

THE "SCOTCH-IRISH" OF THE VALLEY OF VIRGINIA, AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON MEDICAL PROGRESS IN AMERICA

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ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

TO THOSE of us who have spent our lives in the Valley of Virginia, no description of the term "Scotch-Irish" Presbyterian" is necessary. We know them to be an honest frugal people, who for generations have put into practice in their daily lives the tenets of their religious beliefs far more consistently than have the members of many other Protestant denominations. Perhaps this most commendable trait is the explanation of their valuable and remarkable contribution to the progress and the betterment of American life.

It might be interesting, and certainly refreshing, to recall the origin of these folks. In the years of their persecutions can be found the explanation of their deep-seated and firmly fixed convictions on any subject to which they have directed their attention.

Ulster, the most northern province of Ireland, is composed of nine counties, and it is in this locality that the term Scotch-Irish had its origin. It will be recalled that early in the reign of James I a plot to dethrone the king was discovered. King James then retaliated by confiscating all the land and parcelling it out among his favorites. In the autumn of 1609 came the first rush of people from the highlands of Scotland to Ulster. These folks are described by Rev. Andrew Stewart as being "a wild and lawless set." A few years later a second volunteer immigration took place. According to Rev. Blair, a Scottish minister, this "highland host took root" and

remained in Ulster. This immigration accounts for the many "Macs" who constitute so large a part of the Scotch-Irish race. Naturally the relationship existing between the invading Scotch, the trampled Irish, and the dominating English king was not conducive to peace of any kind. The Scotch did not mingle by intermarriage with the natives of Ulster. The first Scotch settlers were not at all a religious people, but due largely to the efforts of four ministers, including the celebrated John Livingston and Josiah Welch, a great reformation occurred about the year 1625, just at the time Charles I came to the throne. In 1643 these Scotch settlers resolved to send a minister and a layman to New England, but the commissioners were prevented by the king from going farther than London. Among the other indignities to which these Scotch, who were temporarily eking out an existence in Ireland, were subjected was that marriages performed by the Presbyterian ministers were held by the court to be illegal, and, therefore, many of these future settlers of America were legally illegitimate offspring. Bad matters became worse, so by 1750, about 12,000 Presbyterians were landing in America annually. The Protestant Episcopalians did not have the same motive for emigration, and the tide of Catholic emigration from Ireland did not set in until after the American Revolution.

It is interesting to recall that Bancroft says: "We shall find the first voice publicly raised in America to dissolve

all connection with Great Britain came, not from the Puritans of New England, or the Dutch of New York or the planters of Virginia, but, from the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians."

The people of Ulster had heard of Pennsylvania where religious liberty was enjoyed and promised to all comers, and to that province they came in large numbers. They were mainly farmers, tradesmen, and artisans. But jealousies arose in the minds of the original settlers of Pennsylvania, and restrictive measures were adopted by the proprietary government against the Scotch-Irish and the German immigrants. Hence many of both of these peoples were disposed in 1732 and afterward to seek homes within the limits of Virginia. The Scotch-Irish drifted on in the wake of John Lewis to the present county of Augusta; the German people generally located in the region now known as Shenandoah, Page, and Rockingham Counties. Many of these Scotch-Irish are descendants of the defenders of Derry. And as Waddell states in his "Annals of Augusta County," "the list of prisoners captured at Bothwell Bridge and herded like cattle for months in Grayfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh, is like a muster-roll of Augusta people."

An appendix to the old Scotch book called "A Cloud of Witnesses," says "Anno 1679 of the prisoners taken at Bothwell, were banished to America, 250 who were taken away by Paterson, merchant to Leith, who transacted for them with Provost Milns, Laird of Barnton, the man that first bunt of covenant, whereof 200 were drowned by shipwreck at a place called the Mulehead of Daruess, near Orkney, being shut up by the said Paterson's order beneath the hatches; 50 escaped." Then is published the list of prisoners and the

following paragraph completes the quotation from the appendix. "The fifty men who escaped from the shipwreck made their way to the North of Ireland, and were not further troubled." However, they did not all remain in the county of Ulster, for in this list of fifty are to be found the names of the antecedents of many of the people who played a prominent role in the development of that part of Virginia located around Staunton, Lexington, and Timber Grove (now called Timber Ridge). The most eloquent description of these people with which I am conversant is to be found in Governor O'Ferrall's address of welcome to the Seventh Congress of the Scotch-Irish Society of America held in Lexington, Virginia, on June 20-23, 1895, and for that reason, his address is quoted in full as follows:

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Scotch-Irish Society of America: I have laid aside my official duties and journeyed here to meet and welcome you.

I am sure I speak not with extravagance when I say that there is not a section within the broad limits of this republic where you would receive a warmer welcome than in this Old Dominion State—no section where you would find more congenial spirits, more historic landmarks, more interesting footprints, or a population that has preserved in a greater degree the habits, traits and characteristics of the early Scotch-Irish settlers in America than in this valley.

This, I understand, is the seventh meeting of this Congress. At each of the preceding meetings I have observed that handsome and well-merited tributes were paid to the Scotch-Irish race, and so beautiful was the language and so eloquent the sentences that I could not, if I cared to venture, add a single word to them. If I were to attempt it, my effort would fall dead upon ears which have only heard

the pathos of masters and been delighted with the arts of rhetoric. My sentences will be unadorned; but I shall speak the truth, and I trust you will find it "as pleasant in homely language as in fine speech."

Mr. President and gentlemen, I am not one of you; but as my name would indicate, one of the two bloods courses in my veins, and I have never seen the hour when riches would buy a drop of it nor the moment when I was less than proud of it. I have kinsmen, and many of them, whose hearts receive and throw out the commingled blood of the Scotch and Irish, but my own comes from the pure strain of South Ireland.

