

**THE LIFE OF CHARLES THOMSON:
SECRETARY OF THE
CONTINENTAL CONGRESS AND
TRANSLATOR OF THE BIBLE FROM
THE GREEK, PP. 1-242**

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The Life of Charles Thomson: Secretary of the Continental Congress and Translator of the Bible from the Greek, pp. 1-242 by Lewis R. Harley

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SECRETARY OF THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS AND
TRANSLATOR OF THE BIBLE FROM THE GREEK

BY

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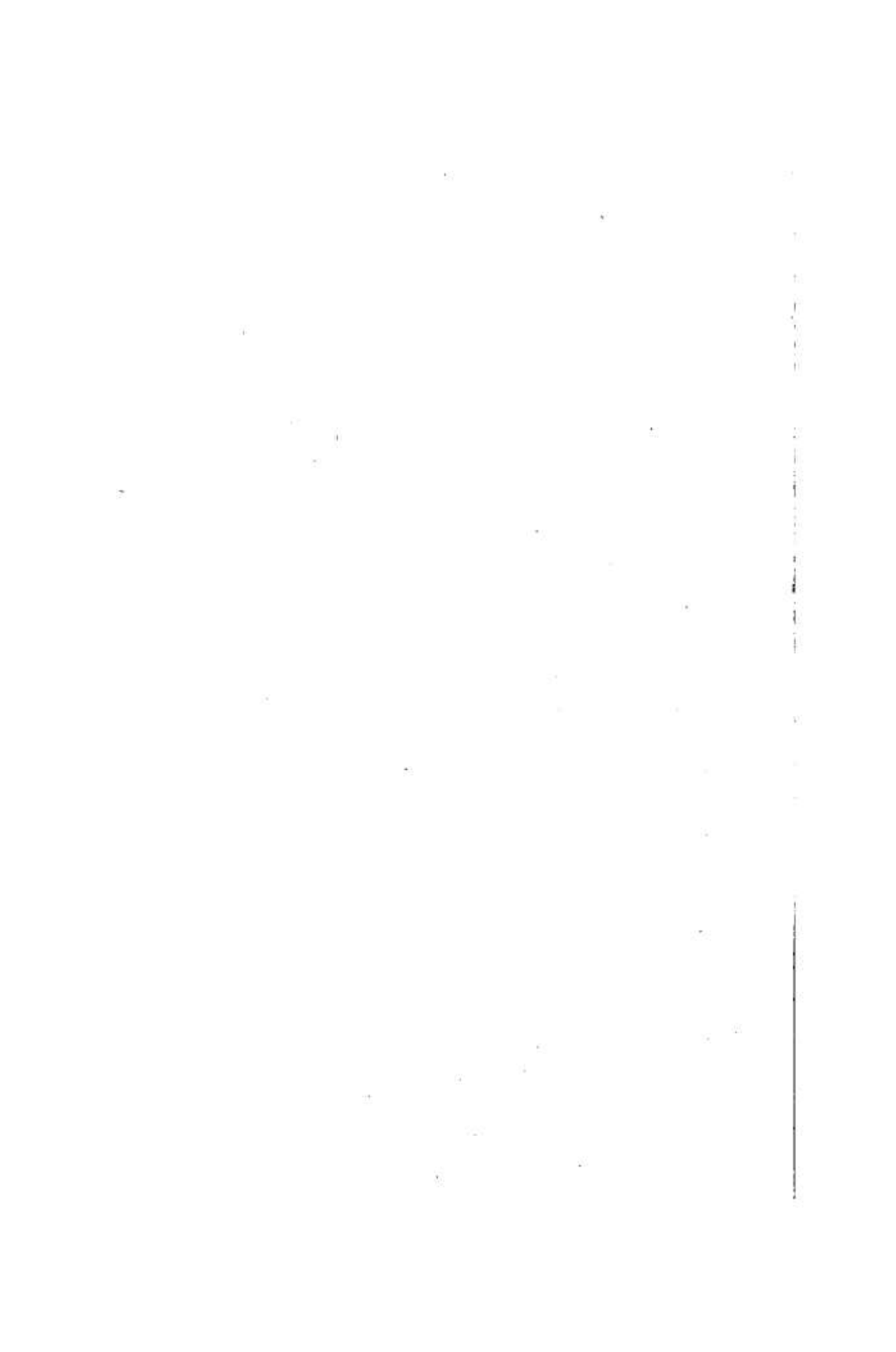


CAUTION --- Please handle this volume with care.
The paper is very brittle.

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To
My Father and Mother
I Dedicate This Book.

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PREFACE.

This book, in its original form, was a monograph of forty-two pages, which I prepared for the Historical Society of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. After its publication in the Society's Collections two years ago, I decided to write a more comprehensive biography of Charles Thomson. His distinguished public services in the Revolutionary period, and his devotion to Biblical literature after he had retired to private life, render no apology necessary for the appearance of this work.

As Secretary of the Continental Congress, Thomson had gathered much valuable information for the purpose of writing a history of his times. In his declining years, he destroyed nearly all his papers, leaving only those mentioned in the Bibliography of this volume. I have thus been compelled to depend chiefly upon these sources for my material. Thomson's correspondence with Franklin and Jefferson, and his papers in the collections of the New York Historical Society for the year 1878, throw considerable light on his relations with the Continental Congress. He was one of the best

scholars of his day, and after retiring from public life in 1789, he devoted twenty-five years to the translation of the Bible from the Greek, and to the Synopsis of the Four Evangelists. John F. Watson was well acquainted with Thomson and frequently visited him at Harriton. His account of the venerable scholar in the *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania* has been consulted in preparing the closing part of this biography. Thomson's manuscripts and notes on the study of the Scriptures give evidence of a vigorous, cultivated mind, and show how constant was his application to this favorite employment.

I wish to express my thanks to Hon. Samuel W. Pennypacker, of Philadelphia, who first suggested to me the writing of this book. He has long been regarded as the chief authority on Pennsylvania history, and he has done much to direct students to its sources.

I am under obligations to Samuel K. Chambers, Esq., of West Grove, Pa., for his valuable assistance in gathering information concerning the New London Academy, and Thomson's school life there.

My thanks are due to Joseph Fornance, Esq., of Norristown, Pa., Mr. Howard Edwards, of Philadelphia, and Mr. Gilbert Cope, of West