

A Sketch of  
Rev. Samuel McMaster.

1744=1811.

John Stevenson McMaster

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A. J. DOAN, PRINTER,  
JERSEY CITY, N. J.  
1900.

TO  
THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER,  
JOHN T. B. McMASTER, M. D.,  
THIS SKETCH OF HIS GRANDFATHER  
IS INSCRIBED.

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A sketch of Rev. Samuel  
McMaster

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BY WHOLE

A SKETCH OF  
Reverend Samuel McMaster,

PASTOR DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR PERIOD OF THE  
OLDEST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA;

PASTOR AND EXECUTOR OF MADAME ANNE HOLDEN,  
DAUGHTER OF REVEREND FRANCIS MAKEMIE;

FOUNDER OF THE McMASTER FAMILY OF THE  
EASTERN SHORE OF MARYLAND.

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BY JOHN STEVENSON McMASTER.

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The subject of this sketch was born in 1744 and died in 1811. The age therefore in which he lived was the one when Great Britain and her colonies were being ruled by George III. and George IV., Prussia by Frederick the Great, France by Louis XV., Louis XVI. and Napoleon I., and the United States of America by Presidents Washington, Adams, Jefferson and Madison.

It was a period of great strife and furnished these great wars: the French Revolution, the numerous campaigns and exploits of Napoleon I., the Seven Years War, the American Revolution, and numerous Indian Wars.

Born in Scotland, Great Britain, and coming to America about 1765 and remaining in America until his death, the subject of this sketch experienced fully the four periods of the American Revolution, viz.:

1763-1776—Causes and Beginnings.

1776-1783—Winning Independence.

1783-1789—Critical Period.

1789-1815—Period of Weakness.

At the time of his death the war of 1812 was brewing, and Napoleon I. was in the zenith of his glory.

He was familiar therefore with the cry of "No taxation without representation," and with the words and works of Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson, Marshall, Madison, Franklin, Adams, Henry, Lafayette, Cornwallis, Arnold, Andre and the host of other public men. He forcibly advocated the observance of all the days of fasting peculiar to this period and to him it seemed eminently proper to preach in his several churches sermons in accordance with the proclamation of Congress setting apart a day of Thanksgiving "for the estimable blessings received of Almighty God and for the capture of Cornwallis."

He saw the country of Washington, then about like Denmark now, become larger and wealthier after the great Louisiana purchase by Jefferson, and knew Philadelphia, New York and Baltimore when they were little more than towns.

It was the period when there were no railroads, no steamboats, and but few books in America, and when the Indians were still troublesome in Ohio and Georgia.

The seat of government had begun at New York, and gone thence to Philadelphia, and thence to Washington.

When he began to preach in Maryland, in the churches established by Francis Makemie, that founder of the Presbyterian Church in America had been dead nearly seventy years, and his churches had found it hard to survive the Revolution and the Tories.

The only one of Makemie's descendants then living was his rich, childless and aged widowed daughter, Madame Anne Holden. She lived in Accomack County, Virginia not far from Pitts' Creek Church, was a most pronounced patriot, and deeply interested in the welfare of the churches established by her father.

The missionaries in this part of Maryland were at this time few in number and were crying for helpers, and "at no time perhaps had so great a want of interest been manifested among all classes in religious matters."

So much for the cotemporary period. Other facts about the subject of this sketch are briefly as follows:

Rev. Samuel McMaster (commonly called Parson McMaster) was born September 10, 1744, in Scotland, Great Britain, but just where in Scotland I have been unable to ascertain. Nor have I been able to learn anything whatever about his parents or other ancestors. It is believed that they were "poor but respectable." He

may have been born at Ardgor, in Argyllshire, Scotland, which was the first home of the McMasters. Those of that name now reside chiefly in Lochaber and Wigtonshire, Scotland. He emigrated from Scotland to some place near Carlisle, Pennsylvania, about the year 1765, and when he was about twenty-one years of age. It was banishment "for conscience sake," and in order to reach America he was compelled to work his passage on ship board. There came with him, and settled near Carlisle, two brothers (who died bachelors) and a sister who married a Mr. Mullins and by him had a son who became a Methodist minister. Concerning these two brothers and this sister and her family I have been unable to learn anything further.

About 1770, at the age of 26 years, and under the care of the Presbytery of Newcastle, Delaware, he became a student in the Academy at Newark, Delaware, the then leading "Old School" Presbyterian Academy in North America, and the rival at one time of Princeton College, which was founded by the Presbyterians of the "New School." He graduated from the Newark Academy in 1774, at the age of 30 years.