Proud, however, as I am of my ancestry, I hesitate not to admit that the Scotch stock that settled in North Ireland had certain good qualities which the Irish did not possess in such large measure, but at the same time I insist that the Irish had traits of great merit which the Scotch did not possess. So, in my opinion, the blending of the bloods was mutually beneficial, and produced a race of people, taking them all in all, unsurpassed by any of which we find a record in history. To the sturdy, slow-plodding, firm and tenacious character of the one were added the enthusiasm, warmth of soul and quickness of action, the restlessness under wrong, and the readiness to strike for the right, of the other. From this union sprang the qualities which have shone so brightly in commercial circles, in the field of husbandry, in the domain of statesmanship, in the forum of the law, in oratory, literature, arts, sciences, on the plain of battle, in war, on land and sea in every calling, avenue and sphere—wherever this people of blended blood have entered the contests for the prize of superiority.

Among the prevailing characteristics of the Scotch-Irish race is the steady adherence to moral ideas and the constant cultivation of religious sentiment. If "morality is religion with its face toward the world," they have at least as a race pos-

sessed it; if "piety is religion with its face toward God," they have as a race embraced it to an extent as great as any people who live under the sun. You can look almost confidently for the altar of Christianity and a well-fingered Bible in every Scotch-Irish home, while infidelity has ever been a stranger to a Scotch-Irish breast. Civil and religious liberty has never failed to rally around its standard the Scotch-Irish in every land, and the weak, oppressed and downtrodden have ever found in them defenders.

Believing that the "sure foundations of a State are laid in knowledge, not in ignorance," they have generally been advocates of education, sustaining in a generous measure the common school, college and university, never neglecting, however, the school of discipline at home, God's own system of inculcating morality and right principles in the young. Regarding idleness a sin and labor a duty, they have by their energy striven to gather the fairest fruits and receive the richest reward, and by their industry secure healthiness of body, wholeness of heart, clearness of mind, purity of conscience, and fullness of purse. But as I said just now, the Scotch-Irish character has been described so perfectly by so many tongues and pens that I must leave it where they have placed it: upon the walls of your memories.

Mr. President and gentlemen, I desire just here to refer briefly to the people of your race who settled in this lovely region bounded by these mountain ranges.

Prior to 1716, the soil of this valley had never been pressed by the foot of civilized man. It was then the home and hunting ground of the savage. During the summer of that year the "Knights of the Golden Horseshoe," as they were afterwards termed, under the leadership of Alexander Spottswood, scaled the summit of the Blue Ridge from the east, and discovered a section more fertile and beautiful than any they had ever beheld. Exultation thrilled their souls and triumph fired their brains. From a commanding peak a

new and unknown realm spread out under their wondering vision, and there they drank the health of his Majesty, the British king, and named the peak "Mount George." The news of this discovery of this goodly heritage spread like flame in dry stubble, extending throughout Eastern Virginia and into Pennsylvania. But for some reason, no settlers came until 1732, and then among the first were John Lewis and other Ulstermen. Soon, however, the tide of immigration set in; soon Scotch-Irishmen under the protection of their trusty rifles were felling the timbers, clearing the forests, building homes, plowing deep the friendly soil, sowing seed for the sun and dews to quicken, and erecting houses of worship from the banks of the Potomac to the head waters of the James. As years rolled on, others swelled the band, and gradually those in the lower valley with few exceptions joined their fellow-pioneers in the county of Augusta, which embraced a large part of this county of Rockbridge, forming a strong and homogeneous community, and making the populations of these two counties what they are almost distinctively today, Scotch-Irish by blood, traits, habits, and teaching.

But I must desist. I cannot enter further into an historical narrative of the settlement of the Valley of Virginia. I see from the programme that this pleasant task has been assigned to another, one who will entertain and delight you.

My purpose in referring to these early days of this valley's civilization has been to remind you that you are in the midst of friends by racial, possibly some of you by ancestral, ties; that you are upon ground consecrated by the heroism, courage and valor, and sanctified by the travail, toil and blood of the stock from which you sprang; and that you have wended your way to a spot on the great map of this broad union of lakes and lands where you can draw fresh inspirations from the memories that cluster around the graves of these pioneers, and the sites of their rude homes; and, more

than all, the temples to the living God in their antique grandeur still standing, erected by the hands of these early settlers from the native limestone, a fit symbol of their sturdy character and superb manhood, cemented with sand packed in bags for miles on horseback by the Spartan women of the settlements.

Mr. President and gentlemen, to this valley, so full of interest to you, I welcome you. Its hills and dells, its green meadows and golden fields, its dashing torrents, rippling streams, and crystal fountains—all have a tale to unfold to you which must fill your souls and moisten your eyelids. To this valley, whose people in the language of a lamented son of Rockbridge, have never in their annals been known to "spit fire nor eat dirt"; to this valley, immortalized by the exclamation of the "Father of His Country," when touched by the recital of an incident of womanly devotion to the cause, "Leave me but a banner to plant upon the mountains of Augusta, and I will rally around me the men who will raise our bleeding country from the dust and set her free," I welcome you.

To this town hung with cherished memories, in whose sacred keeping are the mausoleum and marble figure of a Lee, the tomb and bronze statue of a Jackson and the inurned dust of a McDowell and a Letcher: to this town, proudly pointing to her Washington and Lee University and her Virginia Military Institute, sublime in their histories and superb in their achievements, I welcome you.

To every spot of this old commonwealth of colonial relics, revolutionary landmarks, grand traditions, spotless fame and unsullied honor, whose mountains tower like memorial columns to her dead, great and good, whose rivers murmur the names of her illustrious sons almost as numerous as the oaks in the forest, whose autumnal winds sweeping through her woodlands roll a ceaseless requiem to her departed worthies, and whose feathery songsters warble their sweetest lays over the

turfy mounds of her heroes, statesmen, warriors, orators, editors, poets and philanthropists who have "crossed over the river," I welcome you. Yes, this land, where the cradle of our civil and religious liberty was first rocked, where the first stone in the temple of republican freedom was laid, where resistance to British tyranny was first proclaimed, and where the final blow was struck which gave to our fathers a country free, and the oppressed of every land a refuge sure, and to us a heritage blessed over which a common flag now floats and a common Constitution extends its shield—to this land, whose sons walk in the very atmosphere of her fame and bask in the very sunshine of her glories, I welcome you—welcome you to the homes, hearts and festal boards of her people.

