



ROBERT MORRISON IN 1851.

In 1893 Secretary Morton sent him to Alaska to make a collection of the flora of that region. He brought back the best collection that had yet been made, and was sent on a similar expedition farther inland in 1894. During this expedition he went on two snow shoe journeys with the Indians, reaching the shores of the Arctic Ocean. He built himself a boat, which he called the 'Nancy Hanks,' and floated fifteen hundred miles down the Yukon river, collecting specimens of flora and fauna.

He went to Mexico in 1895 to engage in the coffee business, but found the money market too unfavorable for such a scheme. He then went to New York and was engaged in literary work for various magazines and newspapers, when he met some of the Cuban Junta. Their persuasions and a commission from *Harper's Weekly* decided him at once. He was already an enthusiastic partisan of the insurgents. He was made captain soon after his arrival and became at once 'mixed up in some mighty stiff fighting,' to quote his own words. He was present at the siege in which Major Osgood, Phi Gamma Delta's athlete and soldier, was killed, and succeeded to his command. In that battle he had charge of a twelve-pounder, and out of one hundred and ten shots he missed his mark but once. He writes that he expects next summer to see Cuba 'a free and independent nation,' and thinks that his own chances of becoming colonel are fairly good. He says that he is going to be 'mighty proud' of the fact that he did what he could in his 'modest and retiring way to boost the Spaniard off this island.' He is confident that Spain will give up the fight soon, after which he hopes to come home 'to get a little Kansas ozone and good home-made pie' into his 'system.'

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## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY: ROBERT MORRISON.

### ANCESTRY.

Robert Morrison, my grandfather, was of Scotch-Irish parentage. He was born in County Derry, Ireland. The family was of the middle class, neither poor nor rich, and was connected in marriage with the Hamiltons, in Scotland. In 1765, when Robert was sixteen years old, with brothers older than himself, he came to America and settled in Delaware. Some of them emigrated to the valley of Virginia, one kept on south; another wing went west to Vincennes, Kaskaskia and St. Louis.

After the Revolutionary War, in which Robert had a share as one of the 'blue hen's chickens', as soldiers from Delaware were called, he concluded to take his young wife—Elizabeth Culbert-

son, an Englishwoman, and two little children, as I believe, and go west. General Washington asked him to take his tract of 600 acres in the northwestern part of Fayette County, Pennsylvania, lying on the Youghiogheny river. He went and looked at the land, but thought it too much exposed to incursions from the Indians, and continued his journey about fifty miles southwest into Greene County, and bought out the McClungs, who took their slaves and went to Kentucky, as Pennsylvania had in 1780 passed an ordinance of gradual emancipation. There my grandfather lived and reared a family of ten children and died, at the age of eighty-two. There my father, Thomas Morrison, was born and reared, and when twenty-eight years old crossed the Monongahela river at Jennings' Ferry and married Mary, the daughter of Henry and Rhoda (Leslie) Jennings, a woman of Scotch descent. The Jenningses were an old English family of some prominence in military lines, under the Duke of Marlborough, whose wife was Sarah Jennings. The Jenningses were well known among the Presbyterian clergy in western Pennsylvania, also in Baltimore and Nashville, where Governor Wise got his wife.

#### BOYHOOD DAYS.

In the country not far from Carmichaeltown, in Greene County, did my young eyes see the light, March 15, 1822. Shortly afterwards my father concluded to go west. He landed in central Ohio, in Knox County, about twenty miles from Mt. Vernon. His land was covered with a heavy growth of timber. There were white oaks, poplars, chestnuts, black walnut and other trees, from three to five feet in diameter. A clearing was made near a large never-failing spring. Then a cabin was built. This for years was our home. There, or near there, in a better house, four brothers and two sisters came to greet me.

The country was largely in its primitive condition. I have seen wild deer in the garden eating beet tops and cabbage leaves. An occasional black bear was killed. No more delicate or sweeter meat than a young bear's flesh ever touched my palate. Now and then a straggling Indian of the Delaware tribe would wander over the old hunting ground. There was work to be done and hard work, but it was done, and soon improved farms, school houses and churches became common. At a crossing of the roads on my father's farm, some of the neighbors and he put up first a log church, then by and by a framed house. So I was brought up on the catechism and in the worship of the Presbyterian Church, to which my ancestors had belonged away back in Scotland. I am not apologizing for them nor myself, but merely stating facts.