At this time the Presbytery of Lewes, Delaware, appealed to the Presbytery of Newcastle for religious laborers. "Two noble-hearted young men caught the echo of this 'Macedonian cry,' and responded at once to the pressing appeal. These were Samuel McMaster and John Rankin."

Accordingly, on April 26, 1774, he was recommended by the Presbytery of Newcastle, Delaware, to the Presbytery of Lewes, Delaware, "in order to trial as a candidate for the ministry." The original of this certificate of recommendation I have seen. It is now in the custody of Miss Margaret R. Spence with other early records of the Snow Hill Church.

On October 25, 1774, as "a piece of trial," an exegesis on this question was appointed him: "*Quonam sensis peccatorem fides justificat?*" (To what extent does faith justify one who errs in doctrine?) This trial discourse was heard and approved by the Presbytery of Lewes on November 29, 1775.

On March 26, 1776, he was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Lewes, and on the next day (March 27, 1776) he delivered at Dover, Delaware, a popular sermon on Col. 3rd and 3rd, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

On April 24, 1778, he acted as Clerk *pro tem.* of the Session

of the Snow Hill, Maryland, Presbyterian Church, and preached from March 27, 1776, to April 20, 1779, as a supply, for "the Presbyterian Dissenting Congregation near Snow Hill town."

On April 20, 1779, he was ordained at the Buckingham Presbyterian Church at Berlin, Maryland, as Pastor over the "United Congregations of Snow Hill and Pitts' Creek," in which connection, and as Pastor of the Church at Rehoboth, Maryland, he remained thirty-one years, viz.: from April 20, 1779, to shortly before his death, in 1811.

On August 6, 1781, he married Nancy Gillet, he being 37 years of age and she 18 years of age.

Nancy Gillet, said to be a refined, gentle and excellent woman, was the daughter of Ayres Gillet and Mary Ann, his first wife, who were people of respectability, prominence and comfortable circumstances, and who then resided on a farm on the seaside near Horntown, Accomack County, Virginia.

Nancy was an own sister of the late Col. James Gillet, of Accomack County, Virginia. Ayres Gillet's second wife was Tabitha Wise, whose first husband, John Wise, was grandfather of the late Governor Henry A. Wise, of Virginia. Nancy's half sister, Tabitha, married John Custis, Sr., of Deep Creek, father of Mrs. Catharine Parker Wharton (Custis) Poulson, of Onancock, Virginia. Judge John William Gillet, of Accomack Court House, was a son of Nancy's half brother William Gillet.

Samuel and Nancy McMaster had seven children, viz.: four boys (William, James, Samuel and John Gillet) and three girls (Mary, Nancy and Mollie Gillet). Of these seven only three, (William, James and Samuel) attained their majority; the rest dying before attaining the age of four years. William and James became physicians, and Samuel a farmer and tanner.

On December 21, 1801, Nancy died, at the age of 38 years.

Within one year thereafter (thus following the example of the widow of Francis Makemie) viz.: on July 22, 1802, Parson McMaster (then 58 years old) married Sarah Ayers, daughter of John Ayers and Janette (Martin) Ayers, and granddaughter of Robert and Mary Martin, all people of much worth and prominence.

Robert rendered valuable services during the Revolution. The late Dr. John S. Martin, of Worcester County, Maryland, was of this family. Of this marriage there was no issue. Sarah

was born near Snow Hill, Maryland, and died in 1841, having survived the Parson about 30 years. She lived after her marriage and until her death on the McMaster Homestead Farm (near Pocomoke, Maryland) with her step-son, Samuel McMaster, and his family. She was a woman of much force and positiveness of character.

During all the thirty-five years (as supply and pastor) Parson McMaster was preaching in the three churches at Snow Hill, Pitts' Creek and Rehoboth, his only charge, he appears to have lived but in three places, viz.: before his marriage, at Snow Hill, Maryland, and after his marriage, at Poplar Grove, Accomack County, Virginia, and on the Homestead Farm near Pocomoke. This farm was conveniently located for the three churches he was serving, and at the same time near his first wife's birthplace and relatives.

At each place of residence he conducted a private school, then known as a "Latin School." Among his pupils at Poplar Grove, and the pupil who had the fastest horse, was the father of the late Governor Wise of Virginia.

The dwelling house upon this farm is patterned after some of the most interesting farm dwellings in Accomack County, Virginia, and is unlike such houses in Maryland. One of the photographs of this house, taken of late years, is in my possession.

The semi-detached two story brick building at the east end of this house was the parson's study and school rooms.

