

**A MONOGRAPH ON THE
REV. ISRAEL
EVANS, A.M.: CHAPLAIN
IN THE AMERICAN ARMY**

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A Monograph on the Rev. Israel Evans, A.M.: Chaplain in the American Army by John Calvin Thorne

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JOHN CALVIN THORNE

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IN THE AMERICAN ARMY**



Israel Evans

REV. ISRAEL EVANS, A.M., 1747--1807.
Chaplain in the Army of the Revolution, 1776--1783.
Concord's Second Settled Minister, 1789--1797.

From a Miniature by Kosciuszko. (Inscribed:
"Washington's Chaplain.")

A MONOGRAPH
ON THE
REV. ISRAEL EVANS, A.M.

CHAPLAIN IN THE AMERICAN ARMY
DURING THE ENTIRE REVOLUTIONARY WAR
1775-1783

The Second Settled Minister of Concord, New Hampshire
1789-1797

BY
JOHN CALVIN THORNE
GOVERNOR OF THE SOCIETY OF COLONIAL WARS IN THE STATE
OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

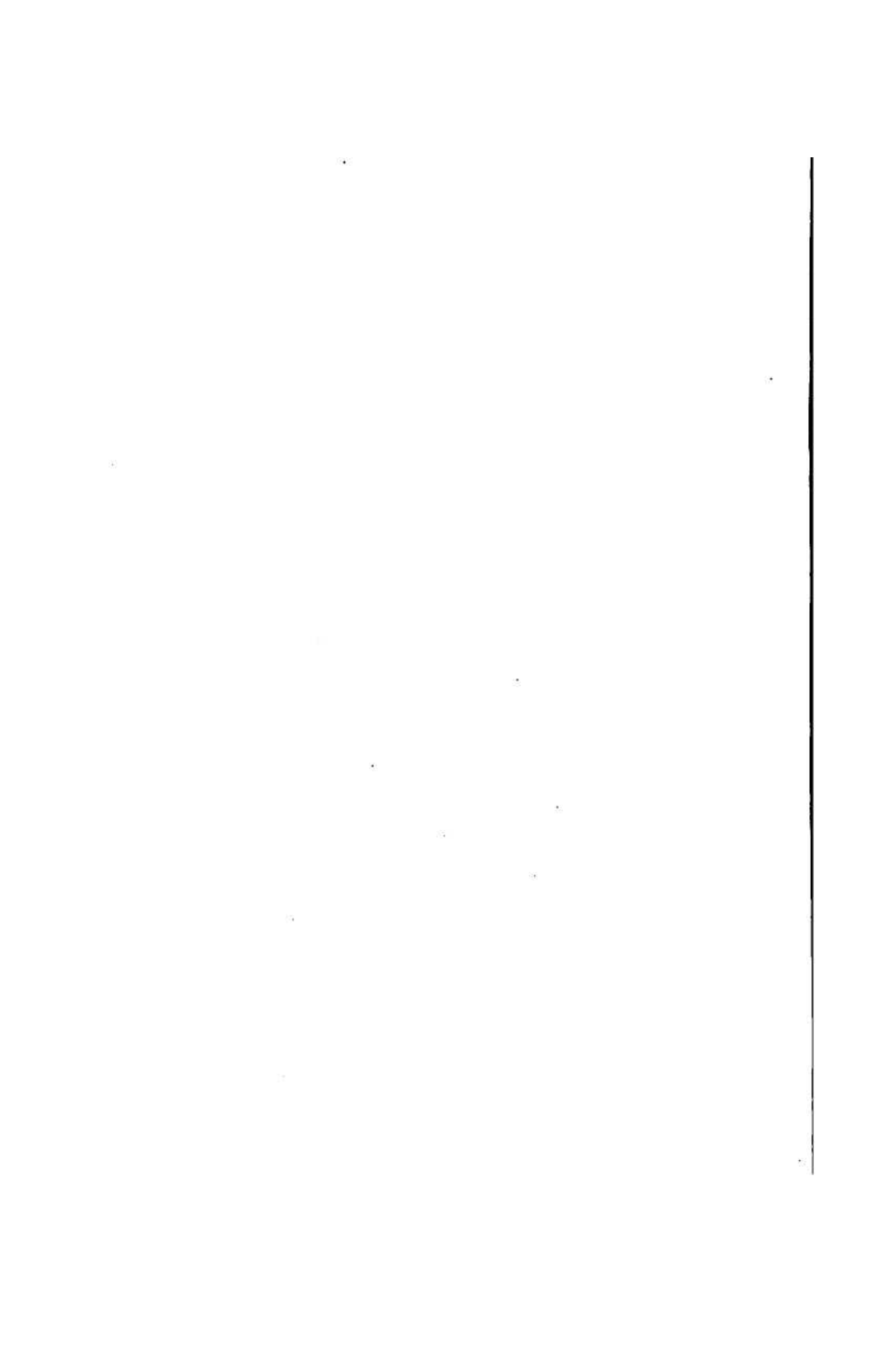
CONCORD, N. H.
1902

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1907



JOHN CALVIN THORNE.
Author.