The physical training that such a farming life as mine was in my early time, may have had its drawbacks, but it hardened the muscles, so that afterwards at college, at Athens, Ohio, without any training in that line, I threw the man that had thrown down a hundred men. As to walking, I often in early life walked to church seven miles and back on the same day, without any especial weariness. We thought it right, in those times, to rest horses one day, that had faithfully pulled the plow for six days. One winter I did chores morning and night and walked daily to school three miles. In time of muddy roads I walked home from college for two days and a half, with saddlebags filled with clothing, at the rate of thirty miles a day. When sixteen I split two hundred eleven-foot rails in a day's sunshine, and in the same time on another day, I reaped with the old-fashioned sickle, bound and shocked up thirty-two dozen bundles of wheat.

## AT OHIO UNIVERSITY.

A few months after I had passed my seventeenth anniversary, my father took me in a little one-horse, springless wagon to the Ohio University, at Athens, Ohio, a distance of about 125 miles. Rev. Robert G. Wilson, D. D., was then president, and had been for fifteen years, at first efficiently so, but as he was then past three score and ten his usefulness was historic. My second year found Rev. W. H. McGuffey, D. D., president, and I will ever regard it as one of the great privileges of my life, to have had his instructions, even for one year. In February, 1841, during a protracted meeting in town, another student (in the late war, Col. D. E. Wood, of Pennsylvania) and myself made profession of our faith in Christ and joined the Presbyterian Church, and two weeks later, William J. Hoge, of blessed memory, I. P. Safford and others enlisted in the same service.

Returning home at the end of my second college year, I was shocked to find my father suffering so greatly. In the spring, while peeling white oak bark for tanner's uses, he had cut a knee joint with an ax, and falling into the hands of a quack, he had been kept on his back three months, his physical system wrecked, his season's farm work lost, a doctor's bill incurred, himself lamed for life; so he was not in shape to pay my college debts as he had expected to do. In order that I might finish up my year's work at college, he had not allowed anyone to tell me the whole truth as to his condition.

I mention somewhat fully this trouble of my father, as it became the turning point in my college course, if not in my life thereafter. As the oldest child, too, it brought me into a different relation to the younger children, to take, to some extent, so

far as I was able, my father's place in securing for them an education.

As all our debts were to be honestly paid, and paid as fast as possible, my father gave me my time—not quite two years, if I would shoulder my college bills. I went back to Pennsylvania, taught country public schools, paid my debts, studied a little, learned about business somewhat and passed three years of precious time. The winter of 1845-6 I spent teaching in my father's family, helping him a little on the farm and delivering a few temperance lectures in neighboring churches and school houses.

AT MIAMI.

In the spring of 1846 my brother William took me to Dayton. There he left me, as the Lake Erie and Ohio Canal went through the city. I intended to travel south from Dayton by packet, but I was an hour too late for the morning boat. Nothing remained for me then to do but to wait. Being a stranger in a strange city, I wandered about hunting a book store. By and by I found one, the large establishment of B. F. Ells. I went in, told Mr. Ells my circumstances and asked leave to inspect his books and read some of them, perhaps. A cordial assent was given, and I began to look around. I did not look long until I saw a rather small book entitled *The Student*. It was a novel by the French historian, Michelet. I found it well written, and when about half through it, I came across this sentiment: '*If you would succeed in the world, go to acquaintances for advice, strangers for charity, friends for nothing.*' I was startled! I was on my way to Oxford, near where two uncles lived that had promised, when I was a small boy, to furnish me help, if I would go there to college when I got to be older. Was this a warning to prepare me for the future? I concluded, however, to go on and see. I did not read much more from Michelet that day. Toward evening the proprietor came across the store to see me. He said, 'So you are going to college. I suppose you have lots of money?' I answered, 'No, sir; very little.' Then he asked, 'What are you going to do with yourself when you get through?' I replied, 'If I have the same mind then that I have now, I expect to preach.' Then, said he, 'I have been noticing you during the day, and I have concluded to make you this offer: Go over to Oxford, and during this short session look around and secure a suitable room; rent it from the beginning of the next college year. I will pay the rent, send you a stock of books and pay all charges for freight, and you can take fifteen per cent. of all your sales.' I said in reply: 'I am very much

surprised, but as I suppose the offer is made in good faith, I will accept it in the same spirit.'

