

# PRINCETON COLLEGE BULLETIN.

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## HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS.

### THE FIRST CHARTER OF PRINCETON COLLEGE. A DISCOVERY.

It is well known that the present charter of the College, that of 1748, was preceded by an earlier one granted Oct. 22, 1746. President Maclean in his history (vol. I, p. 70), states that "neither the original nor any copy [of the first charter] is to be found." He gives a few facts regarding it, gleaned from various sources. But the whole account is meager.

By the kindness of William Nelson, Esq., of Paterson, Corresponding Secretary of the New Jersey Historical Society, the following additional information has been secured. It is contained in the following advertisements from the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of August 13, 1747, and according to Mr. Nelson's judgment is "a pretty full copy of the charter itself, merely omitting the purely formal parts." This excerpt from the "*Pennsylvania Gazette*" seems to consist of two parts.

1. An abstract of the First Charter.
2. Action of the Trustees.

"These are to give Notice to all concerned, That by His Majesty's Royal Charter for erecting a college in New Jersey, for the instructing of youth in the learned languages, and in the liberal arts

and sciences bearing date October 22, 1746, Messrs. William Smith, Peter Vanbrugh Livingston, William Peartree Smith, gent. and Messrs. Jonathan Dickinson, John Pierson, Ebenezer Pemberton, and Aaron Burr, ministers of the gospel, are appointed trustees of the said college; with full power to any four or more of them, to chuse five more trustees to the exercise of equal power and authority in the said college, with themselves. By virtue of which power, the said trustees, nominated in the charter, have chosen the Rev. Messrs. Gilbert Tennent, William Tennent, Samuel Blair, Richard Treat, and Samuel Finley, as trustees of the said college of New Jersey. Which trustees are by the said charter, constituted a body corporate and politick, both in fact and name, with full power to act as such to all intents and Purposes, and rendred capable of a perpetual succession to continue forever. By which royal charter, there is authority given to the major part of any seven or more of the said trustees, and their successors conven'd for that purpose, to purchase, receive, and dispose of any possessions, tenements, goods and chattels, gifts, legacies, donations and bequests, rents, profits, and annuities of any kind whatsoever, and to build any house or houses, as they shall think proper, for the use of the said college. And also by

the said charter is given to the major part of any seven or more of the said trustees and their successors, full power to chuse, and at pleasure to displace, a president, tutors, professors, treasurer, clerk, steward, and usher, with any other ministers and officers as are usual in any of the universities or colleges in the realm of Great Britain. And also by the said charter, is given to the major part of any seven of the said trustees and their successors, full power to make any laws, acts and ordinances, for the government of the said college, as are not repugnant to the laws and Statutes of the realm of Great Britain, nor to the Laws of the Province of New Jersey; provided, that no person be debarred of any of the privileges of the said college on account of any speculative principles of religion; but those of every religious profession have equal privilege and advantage of education in the said college. And also by the said charter, power is given to the major part of any seven of the said trustees and their successors, by their president, or any other appointed by them, to give any such degrees as are given in any of the universities or colleges in the realm of Great Britain, to any such as they shall judge qualified for such degrees; and power to have and use a common seal to seal and confirm diplomas or certificates of such degrees, or for any other use which they shall think proper.

“And these may further notify all con-

cern'd, that the said trustees have chosen the Rev. Mr. Jonathan Dickinson president, whose superior Abilities are well known, and Mr. Caleb Smith tutor of the said college, and that the college is now actually opened, to be kept at Elizabeth-Town, till a building can be erected in a more central place of the said province for the residence of the Students; that all who are qualified for it, may be immediately admitted to an academick education, and to such class and station in the college, as they are found upon examination to deserve; and that the charge of the college to each student, will be Four Pounds a year New Jersey money, at Eight Shillings per ounce, and no more.”

It will be seen at once that an important contribution to the history of the college has been obtained. The names of eight of the twelve original trustees not given by Dr. Maclean are here mentioned, so that we know now all the first corporators. It appears also from the action of the Trustees, that the permanent site for the college had not been decided on. It was “to be kept at Elizabeth-Town till a building can be erected in a more central place of the said province for the residence of the Students.”

It is not without interest to note that “the charge of the College to each Student, will be Four Pounds a year New Jersey money, at Eight Shillings per ounce and no more.” JAMES O. MURRAY.

### NECROLOGY.

FRANKLIN C. HILL, Sc.D.

DIED NOV. 5, 1890.

In the death of Dr. Franklin C. Hill, Curator of the E. M. Museum, Princeton lost a valued officer who had been in the service of the college for sixteen years.

Dr. Hill never fully recovered from an attack of pneumonia some four years ago, and for two years he maintained a losing struggle between a strong will and failing bodily strength.

He was born in New York City, June 26, 1827. His father was an elder brother