

**MEMOIRS OF THE REV.
THOMAS CLELAND,
D.D., COMP. FROM
HIS PRIVATE PAPERS**

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Memoirs of the Rev. Thomas Cleland, D.D., Comp. From His Private Papers by Edward P. Humphrey & Thomas H. Cleland

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EDWARD P. HUMPHREY & THOMAS H. CLELAND

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Compiled from his Private Papers.

By EDWARD P. HUMPHREY,

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MEMOIRS
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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

It is proposed to spread upon these pages a brief memoir of the life and labors of the Rev. Dr. THOMAS CLELAND, of Kentucky, lately deceased. The necessary information is supplied in his private papers, but particularly in an autobiography which he prepared in 1848. This was intended not for the public eye, but for the use of his children and intimate friends, at whose request it was written. These friends have deemed it proper, however, to publish such parts of it as are of public interest, together with such portions as relate to his career as a minister of the Gospel, and indicate the early training by which the Providence and Grace of God raised him up for the work set before him.

In order to a just appreciation of his character, both personal and professional, it is needful to survey the sphere into which his life was cast. He was a man of his time: in many things the product and type of the region and the period in which he spent his days. What was there, then, peculiar in the conditions under which he came into the service of the Church?

The first of these conditions is found in the fact that he was one of the pioneers of Kentucky; not too young to be reckoned among the second generation of that remarkable body of men. In the year 1780, a few months after the first inauguration of Washington, the Cleland family descended the river Ohio, after the manner and amidst the dangers of that navigation, in a flat-boat floating with the stream, the banks of which were infested with hostile Indians. In the following year the family settled in what is now called Marion county, Thomas being in the twelfth year of his age. Sixteen years only before that settlement was effected, James Harrod built his log cabin, perhaps the first in the State, near the spot now occupied by Harrodsburg. Daniel Boone's fort on the river Kentucky had been erected not more than fifteen years, and the original block-house at Lexington about eight. The terrible siege of

Logan's fort, and the brilliant march of Clarke upon Vincennes and Kaskaskia, the disastrous expedition of Bowman against Chillicothe, and the bloody but decisive battle of the Blue Licks, had all occurred at periods the most remote of which was not more than thirteen, and the nearest only eight years earlier than the settlement of the family. The sites now occupied by the towns of Danville, Harrodsburg, Lebanon and Springfield, were marked by a few log dwellings, or were covered by the unbroken forests. Not more than eleven years had passed since the McAfees, and McCouns, and Armstrongs had settled near the spot where, seventy years ago, they built a house of worship, which they called New Providence Church, in acknowledgment of God's protection over their infant colony; where, for forty-five years, their descendants have received the word of God from Dr. CLELAND'S lips, and where they have now given him a reverent burial with their kindred. Wayne's treaty was not formed until four years after he came to the county, and he was a young man of two and twenty when the century which is now on the wane began its cycle. His life as a pioneer lad will be described in his own words in another part of this volume. To that manner of early life, those who knew

him will readily refer much of his manhood and force of character, and much that was attractive in him; his vigorous constitution, the resolution with which he met difficulties and opposition, the primitive structure of his dwelling and its appointments; his frankness and honesty, the simplicity of his manners, dress and mode of thought and expression; the familiarity of his intercourse with all classes of people; his genial humor; his fondness for the implements of frontier life—the ax and the rifle; his hearty and unostentatious hospitality at home, and his exemplary patience with what his younger brethren find intolerable,—bad roads, bad weather, and rough fare when on duty abroad.

He belonged, also, to the second generation of the pioneer preachers of Kentucky. Father Rice, Terah Templin, Robert Marshall, and those immediate fellow laborers among the Presbyterians were much older than he; so were Wm. Hickman, Lewis Craig and John Gano among the Baptists, and Francis Poythness, Benjamin Ogden and James Haw among the Methodists; though the most of these were alive when he began his ministry. He was, however, the cotemporary, among the Presbyterians, of Carey H. Allen, John P. Campbell, James Blythe, John Lyle, Robert Stewart,

Archibald Cameron and Joshua L. Wilson. Being, by a few years, younger than any of them, he survived them all, and brought down to the present year, the type of that generation of powerful preachers.

To this we add, on a wider survey of his sphere in life, that his cotemporaries in other professions were great men—great in any comparison. Henry Clay and Felix Grundy were his seniors by a year only; Joseph Hamilton Davies and John Boyle by two years; John Allen, John Rowan and John Pope by from four to seven years; while Wm. T. Barry, Ben. Hardin and Benjamin Mills were younger than he. Very few of these men, in the active period of life, were professedly religious, and the points of immediate contact between the professions of the law and the ministry of the Gospel were not very numerous. But the influences which those classes of public men exert on each other through their influence on the community in the bosom of which both have their spheres, the taste for forensic eloquence created by great lawyers and politicians acting on the pulpit, and the love of justice and the sense of responsibility to God, acquired from the instructions of the pulpit, re-acting on the tribunal of justice and the forum—