In good time I arrived at Oxford, spent three months in hard study and selected a good, small store room. In the fall term I opened the new store in the afternoons. The entire forenoons were spent in the recitation rooms. The professors were kind in giving me the names of new books ahead of time. The students generally were friendly, and ready to do a good share of their trading with me. My Dayton friend continued his kindness for about two years, or until I got a good mercantile name, so far as my needs went, in Cincinnati, which was much nearer and more convenient. I soon took my brother William, helped him and initiated him into my business, so that he was able to go right on and graduate without losing any time in getting money for school bills.

I was three years and three months in college, making in all in my academic course a little over five years. Before brother William came to help me, I got up at four o'clock in the morning, got all my lessons and was ready when the bell rang for recitation to keep on reciting until dinner. I wondered how it came to pass that I should take honors under such circumstances.

After college study was over, not having any suitable place in which to teach, I, for the seminary year, attended the Oxford Associate Reformed Theological School, in which Rev. J. Claybaugh, D. D., was the chief instructor. In the meantime I rendered some help to my brother, who continued my business. So I did not need the help of my uncles. Providence did better by me in giving me an opportunity where I could help myself.

#### IN TENNESSEE.

Toward the close of the seminary year, Rev. Wm. S. Rogers, a returned missionary from Northern India, and a brother of Andrew W., as he was preaching in Tennessee and Kentucky, secured a place for me in the former state, in Rutherford County, twenty miles from Nashville, near the Old Smyrna Camp-ground.

Rev. Wm. P. Buel, a returned missionary from Siam, was the principal of the Poplar Grove Academy. I spent one year there as assistant, and as Mr. Buel resigned, I took his place for the next year. I had two assistants; Jean Jacques Giers taught music, French and German, and an accomplished lady from Ohio, Miss Jane E. Miller, was my assistant in the English department.

While there I got a place for my classmate, John M. Wilson, in a select school a few miles away, also one for R. S. Elliott.

I spent two very pleasant years with those young people in the academy. Two of the boys afterwards graduated in Miami University, Joel A. Battle, in '59, and T. C. Hibbett, in '54, who became a member of the  $\Phi \Delta \Theta$  Fraternity. When I left Tennessee with a view to pursue my studies in theology, I resigned in favor of John W. Lindley, who became my successor. I went there in 1850 and left in 1852.

#### AT THE SEMINARY.

I at once entered the seminary at New Albany, Ind. This was the germ of the McCormick School, in Chicago. There Drs. E. D. MacMaster and Philip Lindsley were the principal teachers; both had been presidents of universities, the one of Miami, the other of Nashville. This was in the winter of 1852-3.

In the fall of 1853 I entered the seminary at Princeton, in the Senior class, intending to graduate in the spring following. I enjoyed the circumstances, teachers, students and studies very much, but when the term was about half gone, Rev. W. W. Hill, D. D., editor of *The Presbyterian Herald*, invited me to become his business manager and assistant editor, but conditioned his offer on my beginning work on New Year's day. So with great regret and sincere reluctance I bade adieu to the venerable shades of Princeton. My college and seminary days were then over, and naught now remained of life but work in other fields.

#### IN KENTUCKY.

In April, 1854, I was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Louisville, in the First Presbyterian Church of that city. Immediately after my licensure, a ruling elder from a church in the country, who was present, invited me to become their stated preacher for half my time. As this church was near the city, I accepted the invitation. The three principal Presbyterian churches of the city asked me to become their city missionary for the other half of my time. My chief work in the city was at Portland, then four miles off, at the foot of the Falls and the Canal. Now it is a part of the city itself, as it has gone west and absorbed that suburb. Here I organized a Sunday school and before long a church, which has lived and prospered until to-day it is one of the strong churches of the city.

I continued also my work in Dr. Hill's office until November, 1855, when I gave up all my work in the city and moved into the country, where I had preached my first sermon, some twelve miles out. I was also invited to a professorship in a young ladies' seminary in Paris, Ky., and to the charge of a large country church in Lafayette County, Mo. I gave up all these

desirable fields, as they could get almost anyone they wanted, while the little church in the country to which I went, could get no one else that they would have. To do what ought to be done, but what would not be done unless I did, I thought to be my duty.