It is not difficult to understand that from this stock came such men as Drs. Alexander Humphreys (sometimes spelled Humphries), Ephraim McDowell, Jesse Bennett, and Mrs. Jane Todd Crawford, all four of whom contributed much to the progress of surgery throughout the world. It is interesting to recall that this little community also produced Cyrus McCormick, inventor of the reaper and binder, and his close neighbor, Gibbs, who laid the foundation for the modern sewing machine—a "dream come true." (It is not improbable that they "exchanged ideas," especially as the principles of both are somewhat similar.) The lives of Archibald Alexander, the great theologian; John Letcher, the "Honest John" who guided the ship of state in the perilous period of the revolution, and Sam Houston, whose checkered career as an Indian fighter, senator, representative in Congress, Governor of two states and President of a Republic, whose independence he achieved, rival the stories of romance. In this list should also be included William

McClung, a first cousin of Ephraim McDowell, and a brother-in-law and close companion of Chief Justice John



FIG. 1. THE McDOWELL FAMILY GRAVEYARD. THE MONUMENT IN THE CENTER WAS ERECTED TO THE McDOWELL FAMILY.

Marshall.

It was with this background and with support of such inherited traditions that Ephraim McDowell was willing to undertake in the "then woods of Kentucky" to operate on Jane Todd Crawford. She also came from this same community in Virginia, and possessed that type of courage that is bred only by generations of meeting hardships with the fortitude produced by lives dedicated to the fixed principles of facing, heroically, conditions as they actually exist.

The object of this paper is to try to present a picture of that community at the time in which Ephraim McDowell and Jane Todd lived there, and to surmise if such a study gives the explanation of the willingness of the surgeon to undertake and of the patient to submit to an operation which was at that time practically unknown.

Such was the environment in which

Ephraim McDowell was born and lived until he was twelve years of age, and to which he returned at nineteen



FIG. 2. CLOSE-UP VIEW OF THE SAME MONUMENT. MR. SAMUEL MCDOWELL AND HIS WIFE, THE FATHER AND MOTHER OF EPHRAIM MCDOWELL, ARE BURIED NEAR THIS MONUMENT.

years of age. He then remained in Staunton for about two years studying under Dr. Alexander Humphreys.

The old McDowell graveyard is in a fair condition of preservation. The brick walls and tombstones have been repaired and renovated since the taking of the photographs. (Figs. 1, 2.)

The house in which he was born has been torn down, but the kitchen of the "Red House" (Fig. 3) is built over that site.

Jane Todd was born within a few miles of the birthplace of Ephraim McDowell, and remained there until she was thirty-one years of age, when she married Thomas Crawford. (See Fig. 4 and note that her name is spelled Jenny).

Miss Katherine Helm, niece of Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, states:

Jane Todd Crawford and Mary Todd Lincoln, the wife of President Abraham Lincoln, were both descended from two brothers who settled in Pennsylvania. Jane Todd's grandfather, Samuel Todd I, was the elder. His descendants migrated from Pennsylvania to Virginia in 1754. Mary Todd Lincoln's great-grandfather, David Todd, was but fourteen years old when he emigrated to America with his father, Robert, the youngest of the sons of Todd in Ireland. In 1783 he sold his lands in Pennsylvania for about \$1,200 and migrated to Kentucky.

It is also interesting to note that the marriage ceremony was performed by Rev. Samuel Houston, a relative of the hero of Texas. Whether the man who performed the wedding ceremony was the father or the cousin of Governor Samuel Houston is a little indefinite. Governor Houston's father was Samuel Houston, who fought during the Revolutionary War and retired as Major in the Timber Ridge neighborhood. It is also known that he became a magistrate and did perform marriage ceremonies. However, Rev. Samuel Houston was an ordained Presbyterian minister who lived at Natural Bridge, a distance of some twenty miles. It is more than likely that the marriage ceremony was performed by Rev. Samuel Houston of Natural Bridge, for there is no record of Major Houston signing any marriage certificate as "Rev.^d Samuel Houston," such as in the illustration (Fig. 4). In fact, Major Houston signed all of his papers with the prefix of Major.

Although Jenny Todd was eight years older than Ephraim McDowell, it is more than probable that their families knew one another. They were both descended from the same type of people, were neighbors, and their families on both sides were interested in education. In fact, that particular location has

always been interested in education. Liberty Hall was started at Timber Ridge and later moved to Lexington

taught Ephraim McDowell, but Dr. Humphreys remained his medical counselor throughout his life. In fact, after



FIG. 3. THE RED HOUSE, BUILT OVER THE SITE WHERE MCDOWELL WAS BORN.

to become Washington and Lee University, while the University of Virginia would probably have been located at Staunton, had it not been for the influence of Thomas Jefferson. Mr. Jefferson was then living in Monticello and naturally desired his dream concerning that educational institution—that it be located near enough to his home to permit him to make personal visits and supervise the architecture, etc. This fact overweighed the desire and the intent of the people of Augusta County to locate the State University in their midst. (It is interesting to recall that Mr. Jefferson was seventy-two years old when the University of Virginia was started.)

That Dr. Alexander Humphreys was one of the most dominant figures in the life of that community there can be little doubt. Professionally, he not only

Dr. Humphreys' death, his family moved to Kentucky to be near Dr. Ephraim McDowell and his family. From this, one would judge the friendship existing between preceptor and student to have been closer than is sometimes the case.

McDowell was not the only student whom Humphreys taught. In fact, we find that he acted as preceptor for ten young men during his rather short life. He died at the age of forty-three years. He was buried in the historical yard of Trinity Episcopal Church, Staunton, Virginia, as is shown in illustrations. (Figs. 5, 6, 7.)

William Wardlaw was another one of his students. Wardlaw emigrated to Tennessee and became well known in the early medical history of that state.

