

**MEMOIR OF THE  
REV. JAMES  
WADDEL, D.D.**

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Memoir of the Rev. James Waddel, D.D. by James Waddel Alexander

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**JAMES WADDEL ALEXANDER**

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JAMES WADDEL AALEXANDER, D.D.

1880.

1872

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*This Memoir of the Rev. Dr. Waddel, by his grandson, was published in the WATCHMAN OF THE SOUTH, a religious paper of Richmond, Va., in 1844. It is now put in a permanent form to perpetuate the memory of an eminently holy, learned, and eloquent father of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.*





REV. JAMES WADDEL, D.D.

**J**AMES WADDEL was the son of Thomas Waddel, and was born in the north of Ireland, in the month of July, of the year 1739, as is believed. He was brought in his infancy by his parents to America. They settled in the south-eastern part of Pennsylvania, near the State line, on White Clay Creek. Thomas Waddel had four children, William, Robert, James, and Sally. Of these, only one remained unmarried. The elder sons removed to the western district of Pennsylvania, near the Ohio, where their descendants remain.

Old Mrs. Waddel was a woman of eminent Christian knowledge and piety, and brought with her to America the methods of ancient Scottish Presbyterianism. To her advices, her son ascribed his first religious convictions. He was a frail boy, and an incident of his child-

hood left its mark on him for life. When he was about twelve years of age, he went in company with one of his brothers to chase a hare. The little creature took refuge in a hollow tree, or log; and as James was pointing out the spot, his brother let fall a hatchet on the place, which struck the left hand of the younger boy, and almost severed it from the wrist. Throughout his life, this hand was small, and in a great degree useless. This induced his father to give him an education. Accordingly, he was sent to Nottingham, about fifteen miles distant, to the school of the Rev. Dr. Finley, afterward President of New Jersey College. It was an academy of high reputation. The late venerable Mr. Samuel Houston, in a letter to my mother, of date November 10, 1835, speaks as follows :

“ In his familiar hours, [Dr. Waddel] sometimes gave me anecdotes of his early life. One was of his mother [and of] the morning he left home, to go to a grammar school, some distance from their abode. When she

had made ready all things for his departure, she took him into a private room, and said to him, weeping, 'James, my dear son, you are going from under my care. I entreat you, be careful to pray, and to keep God's Sabbaths. Hence, on that holy day, spend not your time in bad company, or with Sabbath-breakers.' Then, handing him two little religious books, she said, 'Take these books, and read them for your mother's sake;' and falling on her knees, she prayed very feelingly for him. Dr. Waddel has told me that this parting deeply affected him, and had a very salutary effect. The books he often read; and though he had in his library other books on the same subjects, he prized these volumes more than all, for his mother's sake."

From the school of Dr. Finley proceeded a number of eminent men. Among these were Dr. Benjamin Rush, who often used to speak of Dr. Waddel, to whom he had recited lessons; and Judge Jacob Rush, Ebenezer Hazard, of Philadelphia; Dr. McWhorter, old Dr. Tennent, and Governor Martin, of North Carolina. Mr. Hazard used to exhibit a manual of Prosody, in the handwriting of Waddel; and