REVEREND ISRAEL EVANS, A. M.

THE Reverend Israel Evans was of Welsh descent, born in Tredyffrin, Chester county, state of Pennsylvania, in the year 1747. Tredyffrin township is situated in the "Great Valley," so-called, in the eastern part of Chester county, near Philadelphia. The name signifies "valley town." Here in this beautiful, fertile, and smiling region, our Israel was born. We find in the records a variety of ways for spelling his family name. Ap * Evan, Evan, Even, Evens, Evans.

In 1701 several Welsh families, among them those by the name of Evans, came to Pennsylvania and settled in "Great Valley." Here, this religious people, true to their custom, at once built a church, named the "Great Valley church." We know that the father and grandfather of Israel Evans were ministers in this country, and that his great-grandfather was a minister in Wales. But a thorough search of the many records of church and state, as gathered in the city of Philadelphia, has failed to bring *positive* proof of our subject's ancestry. A correspondent, Mr. Frank Brooks Evans, of Philadelphia, writes as follows: "If you have done much in Welsh genealogical work, you probably have found that it is a very different matter from the running down of the pedigree of an English family, as the surnames given to Welshmen were derived from an entirely different method than was employed by the English. It is at times a most difficult task to trace connections among Welshmen, even though they have a common surname—in fact, a surname in common does not necessarily indicate a relationship."

Another valued correspondent says: "I cannot find the particular Israel among the hundreds of Evans names scattered

* Ap signifies son of.

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throughout Pennsylvania. It is strange, that for so noted a chaplain as he became, the fact of his ancestry does not show itself. The more I learn of him and of the service he rendered as chaplain and preacher in the army, the more I wonder that so little can be found in regard to his early life."

Says another writer, "Probably no [other] chaplain in the Revolution followed its fortunes so steadily from its commencement to its close, sharing in all its perils and hardships, yet about whom so little is known as of Reverend Israel Evans."

I hope, however, in this monograph, to add some information, gathered from many sources, in regard to his most useful life.*

* Since the above was written, I have learned some additional facts in regard to Mr. Evans, and especially of his ancestry, which should be preserved.

On sending to Yale College a copy of the earlier publication, I received the following:

"For notices of the father and grandfather of the Rev. Israel Evans, both of whom were graduates of Yale, which you state you were unable to find, see Yale College Biographies and Annals, 1701 to 1745, by Franklin Bowditch Dexter, M. A., Vol. I, pages 111-113, also 623-624.

Very respectfully,

A. VAN NAME, Librarian."

Thus, after searching in vain for the information there given, for perhaps a year or more, I found in the volume mentioned a very full and satisfactory account, which is here given in substance, and which I am glad to state was in harmony with surmises made from my previous investigations.

The Rev. Israel Evans was the son of Rev. Samuel Evans of Great Valley, Chester county, Pennsylvania, a graduate of Yale College, class of 1739, with degree of A. M. Samuel was licensed to preach by the Presbytery of Philadelphia, January 8, 1741. On the 7th of October he accepted a call from the Great Valley church. On May 5th of the following year he was ordained and installed as its pastor. Samuel's father, the Rev. David Evans, Jr., who had been settled over this same church from 1720 to 1740, preached the installation sermon. In 1747 Samuel left his pastoral charge and made two or more voyages to England. His later career is unknown. He died about the year 1766.

His son Israel was born in 1747; was graduated at the College of New Jersey in 1772; and was pastor of the First Congregational church in Concord, N. H., 1789 to 1797.

Rev. David Evans, Jr., the grandfather of Israel, was the son of David Evans, who emigrated from Wales to Philadelphia in 1701. He was of course



ISRAEL EVANS' DIPLOMA.

College of New Jersey (Princeton University).

1772.

(From original in possession of Dr. George Porter, Bridgeport, Conn.)