

In Memoriam



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THE OLD UNION SEMINARY BUILDING



## In Memoriam

JOHN HOLT RICE, D. D.

GEORGE A. BAXTER, D. D.

SAMUEL L. GRAHAM, D. D.

FRANCIS S. SAMPSON, D. D.

SAMUEL B. WILSON, D. D.

BENJAMIN M. SMITH, D. D.

JAMES F. LATIMER, D. D.

THOMAS E. PECK, D. D.

ROBERT L. DABNEY, D. D.





(1) DR. ROBERT L. DABNEY

(2) DR. GEORGE A. BAXTER

(3) DR. SAMUEL R. GRAHAM



# Union Seminary Cemetery at Hampden-Sidney

BY WALTER L. LINGLE

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IT was my rare privilege to spend a few days at Hampden-Sidney last June (1919). I left there in 1898, the year that Union Seminary was removed from Hampden-Sidney to Richmond. Many changes have taken place since then and one is tempted to grow reminiscent, but I will refrain. The place was more beautiful than I ever saw it. The college campus and the old Seminary campus have been thrown together and are kept in almost perfect order. To a man connected with Union Seminary the most sacred spot at Hampden-Sidney is the Seminary cemetery, where our beloved and distinguished dead are buried. This has also come to be the most beautiful spot in Hampden-Sidney. It will be difficult for one who knew Hampden-Sidney a quarter of a century ago to believe this, for back in those days the old cemetery was a veritable eyesore. I remember so well the black-jack trees that stood in the cemetery then and how dreadfully they stained the white marble monuments and headstones. I also remember the poor gravelly black-jack soil under those trees. It was a most forbidding place.

But all of this has been changed. There has simply been a marvelous transformation. About six years ago Rev. J. E. Booker, D. D., the efficient and beloved Superintendent of Home Missions in Virginia, moved to Hampden-Sidney and became deeply interested in beautifying this sacred but neglected spot. As a work of love he has thrown his soul into this task. It would be difficult to estimate the amount of his time and of his own money he has put into work of reclaiming the old cemetery from the neglected state into which it had fallen. First of



all, he removed those unsightly black-jack trees, root and branch, until there is not one of them left. In their places he has put evergreens and roses. After several years of painstaking toil he has gotten the whole cemetery covered with as fine a sod of velvety grass as I have ever seen. The old fence has been repaired and painted. Along the whole length of the back side of the cemetery there is a great bank of the most beautiful Dorothy Perkins roses that it has ever been my privilege to see. They were in their prime when I saw them in June. We are printing several photographs of the cemetery which will show something of the transformation that has been wrought.

All the friends of Union Seminary and Hampden-Sidney College, all the relatives of the beloved dead, and the whole Southern Presbyterian Church are under lasting obligation to Dr. Booker for what he has done and is doing to beautify and care for this cemetery where rest the bodies of these distinguished servants of God who did so much for us and our Church and for the Kingdom of God. You will see Dr. Booker's picture in the photographs which we are printing. He insisted that he should be blotted off of the cuts. This was very characteristic of the man. But we insisted just as strenuously that this should not be done, for the records ought to show the picture of the man who has done such a great work of love.

As I wandered about in the cemetery reading inscriptions, the thought came to me that these inscriptions contained much valuable history and biography which ought to be made available for friends in every part of the Church. I accordingly secured a tablet and spent some hours copying them, and they are reproduced in the pages which follow.

I was interested to learn that the ground for this cemetery was given to the Seminary in 1850 by Dr. Samuel L. Graham, who was at that time a professor in the Seminary. It will be observed from the inscriptions that Dr. John Holt Rice and Dr. George A. Baxter both died prior to that date. Dr. Rice was buried at Willington, in Prince Edward County, near the town of Farmville, and his body was afterwards removed to the cemetery at Hampden-Sidney. I have not been able to learn



where Dr. Baxter was buried, but his body was also removed to the cemetery at Hampden-Sidney. The names below include all those professors of the Seminary and their wives who are buried in this cemetery. We have tried to place the inscriptions as nearly in chronological order as possible.

1. REV. JOHN HOLT RICE, D. D., was the real founder of Union Theological Seminary. The following facts are given about him on a tablet in the Watts Chapel of Union Seminary; Born in Bedford County, Va., November 28, 1777; tutor in Hampden-Sidney College 1797-1804; Pastor Cubb Creek Church 1804-1812; Pastor First Church (Richmond) 1812-1823; Professor of Theology in Union Seminary 1822 to his death, September 31, 1831.

Inscription:

"John Holt Rice, First Professor of Christian Theology in Union Theological Seminary, was born in the county of Bedford on the 28th of November, 1777, and died on the 3rd of September, 1831. To his memory this stone is raised by her whom he loved."

2. MRS. JOHN HOLT RICE is buried beside her husband. It is interesting to note from the inscription that she was only seventeen when she was married.