This farm, known as Fouke's Choice, and later as Goshen, and containing 206 acres, the parson bought from George Stevenson and his wife, Sarah, April 28, 1788, for 618 pounds sterling (\$3,090,) it having been devised to said George by the will of his father, Joseph Stevenson. This farm was devised by the will of Parson McMaster to his son, Samuel, after whose death it was sold by Samuel's heirs to Isaac Harris, the father of the present owner, Mrs. George Bayne, who only a short time ago sold the timber on this farm (mostly first growth) to Edgar W. McMaster, a great grandson of Parson McMaster.

His salary from the Snow Hill Church for the years 1781 to 1792 inclusive (12 years) averaged about \$160 a year. I do not know the amount he received from the other two churches.

He wrote a history of the Rehoboth Church, a copy of which history, and possibly the only copy, (now unfortunately lost), was

in the possession of Mr. Irving Spence, at the time he wrote his "Early History of the Presbyterian Church." The quotation from this history which Mr. Spence gives is as follows: "The first congregation which worshipped at Rehoboth consisted of English Dissenters. A few families migrated from England, their consciences not suffering them to comply with the establishment then existing, and settled near the mouth of Pocomoke River and the adjacent parts; some on the east and some on the west side of the river, at a place called Rehoboth." This was likely the first history of this oldest Presbyterian Church in America, and in compiling it Parson McMaster was undoubtedly assisted by Francis Makemie's daughter, Madame Anne Holden.

At the time of his death, Parson McMaster left a number of his sermons and other writings and books in his residence on his homestead farm near Pocomoke, but these writings were subsequently destroyed by fire. The only writings of his therefore known to me to be in existence now are certain extracts in the minutes of the churches at Lewes and Snow Hill, and certain legal documents, connected with the settlement of certain estates in the County Clerk's offices at Snow Hill and Accomack Court House, and his signature to his interesting will. All the many books also, except the family Bible, referred to with great particularity in his will, seem to be scattered or lost. This Bible is now owned by Edgar W. McMaster, of Worcester County, Maryland.

The early minutes of the Presbytery of New Castle, Delaware, and of the Pitts' Creek and Rehoboth Churches and of the Newark Academy, Delaware, are also lost. Not so however the records of the Snow Hill Church during the Revolutionary period. What a monument these losses are to some one's carelessness. And how they suggest that every church where possible ought to have fire-proof safes for the keeping of its records.

In politics, Parson McMaster was a strong Whig, and preached some vigorous sermons during the Revolution, denouncing the British and the American Tories.

During most of the long pastorate of Parson McMaster over the churches at Snow Hill, Pitts' Creek and Rehoboth, Rev. John Rankin was pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Berlin and of a nearby church in Delaware, and Rev. Jacob Ker was pastor of the Presbyterian Churches at Manokin (Princess Anne) and at Wicomico. Messrs. McMaster, Rankin and Ker were warm friends,

and used to assist each other, especially on Communion Sundays. Mr. Ker married Parson McMaster to Nancy Gillet, and Parson McMaster married Mr. Rankin to Polly Atkinson. All had long pastorates, viz., Mr. Rankin 23 years as supply and pastor; Mr. Ker 31 years as pastor, and Mr. McMaster 35 years as supply and pastor.

Mr. Rankin was born in Newark, Delaware, March 22, 1750, "of (it is believed) poor but respectable parents;" was a schoolmate at Newark Academy (though he did not graduate) of Parson McMaster, and came with him to the Presbytery of Lewes; was an able, eloquent and successful preacher; served the Berlin Church, his only charge, as supply and pastor from 1775 to 1798 (23 years); and left among his descendants the late Judge John R. Franklin, of Snow Hill, whose mother, Sarah A., was a daughter of said John Rankin.

Mr. Ker's grandfather, Walter Ker, was banished from Scotland in the reign of James II. (1685) along with hundreds of other Scotch Presbyterians. Mr. Ker was born in Monmouth County, New Jersey; graduated at Princeton College; was pastor of Manokin and Wicomico Churches from 1764 to 1795, (31 years); was also an able and successful pastor; and left among his descendants, the descendants of the late William Handy, of Princess Anne, whose wife, Betsy, was a daughter of said Jacob Ker.

In 1783, Rev. Dr. Alexander McWharter was chosen Principal of the Washington Academy at Princess Anne, and Parson McMaster delivered (for Mr. Jacob Ker) to Dr. McWharter the notice of his appointment aforesaid.

Parson McMaster (his name in the synod records through a common error generally spelled McMasters) sat in Synod in Philadelphia in 1783 and 1787. His absence in the meantime was due to the unsettled state of the country at the time.

He was a member of the General Assembly in 1794 and 1806, and each time served on the Committee of Bills and Overtures.

