a teacher of Latin and Greek in the School of C. J. Halderman, at Bristol, Pa. Professor Halderman was an eminent mathematician and from him he received those lessons which gave direction to his future and contributed to his success as professor of mathematics. In the fall of 1834 he returned to Jefferson College, and graduated the following year, receiving,