Inscription:

"Annie Smith Rice, widow of Rev. John H. Rice, D. D., born January 20, 1785; married July 9, 1802; died March 5, 1867. A helpmeet for her husband in all his arduous labors. Prov. XXXI:30."

3. REV. GEORGE A. BAXTER, D. D., succeeded Dr. John Holt Rice as Professor of Theology in the Seminary. He was born in Rockingham County, Va.; licensed to preach by Lexington Presbytery April 1, 1797; elected Professor of Mathematics, Natural Philosophy and Astronomy in Liberty Hall (Washing-





(4) DR. THOMAS E. PECK

(5) DR. SAMUEL B. WILSON



ton College) in 1798; Principal of Liberty Hall 1799-1829; Pastor of the Lexington and New Monmouth Churches 1799-1831; Professor in Union Theological Seminary 1831-1841.

Inscription:

"George A. Baxter, D. D., elected Professor of Christian Theology in Union Seminary A. D. 1831. Born June, 1772; died April 24, 1841. Aged 68 years.

"Endowed with genius by nature, with grace by the Holy Spirit; a profound theologian and able professor. He had the charity of a Christian, and exemplified the gospel by his life."

Theology was read in Latin in Dr. Baxter's day and it was considered the proper thing that there should be a Latin inscription of some length to his memory. So on the other side of the modest monument we find this inscription:

"Hic jacent reliquiae mortales Georgii A. Baxter, Theol. Christ. Prof. in Schol. Theo. hic locata. Nat. June, 1772, Ob. 8 cal. Mar., 1841. Ingenii nitore illustris, Theologicus perspicax. profundus rerum literarum peritus pietate erga Deum perquam celebris."

4. REV. SAMUEL L. GRAHAM, D. D., was Professor of Church History 1838-1839, Professor of Oriental Literature 1839-1849, and again Professor of Church History 1849-1850.

Inscription:

"In memory of Samuel Lyle Graham, D. D., who was born February 9, 1794, and died October 29, 1854. He was during thirteen years a Professor in Union Theological Seminary. Holding fast the faithful word as he had been taught that he might be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince."

5. REV. FRANCIS S. SAMPSON, D. D., was a Professor in the Seminary from 1849 to 1854. Dr. R. L. Dabney said of him: "Having sat under the teaching of several of the most learned



and able professors who ever appeared on this side of the Atlantic, I am compelled by the truth to declare that Dr. Sampson's instructions were more valuable to me than those of any other living man."

Inscription:

"Sacred to the memory of F. S. Sampson, D. D., Professor of Oriental Literature in the Union Theological Seminary, Prince Edward County, Virginia. Born November, 1814; died April, 1854. And Enoch walked with God, and he was not for God took him. Gen. 5:24."

6. MRS. F. S. SAMPSON, afterwards Mrs. F. B. Watkins, is buried beside Dr. Sampson.

Inscription:

"In memory of our Mother, Caroline Susan Dudley, born September 29, 1821; married September 29, 1840, F. S. Sampson, D. D.; June 15, 1857, F. B. Watkins, M. D.; died May 27, 1886. Her children shall rise up and call her blessed."

7. REV. SAMUEL B. WILSON, D. D., was elected to the chair of Theology upon the death of Dr. George A. Baxter in 1841.

Inscription:

"S. B. Wilson, D. D., Professor of Theology 28 years in U. T. Seminary, Pr. Ed. Co., Va. Born March 17, 1783; died August 1, 1869."

8. MRS. SAMUEL B. WILSON is buried beside her husband.

Inscription:

"Elizabeth, wife of S. B. Wilson, D. D. Born March 25, 1783; died December 29, 1852. Those who knew her best loved her most."

9. REV. B. M. SMITH, D. D., was Professor of Oriental Languages from 1854 to 1889, and Emeritus from 1889 to 1893.



He has the distinction of having been a professor in Union Seminary longer than any other man ever connected with the institution. His successor, Dr. W. W. Moore, stands next in length of service and has nearly equalled Dr. Smith's record. Dr. Moore became a professor in Union Seminary in 1884. Long may his bow abide in strength.

Inscription:

"Benjamin Mosby Smith, D. D., born June 30, 1811, at Montrose, Powhatan County, Va.; died March 14, 1893, in Petersburg, Va. Pastor at Danville, Va., 1838-40; Tinkling Spring and Waynesboro, 1840-45; Staunton, 1845-54. Professor of Oriental Languages for 38 years in Union Theological Seminary. Emeritus Professor five years.

The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

In the sweet bye and bye

We shall meet on that beautiful shore."

10. MRS. B. M. SMITH is buried beside her husband.

Inscription:

"Mary Morrison, wife of Rev. B. M. Smith, D. D. September 3, 1821; September 17, 1903. Them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

11. REV. J. F. LATIMER, D. D.

Inscription:

"Rev. James Fair Latimer, D. D., Scholar, Teacher, and Man of God. October 7, 1845; February 29, 1892. Confederate soldier 1861-1865. Professor in Davidson College 1872-83. Pastor of Second Presbyterian Church, Memphis, Tenn., 1883-84. Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Polity in Union Theological Seminary 1884-92.