Madame Anne Holden "old and decrepit," died January 29, 1788, possessed of a large estate, and made Parson McMaster one of the executors thereunder, and also a legatee. By her will, dated November 15, 1787, she also made Rev. Jacob Ker and the Pitts' Creek Presbyterian Church legatees. To Mr. Ker she gave 20 pounds (\$100); to Mr. McMaster "the sum of 46 pounds (\$230), a mahogany desk, a bed and furniture and a negro woman

called Keziah and her children;" "to the good poor" of her neighborhood 50 pounds (\$250); and to the Pitts' Creek Church "100 pounds (\$500) to be disposed of by the session for the support of a minister."

The inventory of her estate contains the names of 78 negroes, also mentioning the *mahogany desk* aforesaid, left to Parson McMaster, and appraised at six pounds (\$30). This desk was left by Parson McMaster by will to his son Samuel McMaster (my grandfather) after whose death and at whose vendue it was purchased by the late John B. White, of Somerset County, Maryland. In 1883 it came into the possession of the Rev. L. P. Bowen, (author of "The Days of Makemie"), who in 1900 presented this desk, as a memorial of his wife, to the Union Theological Seminary of Richmond, Virginia, and at the time published in the *Central Presbyterian* of that city the history of this desk, a copy of which publication appears at the end of this sketch. This desk is the only known relic of the Makemie family in existence.

Parson McMaster was a writer of "good sermons," a psalm singer, and a pleasant and forcible speaker, and in personal appearance and manner was something over medium height and weight, with smooth face and bald head; bright, kind, laughing eyes, soft voice, sprightly and gentle manner and good natured and jovial. No picture of him is known to be in existence.

He owned one of the first gigs in the county, and once upon passing through Poptartown, and doubtless on his way to see Rev. John Rankin in Berlin, some boys jumped on the rear of the gig and upset the gig and the parson in a puddle of water; whereupon the parson good naturedly remarked, "Well, boys, you are trying to make a Baptist of me!"

Like the Scotch preacher of his day, he had his toddy for Christmas and other great days, and like Rev. John Rankin, and without bringing reproach on the church or the ministry, played upon the flute and the violin, notwithstanding the existing prejudice against "fiddling." Such musical talent descended to several of his children and grandchildren.

The late Hugh Stevenson, of Pocomoke, Maryland, told me that he was christened by Parson McMaster at Snow Hill.

On May 25, 1811, at his farm near Pocomoke, Parson McMaster died, aged 67 years, leaving him surviving, (1) his second wife and widow, Sarah; (2) his son, Dr. James McMaster (then 27

years old) and his wife and their child, Samuel H. K. McMaster, (then 8 months old); (3) his son, Samuel McMaster, (then 22 years old and unmarried); and (4) his two grandchildren (children of Dr. William McMaster, deceased), Elizabeth A. McMaster (then 5 years old) and William S. McMaster (then 3 years old) and their widowed mother. Of the nature of his last illness, I have been unable to learn anything.

His will was probated at Snow Hill, Maryland, on May 27, 1811, and with some changes in the spelling is as follows:

IN THE NAME OF GOD, AMEN:

I, SAMUEL MCMMASTER, of Worcester County, State of Maryland, being weak in body, but of sound and disposing mind, memory and understanding, do make, constitute and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following, viz.:

Imprimis, I give by loan to my wife, SARAH MCMMASTER, the plantation whereon I now live (excepting twenty acres, to be hereinafter described, the hall room and the off kitchen) for the term of five years, and after that term, only one-third part or legal dower. I give to her my horse and carriage, negro boy called Henry, a negro boy called James, to be at her disposal to which of my two sons James or Samuel stand most in need of them. The said negroes to revert to my family after the decease of my wife. I give to her two feather beds and the furniture thereunto belonging; by furniture I mean the bedstead, cord and mat, two pairs of sheets and what upper covering is necessary. One yoke of oxen and yoke, cart and chain, a plough and harness, three milch cows, a bureau, a small black trunk, six flag chairs, six windsor chairs, six head of hogs, six head of sheep, Walker's and Dare's Sermons. The property lent during the term specified to her free and undisturbed possession of, without any molestation whatever; and all the rest except the negroes to be at her own disposal.

Item (2). I give unto my son JAMES MCMMASTER, a negro woman called Phillis and her increase, one girl called Fanny, and a negro boy called Stephen, and after my wife's decease two boys called Henry and James, one sulky carriage, one feather bed and furniture thereunto belonging; Burket on the New Testament, Ridgly's Body of Divinity, Witherspoon's Works, and Mosheim's Church History, to him and his heirs forever.