There I staid and labored diligently and joyfully with many encouraging results for five years. It was in the midst of a plain but very kind people. During this interval I had organized a new church and helped them to build a nice edifice. This was five miles off and mainly a colony from the church at Pennsylvania Run.

I was ordained to the full work of the ministry in April, 1856, and preached at my first charge six years and a half, then moved to the bounds of the new—the Hebron Church, where I staid seven years and a half. In that time, however, I did a good deal of missionary work for the Presbytery, by which I was also made its stated clerk. I remained the chief executive officer of that large body for about ten years, when I left the Presbytery to go to Ohio, October, 1868.

In April, 1862, Rev. Stuart Robinson, D. D., Andrew Davidson, Esq., a book merchant in Louisville, and I, bought the subscription list and good will of *The Presbyterian Herald*, of Rev. Dr. W. W. Hill. Mr. Davidson became publisher; Stuart Robinson and I, editors. We three were joint owners, each paying an equal amount toward the purchase. The name of the paper was given by Dr. Robinson, *The True Presbyterian*. As I had had some experience in the *Herald* work, I was made managing editor. The inches of the paper's size were 18 x 24 to each page; columns to the page, seven; pages, four. The first issue was dated April 3, 1862. It appeared weekly until September 4, making twenty-two numbers. After that date, owing to the troubles of the times, it was issued irregularly during that year and the next, only making in all that time, thirty-four numbers in a year and nine months. No. 35 of Vol. I. was published January 6, 1864. In it is my valedictory, with an editorial from Dr. Robinson, the remaining editor, in these words: 'In another column will be found the valedictory of Rev. Robert Morrison, who has been one of the editors of *The True Presbyterian* from the beginning. And though Mr. Morrison feels constrained to retire from editorial management of this paper, at our request he has agreed to contribute to the columns of *The True Presbyterian*, as his leisure may permit, as well as render us such aid as may from time to time be needed, so far as is in his power.'

I lived then fifteen miles south of the city, where my chief place of work was; in general, I preached every Sabbath. As

It was then war time, and most of the common schools of the country about there were broken up, I was urged by many friends to take charge of a select school to be held in the public school house, chiefly for boys and young men. So besides preaching and teaching from thirty to fifty pupils, I did not need any editorial work to keep me busy. Indeed, when the war was over I had to take a year's rest in order to regain former health and vigor.

IN OHIO AGAIN.

After 1866 numerous calls from Presbyterians, mostly in central Ohio, came to the Presbytery of Louisville, to send them one or more preachers. Dr. Stuart Robinson advised me, if I could see my way clear, to go and visit the field, and if I saw fit to stay, offered to help me—words which he bravely redeemed.

In the summer of 1868 I visited my old Ohio home, and while there made a call on one of those churches, and after preaching for them I received an earnest invitation to become their pastor. I told my father of it, whereupon he said: 'Robert, I let you go from home two years before you were of age, to work for yourself, and now if you believe it to be your duty without reference to me, to accept the call, do so; stay near me while I live, bury me when dead, and settle up my estate, then go with my blessing wherever you think best.' That speech settled the question for me. I pitched my tent soon thereafter in the little town of Waterford, in Knox County, Ohio, where my chief point of work for the time was. This was about ten miles from my father's house.

Soon a Presbytery was formed, consisting of four ministers and one church. I preached a great deal in a range of ten to forty miles, organized some churches, got other ministers to join our ranks, until the Presbytery of central Ohio had eight ministers and as many churches.

In 1869, in order to provide preachers 'to the manor born,' and to accommodate our friends with a good school, I began to teach in the public school house with five scholars; the number soon grew. I bought a better house, gathered a large school and called it Westminster Academy. Mr. James P. Killen taught music. By and by I secured the services of my brother, William M. Morrison, and his wife, both successful teachers. It was a co-educational school and numbered for a time as many as seventy-five to eighty. Several of the young people were from a distance. The character of our work was recognized by Wooster University, in Ohio; Central University, in Kentucky, and by some other colleges. Six useful ministers—three Presbyterians and three Methodists—were students there. After six

years of faithful labor I resigned the place of principal and passed the work into other hands, contenting myself with preaching, until December, 1876, when I set my face toward the West.