(6) DR. J. F. LATIMER

(7) DR. FRANCIS S. SAMPSON

(8) DR. JOHN HOLT RICE



This monument is erected by pupils and friends who knew him and loved him."

12. REV. THOMAS E. PECK, D. D.

Inscription:

"In memory of Thomas Ephraim Peck, born in Columbia, S. C., January 29, 1882. A servant of God from his 18th year. Pastor in Baltimore, Md., 1846 to 1860. Professor in Union Theological Seminary 1860 to 1893. Fell asleep in Jesus at Hampden-Sidney, Va., October 2, 1893. His body being still united to Christ rests in the grave till the resurrection."

13. MRS. THOMAS E. PECK is buried beside Dr. Peck and one modest monument serves to mark the resting place of both of them.

Inscription:

"Ellen Richardson Peck, January 14, 1821; January 19, 1909. An honored life, a peaceful end, and heaven to crown it all."

On the third side of the monument are these words, which are most appropriate for both Dr. and Mrs. Peck:

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth yea sayeth the Spirit, they rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Rev. 14:13.

14. MRS. SARAH B. PECK, the mother of Dr. Peck, is buried in this same group. Many of us remember "Grandmother Peck" with a great deal of affection. She was ninety years old when I first saw her, and her mind was still perfectly clear and vigorous. Her handwriting was also perfectly clear and put to shame many of us who were still in the bloom of youth. But it was her saintly character that impressed us most.





(9) DR. B. M. SMITH



## Inscription:

"Sarah B. Peck, born May 2, 1803; died February 7, 1895. Thou shalt come to thy grave in a full age like as a shock of corn cometh in his season."

Dr. and Mrs. Peck and Grandmother Peck were three of the greatest saints I ever knew.

15. REV. ROBERT L. DABNEY, D. D., was a Professor in Union Seminary from 1853 to 1883. No man ever made a deeper impression on the Seminary or on the Southern Presbyterian Church.

## Inscription:

"Robert Lewis Dabney, M. A., D. D., LL. D., born 5th March, 1820; died 3rd January, 1898. Minister of the Gospel, Professor of Theology in Union Seminary and of Philosophy in the University of Texas; Major in the Confederate Army and Chief of Staff to Stonewall Jackson. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. In unshaken loyalty of devotion to his friends, his country and his religion, firm in misfortune, ever active in earnest endeavor, he labored all his life for what he loved with a faith in good causes that was one with his faith in God."

16. MRS. ROBERT L. DABNEY is buried beside her husband.

## Inscription:

"Margaret Lavinia Morrison, wife of Robert Lewis Dabney. October 11, 1828; March 30, 1908. Her children arise up and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praiseth her."

Beside Dr. and Mrs. Dabney lie three of their children. Two of these were little boys who died of diphtheria in November, 1855. Their death was a great sorrow to Dr. Dabney, but he was given marvelous grace, as will be seen from the letters which he wrote at the time of their death. These letters will be found in Dr. T. C. Johnson's Life of Dr. Dabney.

I have given the names of all the professors and their wives who are buried in the Seminary cemetery at Hampden-Sidney.



Quite a number of others who were in some way connected with these families are buried there also.

As I think of the Union Seminary Cemetery at Hampden-Sidney, I feel that some provision ought to be made for the perpetual care of this hallowed place. There ought to be an endowment fund that would yield about one hundred dollars a year. The trustees of the Seminary could hold and invest such an endowment and apply the income to keeping the cemetery in its present beautiful condition. There must be some lover of the Seminary or of the Church, or some friends of the distinguished men who are buried in this cemetery who would gladly provide this endowment as a memorial if the need of such an endowment were only known.

Dr. Booker has in mind the improvement of the approach to the cemetery. He wants to build a good road right down the old "Via Sacra" from Hart's store to the cemetery and beyond. He wishes, also, to extend the concrete walk from the old Seminary Library Building to run by Dr. W. W. Moore's former residence, to pass Dr. Blair's former residence (the old Sampson home), and the Seminary Cemetery, and on down to the residence formerly occupied by Dr. Dabney, Dr. Peck, and Dr. Lati-mer. This would add much to the looks and comfort of Hampden-Sidney and would be the capstone to all the fine work which Dr. Booker has already done. In addition to the endowment fund spoken of above, there ought to be an improvement fund to make these additional improvements which Dr. Booker has in mind.

Everybody who loves Hampden-Sidney ought to be ready to contribute to such a fund. Let us rise up and show our appreciation for the splendid work which Dr. Booker has already done by making it possible for him to go forward with the further improvements which he has in his mind and on his heart.