Next to Ephraim McDowell, perhaps, Dr. Samuel Brown was the best

known of Dr. Humphreys' students. Dr. Brown was a brother-in-law of Dr. Alexander Humphreys. After leaving Staun-

ton, which influenced so greatly medical progress during the early days of the Mississippi Valley. Brown contributed

Name	Date	Location
Travel to Anna Christina Hoyleman	Sept. 4 - 94	Same
Thomas Crawford to Jenny Todd	Jan 9 - 94	Red. Sam. House
Hamilton to Mary Beggs	March 20 - 94	Same
Hindson to Sally McCalpin	March 20 - 94	Same
to Martha Beggs	March 27 - 94	Same
	March 25 - 94	

FIG. 4. REPRODUCED FROM THE RECORD OF MARRIAGES AT LEXINGTON, VA.



FIG. 5. THE TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH, STAUNTON, VIRGINIA, WITH THE GRAVEYARD AROUND IT.

ton, Brown went to Edinburgh with Ephraim McDowell. Then after leaving Edinburgh he returned to America and became one of the founders of the Transylvania University. He also became a member of the Faculty of the Medical Department of that school,

the first paper ever sent by a Kentucky physician to the American Medical Repository. He is reported to have used vaccine in more than 500 cases! This was prior by four years to Jenner's discovery. Furthermore, he was the founder of the society known as "Kappa

Lambda Association of Hippocrates." Moreover he claimed priority for the introduction of lithotomy into this

Dowell during his stay in Edinburgh. It is also illuminating to note that the Scotch university never did give

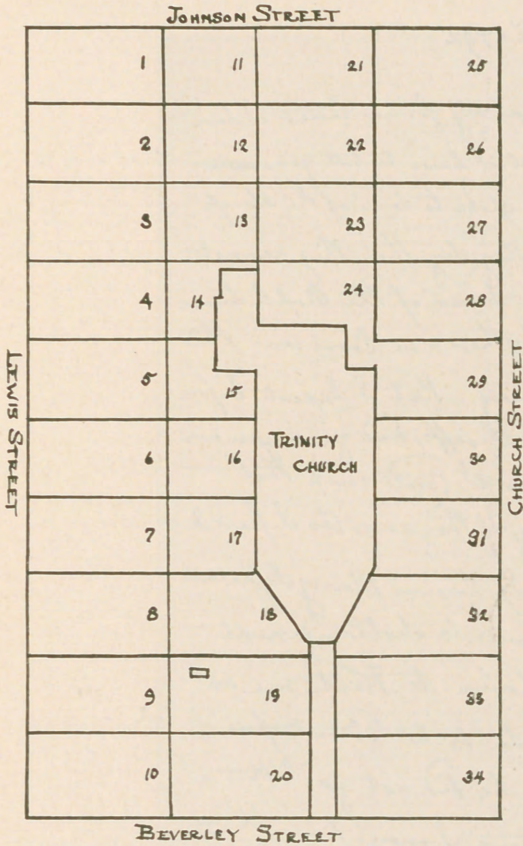


FIG. 6. PLOT OF THE TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH YARD. MANY HISTORICAL CHARACTERS ARE BURIED IN THIS GRAVEYARD. ALEXANDER HUMPHREYS' GRAVE IS IN LOT 19.



FIG. 7. PHOTOGRAPH OF GRAVE OF ALEXANDER HUMPHREYS. THE INSCRIPTION IS "DEPARTED THIS LIFE 23RD MAY, 1802 IN THE 45TH YEAR OF HIS AGE".

country, a claim easily disproved.

There has been much speculation as to the reason for McDowell's failure to graduate from Edinburgh. Personally, I believe the explanation is to be found in the fact that McDowell became so interested in studying anatomy and surgery as a private pupil under the famous John Bell that he did not have either the time or the inclination to give the University courses the necessary attention to justify their bestowing a degree on him. It is interesting to recall that his old preceptor, Dr. Humphreys, was a rather close friend of Dr. Bell and wrote several letters to him about Mc-

Ephraim McDowell any recognition, in spite of his great contribution to the medical progress of the world. This remained to be done by an American institution—the University of Maryland in 1825. This honor was conferred on McDowell largely through the influence of one of his friends of his student days in Scotland—Dr. John Beale Davidge. Dr. Davidge was one of the Founders of the University of Maryland.

Brown in his letters to Humphreys perhaps contributes some explanation concerning McDowell's failure to graduate, by referring to some of McDowell's extra-curricular activities. Cer-

tainly the following accounts taken from Brown's letters show that McDowell demonstrated his Scotch origin to defeat a boastful Irishman in a foot race." A race was arranged between McDowell and the Irishman for a distance

Mercer March 16th 1792

Dear Sir/

After I have filled up my former letter I have yet recollected some thing that I have to tell you which is about your fees, I have spoke to some of the Sheriffs that got them to collect And they say that they cannot collect scarcely any of them, Some of the People swore they were not the People Other are Poor and the Sheriff cannot get any thing. But I Expect before May to settle with all the Sheriffs, and give you an account of the whole matter. I could wish that Inyette and Evens would Pay If they can, As I fear I shall not be able to give Ephraim Money sufficient to take with him, If he goes to Scotland next fall, I forgot to tell Ephraim to Write me as Soone as Possible when he is to set out for Scotland, I would be glad he did not go till Sept^r next as by that time I may have it in my Power to send him some more money than I can do this Spring. I have Inclosed Ephraim a Warrent on the Treasurer for Sixty five Pounds and kept a Duplicate of it least it should be lost and I hope to send him a nother Warrent in April or may next for twenty five Pounds, Pray keep your Eye on Eph^m and see how he conducts and let me know your Opinion, If I might trust him with what money may be sufficient for him to Scotland I only add my best wishes for your happiness and believe me to be your Loving father

Sam^l McDowell

FIG. 8. PHOTOSTAT OF LETTER FROM EPHRAIM MCDOWELL'S FATHER TO HIS SON-IN-LAW ANDREW REID.