Item (3.) I give unto my son SAMUEL McMASTER, after the loan before mentioned, the house and plantation whereon I now live, with the privileges and appurtenances thereunto belonging; also five acres of land adjoining the Tanyard most convenient; also fifteen acres in the old field, beginning at the mouth of a lane next the branch, thence up the lane as the road now goes to the bars, thence southerly through the field, thence westerly to the branch in such manner as to include fifteen acres by the edge of the branch and high ground to the first beginning, which said twenty acres he is to have immediate and quiet possession of, together with the hall room and off kitchen; also a negro man called Meshack, another called Dublin, and a negro boy called Cato, two feather beds and furniture thereunto belonging, a desk, six windsor chairs, a yoke of oxen and yoke and chain, one plough and harness, two milch cows, six sheep and six hogs, Henry's Commentaries on the Old and New Testament, Brown's Family Bible, to him, his heirs and assigns forever.

Item (4.) I give to my grandchildren, ELIZABETH ANN McMASTER, sixty dollars, and to WILLIAM SAMUEL McMASTER, sixty dollars, to be paid them when they arrive at full age, or to their guardian, when they stand in need of it, but if one should die, then the other to have the whole.

Item (5.) I will and desire that an old negro man called (or commonly known in the family by the name of Great Billy) and a negro woman called Keziah, to live upon the land and be under the direction and control of my son Samuel, not that they are to be liberated, but to work for him in as moderate manner in proportion to their age and infirmities, and to be comfortably clothed and supported.

Item (6.) I give the rest of my estate, after my just debts are paid, to be equally divided between my wife and two sons, James and Samuel McMaster.

Lastly (7.) I nominate, constitute and appoint my sons James and Samuel McMaster, joint and sole executors of this my last Will and Testament.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal this nineteenth day of March, Anno Domini, one thousand eight hundred and eleven.

SAMUEL McMASTER. [SEAL.]

Signed, sealed and acknowledged by the }  
 Testator, Samuel McMaster in the }  
 presence of us and at his request. }

THOMAS HARRIS.

JOHN GILLET.

JOHN STEVENSON.

The desk referred to in Item (3) above is the Makemie desk, and the negro woman called Keziah referred to in Item (5) above is the same Keziah who, with her children, was also given to Parson McMaster by the will of Madame Holden.

“The negro man called Meshack was a crank on the subject of religion and conjuration,” and spent his last days at my uncle Samuel S. McMaster’s farm at Cottingham’s Ferry, Maryland.

Certain physical peculiarities of certain of the other negroes named in Parson McMaster’s will, appear in the court records at Accomack Court House, Virginia.

Parson McMaster was, in accordance with the unfortunate custom of his times and neighborhood, buried, as was Rev. Francis Makemie, in the yard about the dwelling on his farm near Pocomoke. His grave (as unfortunately is Makemie’s grave to this day) as well as that of several others of the family buried there, was unmarked until about 1870, when a family tomb was placed there by certain of his descendants. In 1896 the remains in this graveyard were removed to the Presbyterian Cemetery at Pocomoke, Maryland, and in 1895 a memorial tablet placed in the Presbyterian Church of that place bearing this inscription:

In memory of

REV. SAMUEL McMASTER,

B. 1744. D. 1811.

Pastor of Pitts’ Creek Presbyterian Church

From 1779 to 1810,

and during same period pastor  
 of the Presbyterian Churches  
 at Snow Hill and Rehoboth.

Thus I bring to an end this brief sketch of "an active life well spent" and full of successes, despite the many obstacles incident to the troublous times in which he lived and the extended and sparsely settled territory embraced within his circuit. He ever kept burning upon the sacred altars, as best he could, the fires started by Francis Makemie, and so merited and won the praise of God and His church, and the admiration of a line of worthy descendants, who hold dear his memory.

JERSEY CITY, N. J., July 4th, 1895.  
(Revised August, 1900).

#### AUTHORITIES.

1. Minutes of the Session of Snow Hill Church, Maryland.
2. Minutes of the Session of Lewes Church, Delaware.
3. Minutes of Synod of Philadelphia, and of General Assembly.
4. Diary of Mary Spence (great-great-aunt of Miss Margaret R. Spence, of Snow Hill). See the extracts therefrom hereto annexed.
5. Spence's "Early History of the Presbyterian Church."
6. "The Days of Makemie," by Rev. L. P. Bowen.
7. Sprague's Annals of the American Pulpit.
8. Gillett's History of the Presbyterian Church.
9. Court Records at Snow Hill, Maryland.
10. Court Records at Accomack Court House, Virginia.
11. Records of Custis and Gillet Families by Hon. John W. Gillet.
12. Records of Martin Family by Hon. William R. Martin.
13. Minutes of Washington Academy, Princess Anne, Maryland.
14. Letters from various descendants of Rev. Samuel McMaster, and from others.
15. Well established family tradition.
16. Fiske's History of the United States.