## IN MISSOURI.

After eight years had passed and I regarded my work in Ohio as done, with goods and family I reached St. Louis, on my way to Texas. This was about the middle of December. I had no definite place in that great state in view, but thought to halt a year in Lebanon, Mo., as a point of observation. I had some wild land interests near there. In passing through St. Louis the Presbyterian brethren begged me to stay in Missouri, as there was work enough there to do. I was asked to tarry at any rate for a few days. In this I agreed. Very soon there came an invitation to take charge of the Presbyterian Church at Potosi. I went there, was very cordially received and staid there three years. Then came an unsolicited and very unexpected call from the Board of Trustees of Westminster College, Fulton, Mo., to become their financial agent, to raise for them by direct begging, ten thousand dollars, to pay off an old debt. I declined the honor, but it was pressed upon me. I knew it would be a work of immense difficulty, to travel the state over, see the people one by one and get their littles. More patience, perseverance, tact and faith were needed than I possessed, but by and by I sur-rendered my judgment and went earnestly to work, by way of experiment in that part of the field nearest me and furthest from the college. I succeeded some better than I feared, for four of the ablest men of the Synod, all of them D. D.'s, had tried this work and concluded to retire from it. I, however, gave up my charge at Potosi, moved my family to Fulton, got a horse and buggy and to all intents became a traveling man. I had not been in the work long, though I had said 'ten thousand' a good many times, until I began to suspect that that terrible old debt was more than ten thousand. Upon careful investigation I found that it only lacked five dollars of fifteen thousand. When I undertook the business I did not know all the facts about it. Maybe it was well that it was so. The trustees, I know, did not try to deceive me, *they* did not know then. I had moved then and was fully in the fight; it was not a good time to back out, and so I went on, all the same. For my comfort the words of an old proverb came to my mind—'Whatever ought to be done, can be done, though it may be with difficulty.' I was sure that the debt *ought* to be paid, and I believed that with patience and perseverance it could be and would be paid. So, with a little more determination, I apportioned out the amounts

I thought I ought to get from each congregation on the fifteen thousand basis and drove on.

One thought that probably many had, was voiced by a good elder, when approached in the business—‘So it is to pay a debt, that you want money?’ I said ‘Yes, sir.’ The reply was—‘I did not help to make that debt, nor was I a party to it, in any way. I don’t believe in churches or colleges going in debt. I tell you, I would rather pay ten dollars for a colt coming on than one dollar for an old horse or a dead horse.’ Thus far, no doubt, he spoke the mind of a majority of those whom I addressed, but they did not all finish up as he did; he ended his talk by saying, ‘but it is wrong for Presbyterians to be in debt, so take \$25.00 and go on.’

The Board did not guarantee me any monthly or yearly salary. They allowed me to pay all my own expenses. They did not give me a per cent., either, on my collections. The only risk they took was in the endorsement of my character in appointing me their agent. If I worked a year and got all the money I could, they allowed me to retain \$1,200. At the end of two years and two months I had the joy to pay the debt in full and hand over in addition thereto notes for the endowment of one thousand dollars more. I have extended my words about this college financial agency business, it may be unduly, or out of proportion to the time engaged in it, but looking backward to it I am compelled to regard it as the greatest and most difficult, if not the most important, of all the undertakings of my life.

After the college debt was cancelled, in August, 1881, I went to Aurora Springs to spend a month or two in resting up. I hoped to benefit my invalid wife. I procured a tent and lived in it for over a month. There was a large number of tents there at the time. On my first Sabbath there I organized a Sunday school under the shades of some fine trees in the park. I found so much need, as I thought, of gospel preaching, that I bought a house, and was going to stay a month or two. I did not get away for nine years! I became a Presbyterian circuit-rider with a district of four counties. I organized three churches, several Sabbath schools, and visited many people from house to house. As the years went by I had an attractive little home, but my two oldest children, who were little girls when I went over there, were changed in appearance, and for their sakes and the younger ones’, to have them educated as well as possible, I gave up my field, pulled up my stakes and sacrificed my property, so as to move back to Fulton, where the best schools of the state are. So, in December, 1890, I moved back to Fulton, and have lived here ever since.