—“that he was not long in attracting the attention of his classmates is attested to by the fact that he was selected by them of sixty yards and a stake of ten guineas. McDowell purposely allowed himself to be defeated. A second race was arranged

for one hundred guineas and an increased distance, and in this race the Irishman was badly beaten, to the grati-

Finances seemed to have played a part in McDowell's life, as can be seen from copy of a letter written by Samuel

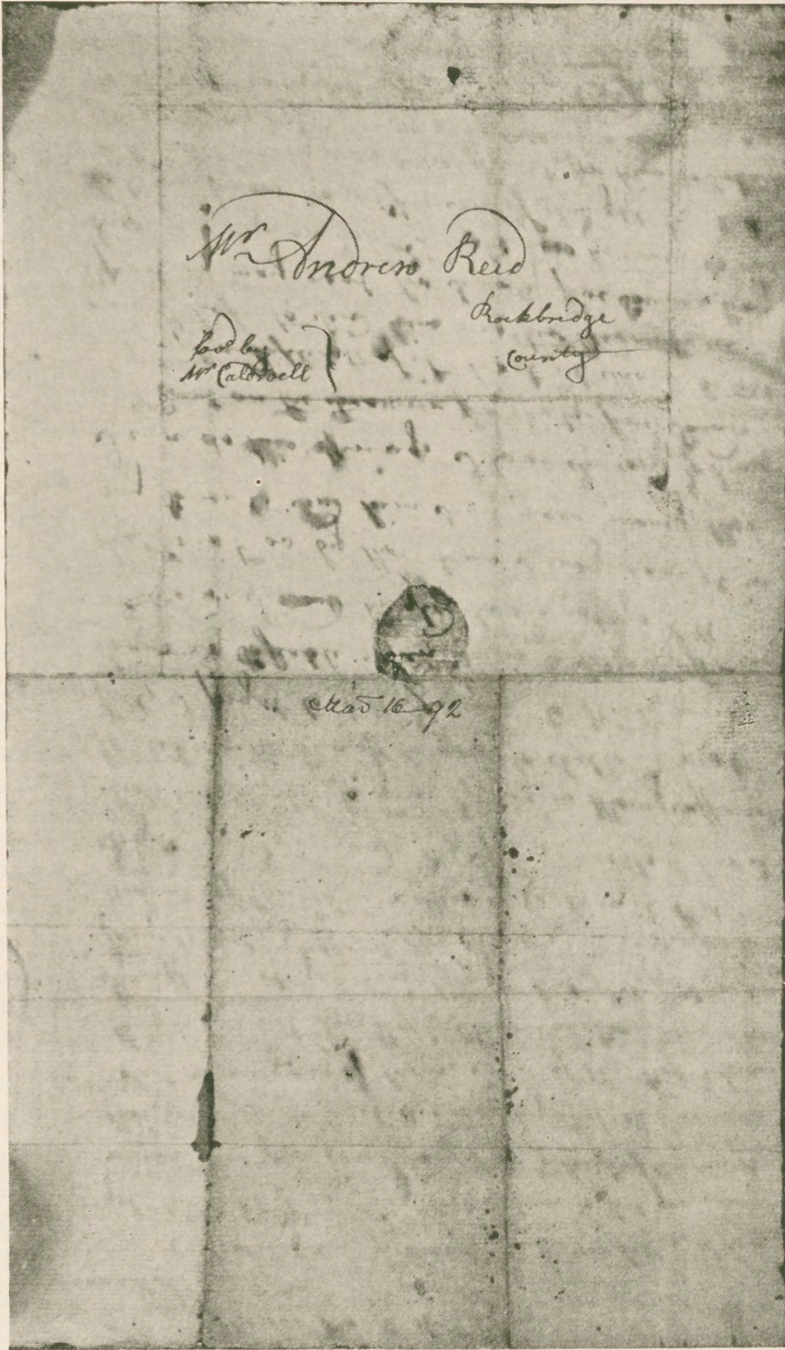


FIG. 9. PHOTOSTAT OF THE BACK OF THE LETTER SHOWING THE MANNER IN WHICH IT WAS FOLDED AND NO ENVELOPE EMPLOYED.

fication of the students. Doubtless also to the financial improvement of McDowell's purse.

McDowell (the father of Ephraim) to his son-in-law, Mr. Andrew Reid, at whose home Ephraim was evidently

visiting when this letter was written, March 16, 1792. (Figs. 8 and 9. The original of this letter is the property of Dr. and Mrs. A. P. Jones, Roanoke, Virginia, both of whom are descended from Mr. Andrew Reid). It is particularly interesting to note the following paragraph: "Pray keep your eyes on Ephraim and see how he conducts, and let me know your opinion, if I might trust him with what money may be sufficient for him to Scotland." Had he been able to visualize the future and had portrayed to him Ephraim's financial schemes concerning the race with

that "boastful Irishman" he might not have had any fears concerning his son's ability to take care of his money.

Humphreys' teaching of anatomy was indirectly the cause of much of his trouble in life, for from a study of Chalkley's Original Court Records, 1745-1800, Humphreys seems to have been in legal controversies far more frequently than were the other three doctors living in Staunton at that time. The other three were Doctors William Grove, Alexander Long, and Hugh Richie.

[*To Be Concluded*]



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(CONCLUSION*)

SOMEWHERE between 1785 and 1790 there came to Staunton an Englishman whose name was probably William R. Watson. I use the word "probably" because such was the name given by the coroner's jury to a body which was found in a cave located just above the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Station, on what is now known as Sear's Hill, but was then called "Abney's Hill." Mr. Watson and Dr. Humphreys were frequently seen together, and usually at the bar in the Washington Tavern. Watson apparently disappeared, and sometime after that, a bag containing human bones was found by some adventurous boys in this cave. Dr. Humphreys' name was on the bag and his arrest soon followed. Regardless of the fact that the coroner's jury on May 19, 1788, acquitted Dr. Humphreys, suspicion continued to haunt him, and this in spite of having had two of his students, Wardlaw and McPheeters testify that those bones were the remains of a body of a negro which they "took up" for dissection. It remained for Ephraim McDowell to call attention a few years later, when visiting in Staunton on his way to Kentucky from Edinburgh, to the hair being that of a negro. This observation aided somewhat in restoring Dr. Humphreys' prestige in the

community. The doctor was always grateful to his pupil for calling attention to such a glaringly apparent oversight on the part of the Court and Jury.