**Extracts from the Diary of Mary Spence, Con-  
cerning Rev. Samuel McMaster,  
From 1779 to 1782.**

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JUNE 9, 1779.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Isaiah, 5th Chapter, 11th verse, the first clause of verse. In the afternoon on the same text. One head of doctrine in first sermon. Mr. McMaster came from John Davies that morning, it being the Sabbath of the Sacrament at Buckingham. Mr. McMaster gave out that he should preach once a fortnight till the end of July.

JULY 18, 1779.—Mr. McMaster preached at Snow Hill. Text, Malachi, 4th Chapter, and 2nd verse. Three heads of doctrine. In the afternoon, text, Jonah, 1st Chapter, 6th verse. Two heads of doctrine. He gave out word that Saturday the pews would be disposed of.

AUG. 1, 1779.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, forenoon, Genesis, 24th Chapter, 63d verse. In the afternoon, text, Rev., 21st Chapter, 7th verse, and three heads of doctrine. He told what to overcome and how we should become saints. He came from Captain Rankin's that morning.

OCT. 12, 1779.—Mr. McMaster preached at Snow Hill. Text, Proverbs, 22nd Chapter, 23rd verse—a very good sermon.

NOV. 14, 1779.—Mr. McMaster preached at Snow Hill. Text, 2nd Peter, 3rd Chapter, and 18th verse. The parson gave out word that Mr. Ker and himself should administer the sacrament at Vienna this day week. Mr. McMaster received a letter from Mr. Rankin this day.

DEC. 19, 1779.—Mr. McMaster preached. We were too late for the text, but it was 2nd Peter, 3rd Chapter, and about three verses.

JAN. 2, 1780.—Mr. McMaster ought to have preached but bad weather prevented.

JAN. 15, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, 1st Samuel, 7th Chapter, and 13th verse. "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Sung but one psalm. Nothing remarkable happened.

JAN. 30, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached. A cold winter this, 1779 and 1780.

FEB. 14, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached from 1st Cor., ‘‘For we shall appear before the judgment seat to give an account of the things done in the body,’’ and a very good sermon. Afterwards he went and married two couples. Then the parson went to John Wise’s.

MARCH 26, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached at Snow Hill. Text, Psalms, 31st, and 23rd verse, and first clause. Baptized a child, and gave out word that he should not preach till that day three weeks.

APRIL 16, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, St. John, 6th Chapter, and 44th verse. He read a proclamation of Congress of a Fast Day to be the 26th of April, not only as a request of Congress, but from a sense of the need for imploring the God of the whole earth for help.

MAY 14, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Solomon’s Song, 3rd Chapter, 9th and 10th verses—three heads of doctrine. A pretty good sermon. It was Whit-Sunday.

MAY 28, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, 2nd Cor., 5th Chapter, 17th verse. A good sermon. In his application, advised them for their instruction to read the 7th of Romans. He sung a fine psalm—126th, common metre.

JUNE 23, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached morning and afternoon. Good sermons, they said.

JULY 9, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, St. John, 6th Chapter, 37th verse, latter clause, one text for both sermons. Good sermons. Sung Brother Adam’s psalm. A good many people out. The parson came here and stayed all night.

JULY 23, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached, and gave out that the next Sunday he would administer the Sacrament at Pitts’ Creek.

JULY 30, 1780.—Mr. McMaster went and administered the Sacrament at Pitts’ Creek. The parson had no assistant, for Mr. Ker was in Dorchester, preaching Col. John Henry’s wife, Dolly’s, funeral sermon. She departed some weeks before that.

AUG. 6, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Isaiah, 5th Chapter and 6th verse, middle clause—‘‘And I will make an everlasting covenant with you’’—and in the afternoon, text, St. John, 3rd Chapter, 30th verse—‘‘He must increase, but I must decrease.’’ He gave out word that he should not preach till this day four weeks, for he was to preach at Rehoboth.

SEPT. 3, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Jude, 1st verse. Explained only two heads of doctrine. He preached only one sermon. Mr. McMaster married Rev. Mr. Rankin to Polly Atkinson the Thursday before.

SEPT. 17, 1780.—Sabbath of Sacrament. Sung verses of suitable psalms. Mr. McMaster preached. There were three full tables, and Mr. McMaster served two of them.

OCT. 14, 1780.—Hannah Hall departed this life, and was buried at her father's, next day. Mr. McMaster waited on the corpse. He spoke a great many good things at her grave.

OCT. 15, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached at Snow Hill. Text, Matt., 16th Chapter and 18th verse. We were almost too late. The parson gave out word that he should not preach here till this day four weeks, as he was going to preach at Rehoboth.

NOV. 26, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Jude, the 1st verse, on predestination. He left two heads of doctrine for another day. He gave out word he should preach at Pitts' Creek the 7th of Dec., on a Thanksgiving Day appointed by Congress.