I have been busy in this interval preaching and acting as evangelist and colporteur through the State at large. I have been honored by my Presbytery in being made chairman of its Standing Committee on this business, as also chairman of the Synod's Standing Committee on the same matter.

Φ Δ Θ MATTERS.

In my life sketch accompanying, I have said nothing especially of my connection with or interest in the Φ Δ Θ Fraternity. How I regard the Brotherhood can be best learned from what I have done for it in an outlay of time and money for nearly fifty years, that would be hardly appropriate for me to mention now and here. Some things, however, I may say: From the first meetings prior to the organization and afterwards, I have faithfully attended and helped, as far as I could. I have not hesitated to spend money when I thought it necessary, though not much was needed in those days. In *THE SCROLL* in years past, the part that belongs to me in particular is often mentioned. The great and good men selected as honorary members were mostly by my choice.

I arranged for the first grand gathering of the Order at Miami University, April 29, 1853, when Rev. E. Humphrey, D. D., delivered a magnificent address, which reads well to-day, and Rev. C. Elliott, D. D., read a poem. I planned the second story of the Fraternity and was appointed its first president, which plan, however, was superseded by the present one of the National Convention. I attended a reunion at Indianapolis, in 1855, I believe, and an anniversary of the Fraternity at Indiana University, when they were addressed by Rev. N. Cobb, D. D., of Boston. I edited and published the first catalogue in 1860. I also attended the anniversary gathering in Centre College in 1860, when Rev. Samuel Hibben was the orator. I was present in the Indianapolis Convention in 1880, and helped in securing a charter for Missouri Beta, in Westminster College, and in trying to get one for the Southwestern Presbyterian University at Clarksville, Tenn. I first moved the machinery that secured a chapter at Central University, attended the Convention in New York in 1886, and tried to obtain a charter for students in William Jewell, at Liberty, Mo. I attended the National Convention in 1889, at Bloomington, Ill.; at Atlanta in 1891, and at Indianapolis in 1894. I have written a large number of articles for *THE SCROLL*, running back for twenty-five years—more in number than any other person, excepting the editors, and Bro. W. B. Palmer—together with sundry things too tedious to mention, as auctioneers are wont to say. Is not this a loud enough blast of one's own trumpet?

## FAMILY.

In Harrison County, Kentucky, four miles from Cynthiana, I was married to Miss Flora, third daughter Rev. C. C. Bomberger and his wife, Margery (Rose). She was of Scotch descent. Mr. Bomberger was a Presbyterian clergyman, an alumnus of Washington College, Pa., and could preach in English or German. Mr. and Mrs. Bomberger were born in Pennsylvania; their children were all born in Ohio. Our children are Margery and Mary (Mamie). They are graduates of the Synodical Female College in Fulton; the three younger children are Ethel, Robert Hall and Anna Gordon.

I own the plain, comfortable house in which my family find their home, and when any visiting brothers come to Fulton, Mo., they will find a cordial welcome from

ROBERT MORRISON, *Ohio Alpha*, 49.

EIGHTH ANNUAL ALUMNI DAY: HOW IT WAS  
CELEBRATED.

## BOSTON.

'The best meeting we have had yet.'—*Tomlinson*.

'Please send me notice of every future meeting.'—*Moore*.

'Where waves the "white and blue" is found the Old Guard.  
—*Hurd*.

The fifth annual meeting and dinner of Massachusetts Alpha Alumni was held at the Parker House, Boston, Friday evening, March 12, at six o'clock. Between 20 and 30 enthusiastic Phis were present and again renewed their allegiance to the Fraternity. It was the chapter's good fortune to meet Bro. Moore, President of Alpha Province, and we hope that his interest in alumni chapters will not fall short of his interest in the active ones. Amherst as usual sent us a delegate, Bro. Walter H. Coles, '97. Amherst has always sent us delegates of whom she can be proud, and Bro. Coles proved no exception to the rule, for the success of the evening was due in great measure to the earnest and helpful talk of Bro. Coles. Each meeting Brown has written that a delegate will be sent. Each meeting fails to see him. Either the delegate gets lost or other attractions are too strong, for he fails to attend.

Officers elected for next year are:

I. C. Tomlinson, Buchtel, '80, President;

D. J. Gallert, Colby, '93, Vice-president;

W. W. Case, Allegheny, '84, Reporter;