The following are extracts from Judge Chalkley's "Chronicles":

ALEXANDER HUMPHREYS

Chronicles of the Scotch-Irish Settlement in Virginia. Extracted from the Original Court Records of Augusta County, 1745-1800 by Lyman Chalkley.

Volume I

March 22, 1788. Page 497. Leave is granted to Dr. Alexr. Humphreys to build an elaboratory on the prison lot, on such part thereof as may be designated by Commissioners.

July 19, 1791. Page 489. Alex. Humphries, M.D. has leave to lease for eight years to come the house and inclosure he now occupies on the prison lot, for the purpose of indemnifying him for erecting the said building, &c., at the expiration of which term all the improvements are to be the property of the County.

June 21, 1791. Page 480. Motion of Michael Garber that Alex. Humphreys shop, built on the public ground by order of Court, be removed as a nuisance—is dismissed.

April 18, 1792. Page 101. Henry West, orphan, about 12 years of age, to be bound to Dr. Alex. Humphreys, to learn apothecaries' business.

September 16, 1794. Page 165. Wm.

* Part I appeared in the January, 1938, issue of ANNALS OF MEDICAL HISTORY, n.s. vol. x, p. 71.

Alexander, Archibald Stuart, Alex. Nelson, Alex. Humphreys, and Robert Courtart are appointed commissioners to report a plan to the next Court for a jail.

Augusta County Court Records. Order Book No. XXIV. June 21, 1796, page 3. Henry Welsh heretofore bound to Alex. Humphreys, now to be bound to Mathew Patton, to learn mystery of a saddler.

August, 1789 (H to Z). Alexander Humphreys vs. Michael Graham. Slander. Writ, 11th, June, 1788. On June 9, 1788, defendant speaking of and concerning a certain William Richardson Watson, who was supposed to have been murdered, and of the bones and remains of a negro found in a cave near the town of Staunton, who had been buried and again raised by the students studying physic under the said plaintiff and by them dissected, said plaintiff might have dissected him the said William Richardson Watson after he was murdered, and then he might have put him in the cave.

Alexander Humphreys vs. Samuel Merrit—Libel for printing in the *Winchester Advertiser* a supposed copy of an inquest and deposition in above cause.

March 1791 (M to W). Catherine Mathews vs. Sampson Mathews. Petition for plaintiff for alimony pending suit for divorce. Affidavit of Alexander Humphreys, August 20, 1790, that Catherine told Sampson in his presence that she would return if he would put away Lucy, but he refused her to his attorney. On May 17, 1790 Sampson advertised that he would not pay any contracts of Catherine as she had absconded from his bed and board. Joseph Mathews and Mary, his wife, 1790.

May, 1795 (M to Z). Alexander McClenachan vs. Michael Garber. Trespass 2d. May 1792. Plea states that McClenachan claims title to the said close under Dr. Alexander Humphreys, who claimed title by virtue of two orders of the Augusta Court, March 1788, granting leave to Hum—to build an Elaboratory on the prison lot, and July 1791, granting Humphreys leave to lease said house and part

of the lot which he had enclosed for a period of eight years, in order to indemnify said Humphreys for erecting said buildings. Garber owned a garden adjoining the public lot, and he and other citizens have an immemorial right to pass through said lot, and waters flowing from the street during rain passed through the lot. A certain Mrs. Gilham, tenant under McClenachan, built a dam which threw the waters on Garber's garden, which dam Garber cut.

May 1796. Alexander Humphreys vs. George McIntosh, George G. McIntosh. Suit to compel defendant to return to plaintiff's service as an apothecary. Letter from George McIntosh dated Edinburgh February 27, 1793, contracting with plaintiff to come to Staunton and be his apothecary for four years.

August, 1796 (A to K). Alexander Humphreys vs. Edward Burk.—Dr. Ephraim McDowell is about to remove out of the State, January 1, 1795.

District Court Judgements.
April 1790.

Augusta Sec. Inquisition at Staunton the 19th, of May, in the 13th, year of the Commonwealth, before Joseph Bell, gent., one of the coroners. Upon the view of the body of a person unknown in a cave, discovered by Michael Grove, John Robeson, Robert Jacobs—dead and much consumed and upon oaths of (the jurors who sign below)—do say that he was a white man, and it appears to them from circumstances to be the body of a certain William R. Watson, who was an inhabitant of Staunton about November last, and that the said person has been murdered wilfully by some person or persons unknown to us. (Signed) Joseph Bell, coroner; John Griffen, foreman, Michael Garber, Samuel Merritt, William McDowell, Michael Sivert, Herman Lovin-good, Owen Owens, James McLaughlin, Abraham Groves, Francis Huff, John Gorden, Henry Hauk, Robert Astrop, Hugh McDowell, Michael Cawley, James McGongal, Daniel Donavan.

Augusta Sec. On the 9th day of June 1788, called before me Joseph Bell, coroner for said County, the subscribers being a majority of the within jurors, to take up the said matter from finding further testimony was to be had in the matter, caused to come before us Alexander Humphreys and William Wardlaw. After being sworn, Alexander Humphreys deposeth and sayeth: That about March last his students, William Wardlaw and James McPheeters, did take from the place of burial a negro and dissect him for their information and that he understood they sewed him up in a bag and put him in the cave within mentioned, and further deposeth that after a negro lays some time in his grave the odds cannot be known between him and a white person as to color. Mr. Wardlaw deposeth and sayeth: That about March Court last him and James McPheeters opened a negro grave and took therefrom the body, in order to dissect the same for their insight in their business, and after doing so, did sew him up in a crokass bag, and put him in the cave within mentioned. But sayeth when they took him up he appeared of an ash color and that while they had him in custody, his color did not change as well as he recollects and further sayeth not. (Signed) Joseph Bell, coroner; Michael Garber, Daniel Donovan, Hugh McDowell, Michael Syvert, Herman Lovingood, Samuel Merritt, John Garden, James Megongal, Francis Huff, Owen Owens, James McGlachlin.