DEC. 10, 1780.—Mr. McMaster preached at Snow Hill on Jude again. Left one head of doctrine for the next time. Published a couple and came here and dined. Old Hannah's funeral sermon was preached by the parson in the afternoon. The text was—"Now is the day of salvation."

JAN. 21, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Isa., 64th Chapter, 7th verse—a very good sermon. He gave out word there would be a funeral sermon at the Great Salt Works, the next Thursday. The same Sabbath evening, Mr. McMaster married Mr. Thomas Sharp to Rebecca Bell at her house, and her first husband is still living. Such another matching is unheard of before, I think. On Thursday, January 25, 1781, Mr. McMaster preached James Richardson's funeral sermon at the Great Salt Works. The text was chosen by the deceased person in Job, 5th Chapter, 26th and 27th verses; hymns sung very suitable—the third hymn in the second book and the 63rd in the same. The parson and we sisters and Mrs. Robins all dined at brother George's.

FEB. 3, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached a funeral sermon. Text, Eccles., 11th Chapter, 9th verse—"Rejoice, oh young man, in thy youth." A good sermon. He gave an exhortation at the grave.

FEB. 4, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached at Snow Hill. Text, Psalms, 22nd, 25th verse. A good sermon.

FEB. 18, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached at Snow Hill. Text, Jude, last head on predestination, and finished all the heads of doctrine he first proposed. He came here to-night, and at prayers read Ezekiel about the sour grapes.

APR. 1, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached at Snow Hill. Text, Acts, 16th Chapter, 30th and 31st verses. Sung Psalm 32nd, common metre. Parson was clerk for this psalm.

APR. 15, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Gal., 6th Chapter, 14th verse—a good sermon—two heads of doctrine. The parson gave out word that Monday was appointed by Congress as a Fast Day for the calamities.

APR. 29, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached a good sermon on the carnal man.

MAY 3, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Hebrews, 11th Chapter, 25th verse. Sung the 18th Psalm. A political sermon.

MAY 13, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, 1st Samuel, 2nd Chapter, 30th verse, latter clause—three heads of doctrine. It was one of the best sermons Mr. McMaster has preached in my hearing. He gave out that this day fortnight he should administer the Sacrament at Rehoboth.

JUNE 10, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached, and he and Mr. Ker administered the Sacrament.

JUNE 17, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached—a good sermon.

JULY 1, 1781. Mr. McMaster preached. Text, St. Luke, 12th Chapter, 4th and 5th verses, concerning fear.

JULY 15, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Solomon's Song, 2nd Chapter and 15th verse—the little foxes; three heads of doctrine—a spiritual sermon.

Monday, the 6th of August, 1781, Mr. Ker joined in holy matrimony Mr. Samuel McMaster and Miss Nancy Gillet.

AUG. 26, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached from Matt., 5:34. The minister read the whole chapter.

SEPT. 29, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Hag., 2nd Chapter, 7th verse, middle clause. Sung suitable psalms, and gave out that the Sacrament would be administered here this day two weeks, and the Thursday before would be the Fast Day.

Thursday, Fast Day.—Mr. McMaster and his wife came, but he had the ague so that he did not preach.

OCT. 7, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, 6th of St. John, verse 3rd. Mr. McMaster slept here and went to Capt. Bowdoin Robin's this evening. Sabbath morning of the Sacrament, Mr. McMaster married a couple.

OCT. 21, 1781.—Mr. McMaster would have preached but on this day the news of Cornwallis' being captured came to town.

NOV. 4, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached at Snow Hill. Text, Isaiah, 40th Chapter and 29th verse—a Whiggish sermon and good, as they say. I was not there.

NOV. 18, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Ezekiel, 33rd, 11th verse, latter clause. Baptized a child.

DEC. 2, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, 2nd Timothy, 3rd Chapter, 4th verse—a good sermon. Mr. McMaster read the Congress Proclamation for a Day of Thanksgiving for the estimable blessings we have received of Almighty God, and for the capture of Cornwallis, and appointed the 13th day of Dec. that he should preach at Snow Hill. That day he published a couple.

Thursday, Dec. 13, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached the Thanksgiving sermon. Text, Psalm 57, 2nd verse, and read the whole psalm.

Dec. 16, 1781.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Romans 8:11. Sung a psalm and gave out there would not be a sermon for four weeks, as he should preach at Reboboth.

JAN. 27, 1782.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Solomon's Song, 1st Chapter, 4th verse, 1st clause. Sung beautiful psalms and published a couple the last time.

FEB. 24, 1782. Mr. McMaster preached. Text, 2d Peter, 3d Chapter, 10th verse—a good sermon—three heads of doctrine.

MARCH 24, 1782.—Mr. McMaster preached. Text, Malachi, last Chapter, 2d verse. Sung suitable psalms. Published a couple last time. Parson went that evening to marry them. The parson was at our house.

## The Old Makemie Desk.

BY REV. DR. L. P. BOWEN.

This venerable piece of furniture, of solid mahogany, remarkable in itself, and the only surviving Makemie relic, was discovered and identified by me in 1878, and it came into my possession in 1883.

Taken from the records of Accomack County, Virginia, where they may be seen, I have copies of the will and inventory of Madame Anne Holden, our pioneer's daughter—the former dated November 15, 1787, and the latter September 29, 1789. In both of these documents the mahogany desk is mentioned. All these facts are put upon permanent record in the Appendix to "The Days of Makemie," published by the Presbyterian Board.

The will contains this bequest: "I give to the Rev. Samuel McMaster the sum of forty-six pounds, a mahogany desk, a bed and furniture, and a negro woman called Keziah and her children." At the death of her pastor, it became the property of his son, Samuel McMaster, Esq., and at his vendue it disappeared, his heirs too young at the time to know its value. His son, John T. B. McMaster, M. D., grandson of Madame Holden's pastor, remembered it well and always said he could prove the fact by his familiarity with its very peculiar secret drawers and springs. Dr. McMaster, a man of fine intelligence and prominence, had greatly assisted me in my investigations of the traditions and court records of the adjoining counties.

The whole community had known of the desk and its fame, and yet very strangely it had utterly vanished from public power to locate it. Some of us had been trying to trace it for years.

Finally, like many of my successes, I struck accidentally, as we say, upon the old desk. During a pastoral visit to one of the historic families in the country near Pocomoke City, Maryland, I was telling enthusiastically of some of my late discoveries, when an old gentleman sitting in the room quietly, but intently listening, said: "All this sounds very familiar. My father knew a great deal about those Presbyterians. Besides, I have at my

house a wonderful mahogany desk which belonged to the very people you are talking about."

Of course I was aroused. He told me that he had bought the desk for two dollars and a half at Mr. Samuel McMaster's auction, and that it was no modern or ordinary piece of furniture; that all his money was in it, and that I could have the money if I could find it!

I went home with the aged gentleman and he showed me through the secrets of the concealed springs and drawers. It was such as we read about. Here the old Presbyterians of the past had hidden their gold and treasures. The owner now was this Mr. John B. White, a citizen of character and much respected.

I drove to town immediately, and took Dr. McMaster out to see the desk. On entering its presence his face brightened, recognizing it at once as known in his boyhood, and he said, "Now don't hint a word, and I will prove my acquaintance, for no one not familiar with it could ever find its secrets."

And the doctor readily opened all the hidden drawers, to our delight. He was much affected by this eloquent reminder of his childhood and his ancestry. He and my court documents made the identification complete.

I said to Mr. White, "Bring it to the parsonage to-morrow, and I will give you twenty-five dollars for it—ten times what it cost you." But we had enthused too much, and the old gentleman was concluding that he owed a bonanza. His good wife said, "By all means let Mr. Bowen have it. We are Baptists, and cannot appreciate it as the Presbyterians would. Mr. Bowen's heart is in the history, and he ought to own the desk."

But it wouldn't work. Afterward I offered \$30, but he was coy. The Presbyterian Historical Society authorized me to offer \$50 for them. This I never did, for I had written a description of the ancient relic for the *Philadelphia Presbyterian*, which brought some enthusiasts down from the city to see it, and they told Mr. White it was worth \$500! Thus I had defeated my plans and hopes.

All this while Mrs. White was urging that the Presbyterian Church or myself should own it. So I kept my eye on it and waited.

In 1880 I returned to Missouri, and three years after a letter came from Mrs. White telling of the death of her husband, and

saying that she wanted me to have the desk at my former offer of \$30, [the legally appraised value in the inventory of the estate of Madame Holden]. I was absent, and my wife hurried off the money and made me a present of the noble old landmark. It came during the winter when I was writing my memorial to Makemie, and no one but myself can estimate the joy and inspiration which it brought.

Thus through the goodness of two good women, both sainted now, Mrs. White and Mrs. Bowen, the only relic of the Father of American Presbyterianism has come into the filial care of the Church which is his child and heir.

And in donating the desk to the Seminary [Union Theological of Richmond, Virginia], in the bounds of the State where Francis Makemie lived and died and lies buried, I would like for the memory of Ellen Powell Bowen to be connected with it. I give it in her name.—[*From Central Presbyterian, Richmond, Va., July, 1900*].