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April 1790. Garber (Michael) vs. Alexander Humphreys—A and B. Writ 22d. August 1789.

Circuit Court Records. September 1799 (M to G). Martin See, assignee Alexander Humphreys; assignee William Chambers, vs. John Shelton McClenachan—Debt, writ, 26th, May, 1798.

District Court September 1793 (G to Z): Alexander Humphreys vs. Richard T. Banks—Caveat, August 30th, August,

1792. Defendant was tenant of John Logan.

September 1791 (A to C). Michael Garber vs. Alexander Humphreys—Malicious prosecution, slander and false imprisonment. Augusta 6th, April, 1790. (Arose from a suit in Augusta 8th, Aug. 1788 for slander). Zackariah Taliaferro deposes Augusta 1st, June 1790; Prior to commencement of suit, Dr. Humphreys against Michael Garber, a report had prevailed among Staunton people and its neighborhood that a person had been murdered, whose remains were found in a cave near Staunton. It was that Dr. Humphreys was privy to the transaction. Deponent had been made privy to the dissection of the body of the negro, whose body was found by one of the students of anatomy. Dieter (Teterach) Fishburne deposes, 21st, March 1791; He was bred near Garber's until the year 1780, then being about 22 years of age. Garber then moved to Yorktown Penn. about 25 miles from where he formerly lived.

April, 1802 (D to L). Benj. Darst, vs. Polly Wendell—Slander. Alexander Humphreys vs. George G. McIntosh—Covenant. Parties entered into a partnership 12th, November 1793, jointly to practice physic and surgery and vending and compounding medicines. Dismissed at defendant's costs.

Judgments. Humphrey's administrator vs. McClenachan's administrator—O. S. 281; N. S. 99, Bill, June 1798, by Alexr. Humphreys, that on 3rd, October 1795, Alexr. McClenachan contracted to sell orator 6,666 $\frac{2}{3}$ acres in Kentucky, due McClenachan for military service in late war, and 4,000 acres as assignee of William Long, also entitled for military service. McClenachan died, intestate, leaving a son John and two daughters, Elizabeth, wife of William Abney, and Letitia, wife of Morris Austin. At September Court, Franklin County, Ky. 1818, David Humphreys is appointed guardian to Elizabeth and Alexander Humphreys, infant orphans of Alexr. Humphreys. James B. Humphreys, son of Dr. Alexr. Hum-

phreys, late of Staunton, releases his claim to Charles Sproule of Frankfort, Ky. 10th, July 1815. Patent by Governor of Kentucky to Alexander McClanahan and Henry Rhodes, 6,666 $\frac{2}{3}$ acres in District set apart for the officers and soldiers of the Continental line on waters of Rock Creek, 22nd, March 1797. Letter dated Lexington, Ky. 20th, August 1796, to Dr. Alexr. Humphreys at Staunton. In 1782, James Thompson, now of Kentucky, obtained a right of settlement for 1,400 acres within 2 or 3 miles of Martin's Station in Powell's Valley and shortly after removed to Kentucky. Writer returned to Kentucky 10, July and found "James, his lady and our relations in this quarter all well. James has formed a respectable connexion. Mr. Blair will also make out very well in this country. Having no late information from my parents or from Preston, I know not whether their removal to Kentucky may be expected this Fall. Our frontier inhabitants and the Indians carry on friendly intercourse with each other, in consequence of which our new settlements extend rapidly. State never enjoyed a greater degree of prosperity. Season has been highly favorable; crops of every kind most abundant. My love to my sister and your little ones." Signed—J. Brown. Answer by Mary Humphries, widow of late Alexander Humphreys and James, John and Samuel, his heirs. David C. Humphreys was also a son.

1793-1794. 1793—January 28, Andrew Campbell and Alex. Humphreys, surety.

Marriages in Rockbridge. 1788 April 8th. Alex. Humphreys and Mary Brown (daughter of the officiating minister).

Hawp. 27th, July, 1802. Saml. Blackburn, administrator of Alex. Humphreys.

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Will Book No. VII. Page 86. 14th, June 1788. John Abney's will. To wife, Isabella; to son, William; to the rest of the children; to son, John; son William to carry on the Hatting Trade. Executrix, Isabella. Teste: Wm. Chambers, Alex. Humphreys. Proved 16th, September

1788 by the witnesses. Isabella qualifies.

Page 154. 2nd, May 1789. Alex. Humphreys certifies that Elizabeth Bourke is well qualified to practice as midwife in all natural cases.

Page 434. 7th, June 1791. Robert McClanahan's will—To wife Sarah; to daughters, Agnes Dean, Jene Sinclair, Lettis Kizer, to son, Alexander, plantation in Rockbridge whereon Robert Shaw lives; to grandsons, John and Robert McClanahan, sons of son Robert McClanahan, deceased, all Kentucky lands. Executors, Alex. McClanahan and Alex. St. Clair. Teste: Michael Bowyer, Alex.

Page 58. 13th, June 1793. Elizabeth Blair's will of Staunton—To grandson, Robert Hartgrove; to Mrs. Jane Hall, as compensation for services and kindness in last illness. Executors, Alex. Humphreys and Archibald Stuart. Teste: G. Christian, John Bowyer, Robt. Douthat. Proved June Court 1793, by Christian and Bowyer. Executors qualify.

Page 59. Poll of election for two trustees for the town of Staunton, taken 1st, January 1793. For Robert Douthat, 22, viz.; Jacob Kinney, Daniel Donovan, Robt. McDowell, Peter Heiskell, Jno. Grates, Jos. Dickey, Jas. Barry, Samuel Merrila, Jas. Cochran, Jno. Gardner, Jas. McLaughlan, Jas. Mathews, Alex. Mason, Smith Thompson, Michael Cawley, 22. The highest 25.

Page 84. 1st, October 1793. Thos. Poage's will, Jr. Teste: Alex. Humphreys, Richard Trother, Philip Sholl.

Page 230. 4th, May 1796. Bill of sale of negro girl by Sampson Mathews to Jacob Kinney. Teste: A. Humphreys, Jno. Dickenson and R. Gratton.

Page 403. 9th, Jan. 1790. Organization of Staunton Fire Co. Alex. Humphreys, etc.

From the foregoing extracts it can be seen that evidently Dr. Humphreys took an active interest in community affairs. It is especially interesting to note that the doctor at that date evidently was required by the Court to certify

regarding the qualifications of midwives
“in all natural cases.”

probable that Dr. Humphreys’ office
was in the old jail yard.

Some years ago a small building next

McDowell went to Edinburgh in



FIG. 10. BUILDING ERRONEOUSLY THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN DR. HUMPHREYS’ OFFICE.

to the Public School in Staunton was thought to have been Dr. Humphreys’ old office. (Fig. 10.) Several accounts have been published illustrating the same as being such. This mistake was probably due to the fact that the initials “A. H.” were found on a corner stone. Many residents of Staunton believe that Dr. Humphreys made an attempt to start a medical school. It is certain that he built what he called an “elaboratory” and that he did have medical students. It has never been definitely demonstrated that he actually applied for a charter to organize a medical school. However, it is safe to surmise that his elaboratory was certainly one of the first in America. From Chalkley’s “Chronicles,” it appears more than

1792 and on his return to America, in the Summer of 1794, he unquestionably paid a visit to his old friend and teacher, Dr. Humphreys. Staunton was on the road to Kentucky, and it is inconceivable that McDowell would have missed an opportunity to spend a few days with relatives and with the man to whom he owed so much and with whom he corresponded while a student in Edinburgh. It is also inconceivable to think of these two exchanging experiences without Dr. Humphreys at least mentioning the most remarkable operation ever done in America up to that time, especially as this operation was successful, and Dr. Humphreys was the consultant. In addition, the operation was done only six months

previously, and at a distance not more than thirty miles from Staunton at Edom in Rockingham County. This

performed by Dr. Bennett on January 14, 1794, and was most successful in as much as both the mother and baby



FIG. 11. TABLET MARKING THE SITE OF McDOWELL'S BIRTHPLACE.

operation was performed by Dr. Bennett on Mrs. Bennett, his own wife. Realizing that his wife could not give birth to her baby, due to a contracted pelvis, Dr. Bennett called Dr. Alexander Humphreys in consultation. Each one applied forceps several times, but without any success, and then they discussed the advisability of a craniotomy, and the possibility of a Caesarian Section was mentioned. The import of each was explained to Mrs. Bennett. She thought that she would die, no matter which one was done, so she insisted upon the operation, which at least gave a chance for the life of her child. Dr. Humphreys refused to be party to such a formidable and then unusual operation and returned to his home. The operation was

lived. This child, a daughter, married Dr. Enos Thomas, from whom much reliable information concerning the Bennett operation has been obtained. It is related that as Dr. Bennett was completing the operation he removed both ovaries and remarked, "This shall be the last," or, in the language of one of the witnesses, "he spayed her."

Dr. Bennett became a regimental surgeon in the War of 1812, and Aaron Burr tried to persuade the old doctor to join his expedition. During the trial of Aaron Burr, Dr. Bennett came to Richmond as a witness against him, and while there he had his miniature painted, a photograph of which now graces the wall of the library of the Richmond Academy of Medicine.

Richmond and the entire South owe

a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Joseph L. Miller of Thomas, West Virginia, not only for his gift of the wonderful collection of books, etc., to the library of the Richmond Academy of Medicine, but also because he was first to tell correctly of the life of Dr. Jesse Bennett, who performed this operation—the first of the kind ever to be done in America. Dr. Miller obtained his information concerning Dr. Bennett from Dr. Aquilla L. Knight, and it is refreshing to note Dr. Miller's tribute to the memory of his preceptor and his friend. Allow me to quote what he says of Dr. Knight:

A splendid specimen of that fine type of old Virginia gentleman physician. His wide acquaintance with the world's best literature, and sympathetic understanding of humanity in its various phases as a doctor sees it in many years' practice, made him one of the most delightful companions and mentor. To the inspiration derived from him more than to anyone else do I owe my love for the cultural side of medicine and its history. I cannot close without quoting something he said to me many years ago in his office, as I was leaving to enter college. "I have won many triumphs, but the grandest has been the conquest of myself." The lives of such men as Dr. Bennett, Dr. Knight and Dr. Mettauer, in their restricted environment as country practitioners in Virginia, though without the fame that came to some of their contemporaries, as McDowell, Long and Sims, make us proud of the old country doctors of the South.

Knowing of the confidence which Dr. Miller placed in Dr. Knight's accuracy and veracity gives us confidence in the description he gave of Dr. Bennett and of the operation.

Twelve years after the Bennett operation Ephraim McDowell was confronted with the problem of whether or not to remove an ovarian cyst from Mrs. Crawford. It is reasonable to surmise that his knowledge of the successful outcome of Dr. Bennett's operation helped him to make his decision—a decision which was a great stimulus to surgery, and for which Dr. Ephraim McDowell deserves all possible credit.

Not only are monuments erected in Kentucky to McDowell and to Mrs. Crawford, but the road over which the patient rode on horseback to the surgeon's office, a distance of sixty miles, is now known as the Jane Todd Crawford Trail.

In 1928 the Medical Society of Virginia erected a small bronze tablet to indicate the birthplace of Ephraim McDowell at Timber Ridge, as seen by the accompanying illustration (Fig. 11). Nearby is the old family graveyard. Since then the brick wall as well as the graves have been repaired and renovated. One can search in vain in Rockingham County, Virginia, for any monuments, tablets or roads to indicate the "site of Dr. Bennett's operation." Virginians might well pause with chagrin and reflect upon their neglect.

From this short narrative it may be perceived that Ephraim McDowell obtained his sturdy Scotch-Irish inheritance, probably his inspiration, and certainly his famous patient, Mrs. Crawford, from the Old Dominion.

I am greatly indebted to Doctors R. P. Bell of Staunton, E. P. Tompkins, R. P. Cooke and Miss McCrumm, Librarian of Washington & Lee University, Lexington, and many other friends for their kindly assistance in the preparation of this article.